SIMON DIEDONG DOMBO UNIVERSITY OF BUSINESS AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

AN EXPLORATION OF THE SUCCESS CRITERIA AND FACTORS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PLANNING: A CASE STUDY OF WA MUNICIPALITY

TAMIM ISSAH

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THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, FACULTY OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT, SIMON DIEDONG DOMBO UNIVERSITY OF BUSINESS AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOMENT

SEPTEMBER, 2024

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the outcome of original research conducted by me and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere, all sources have been acknowledged by citations and references.

Candidate's Signature…… Date: …….

Name: Issah Tamim

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of theses as laid down by the SDD- UBIDS.

Name: Maxwell A. Aziabah (PhD)

Supervisor's Signature…… Date: …….

ABSTRACT

This research investigates ID projects with the goal of clearly understanding the critical planning factors that contribute to ID projects success. Development partners use projects such as the ISS program in Ghana supported by the multilateral and bilateral systems to provide long-lasting remedies to the many problems of emerging regions. Project planning, a critical but sometimes unstudied aspect of PM, has a greater impact on ID success. However, the confusion that planning does not ensure the success of ID projects but makes it more likely in the formal PM literature is the worrying issue here. The significant investments made on ID projects did not produce the desired outcomes in Ghana. The Traditional and Agile PM theories underpinned this current study. The current researcher conducted a case study on the ISS program in Ghana within a qualitative investigation. A number of semi-structured interviews were done purposively with ID academics and practitioners in Ghana at the administrative, career progression, and execution levels to get their pragmatic perspectives. The results of this study showed that there are five key themes that can be utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of ID projects focusing on project planning: project management competency, team performance, ID organizational performance, ID planning tools/methods, and ID project documentation. The general effectiveness of planning for ID projects is influenced by twenty critical success factors. Ownership, a defined mission and vision, communication, and leadership are among those that have been deemed most critical success factors during ID project planning. Again, planning for development projects is hampered by the ineffective engagement of major stakeholders. Supporting entities and recipient governments must make sure that the conditions necessary for that success are met.

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I also want to convey my gratitude to the respondents for sharing their insights, wisdom, and assistance with the study. Your interest in my research topic motivated me to put in more effort and given me the confidence to broaden the scope of my initial research plans.

DEDICATION

The curriculum for the MPhil in Project Management and Community Development included the completion of this thesis. I received a lot of support and guidance from many people while writing this thesis, to which I dedicate this work.

In appreciation for gifting me life and flights, I dedicate this piece to my mother and my parents, the wellspring of all that is good and wholesome in my world. I also dedicate this work to Zuweira, my wife, Shafia, and Shatir, my children; I appreciate you being my brightness and courage forever.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSF……..Critical Success Factors

DESA……...Department of Economics and Social Affairs

FSDR……...Financing for Sustainable Development Report

HR……Human Resource

ID…….International Development

IDPP……International Development Project Planning

IT……..Information Technology

JRM……..Joint Risk Management

Log Frame……Logical Framework

LPMS……...Learn PM Session

MDG……Millennium Development Goals

NGO…….Non-Governmental Organization

NTC……..New Triple Constraints

PB…….Project Beneficiaries

PD…….Participatory Development

PM……Project Management

PM4NGO…….Project Management for Non-Governmental Organizations

Pmdpro1……...Project Management for Development Professionals 1

PMI……...Project Management Institute

PRSP…….Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan

SDG……..Sustainable Development Goals

SC…….Success Criteria

SC…….Selected Communities

UN……United Nations

USAID……..United States Agency for International Development

UNICEF……United Nations International Children's Fund

EU…….European Union

UNDP……...United Nations Development Program

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, projects have been used to deliver international initiatives and aids to developing countries such as Ghana since the 1950s, when International Development (ID) was founded (Ika & Hodgson, 2014; Golini & Landoni, 2014). For instance, close to 100 percent of the works of the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank that borrows money from the world rich nations to help the developing nations on considerable agreements, comprise projects (Ika, Diallo & Thuiller, 2009). According to the 2022 Financing for Sustainable Development Report (FSDR), Official Development Assistance (ODA) financing records have climbed to a maximum level of $161.2 billion in 2020 investments in ID projects (UN DESA, 2022).

We are tempted to ask to know whether ID initiatives are so distinct from typical commercial and construction projects such that a thorough examination of planning-related success factors relating to ID project success is even necessary. This query brings up the issue of the distinctiveness of ID initiatives. They work in difficult contexts with a paucity of resources, a diverse client group, unclear goals and quality assessment standards, thus their surroundings are undoubtedly distinctive (Crawford & Bryce, 2003; Youker, 2003; Ika & Donnelly, 2017). Despite operating in complex and politically affected environment, the project leader is required to provide project results (Remington & Pollack, 2006).

Project Management (PM) publications have been written on ID projects success (Youker, 1999; Khang & Moe, 2008; Ika, Diallo & Thuillier, 2010; Zarina et al., 2014). The success of ID projects influences not only Ghana's socioeconomic advancement, but also the

efficacy of development partners' and organizations' commitments. For instance, a collection of Integrated Social Services (ISS) projects is designed by Ghana government and funded by ID organizations to reduce the alarming rate of vulnerability and poverty in the country. These sponsors and government of Ghana can help guarantee intended goals by understanding the critical factors that determine the ISS program success. The success factors also assist them in projecting the programs' new vision, assessing trouble spots, and focusing their effort and limited resources to achieve project success (Khang & Moe, 2008). Although Chan (2004) recognizes that critical success factors (CSF) contribute to project delivery effectiveness, the success of ID projects is frequently considered as an anomaly (Ika et al., 2010) due to the high rate of failure in development projects.

At an unsatisfactory rate, ID projects fail to achieve their goals. For example, the McKinsey-Devex document shows that, 64% of development aid initiatives fail (Lazima & Coyle, 2019; Hekala, 2012). Again, in 2014, 54% failure rate of International Finance Corporate (IFC) growth initiatives was shown by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) (Lazima & Coyle, 2019; IEG, 2014).

There are also discussions in the developing world especially Ghana about the unsuccessful state of donor assistance (Easterly, 2009) including some causes of failure of ID projects (Lazima & Coyle, 2019; Youker, 1999; Khang & Moe, 2008; Ika et al., 2010; Leiderer, 2012). For example, the 2022 FSDR reveals that, high-income economies received considerable support to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic through recorded loans at ultra-low interest rates, whilst low-income countries acquire such concessionary loans with high interest rates and wind-up spending billions on debt servicing and corrupt practices

that prevent them from investing into sustainable development initiatives (UN DESA, 2022).

Largely, ID projects are created and carried out in emergent environments that constantly test project related predictions (Boakye & Liu, 2015). These assumptions and complications may result in ID project planning flaws and a high failure rate. As a result, ID projects drew the attention of both scholars and development practitioners decades ago (Youker, 1999; Khang & Moe, 2008; Ika, Diallo & Thuillier, 2010; Leiderer, 2012). Other writers (Svejvig & Andersen, 2015) blame the application of inappropriate PM concepts and practices in ID initiatives. They say the current status of the ID sector necessitates a shift away from traditional project and project management approaches and toward more flexible models that could improve project success chances (Svejvig & Andersen, 2015).

Traditional project management (TPM) suggests that ID projects can be effective and efficient when they do not exceed their schedule and cost, function better than expected and according to the project plan. Until the project is completed, this action plan is closely adhered to (Dvir, Razb & Shenharc, 2003). However, during project planning, which is critical to project success, successful management control of these plan actions is significantly reliant on a variety of Critical Success Factors (CSF) and their interactions (Khan & Spang, 2011; Lim & Mohammad, 1999). Project planning is unquestionably important to ID projects' success. As a result, project planning and strategy flaws can lead to business support problems, resource misallocation, under budgeting, poor scope control, and increased risks (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018), all of which can lead projects to no success. Others, on the other hand, believe project planning does not mean that success is assured because there have been a number of projects that were well-executed according

to the project planned document, on schedule, within cost, and met the set quality aims, and yet ultimately failed due to failure to satisfy the users (Dvir et al., 2003) of development projects in recipient countries. Others express worry that putting too much emphasis on planning could impede team members from being innovative, although this does not negate the need for a minimal level of preparation (Ika et al. 2010) to reduce uncertainty and complications in the ID project environment (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018).

Some studies (Dvir et al., 2003; Ika et al., 2010; Roszalina & Hassan, 2018) back up the assertion that, while planning does not ensure project success, it does make it more likely. For ID projects to succeed, quality planning and effective implementation of planned activities under repetitive check and balances across the project phases are essential (Rozenes et al., 2006). Quality project planning provides the best chance for a successful project execution (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018). Project planning is the practice of scheduling detailed project activities based on the project charter and resources available. It includes defining the project's scope, developing a project management strategy, and scheduling the project activities and timeframe (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018).

It has primary processes that include initiating, planning, executing, monitoring, and controlling (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018) functions that enable the development of project plans and the comparison of planned and actual project objectives (Marier-Bienvenu et al., 2017). Major decisions about project objectives and project execution plans are typically made during the initiating process, and this has a substantial effect on the effectiveness of ID initiatives (Dvir et al., 2003). However, planning is iterative, and new knowledge necessitates revisions to the initial plan (Chaves et al., 2016; Roszalina & Hassan, 2018; PMI, 2004).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

International development projects though propel the socioeconomic growth of low-income economies from the multilateral and bilateral systems, usually executed through Non- Governmental Organizations, have had abysmal performances and reportedly recorded higher failure rates (Youker, 1999; Khang & Moe, 2008; Ika et al., 2010; Leiderer, 2012), a worrying issue that warrants further investigations. This current research problem is linked to the following argument that project planning does not mean that success is assured because there have been a number of projects that were well-executed according to the project planned document, on schedule, within cost, and met the set quality aims, and yet ultimately failed due to failure to satisfy the users (Dvir et al., 2003) of development projects in recipient countries. Other expression also indicate that putting too much emphasis on planning could impede team members from being innovative, although this does not negate the need for a minimal level of preparation (Ika et al. 2010) to reduce uncertainty and complications in the ID project environment (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018). Furthermore, there is little research and documentation available on the crucial success elements that ID project managers need to take into account (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018). Finding the factors that can truly make such undertakings succeed or fail is the difficult part (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018; Ika et al., 2010; Khang & Moe, 2008). Moreover, the lack of a benchmark for best practices that project managers need might result in lack of vision, weak implementation and deficient monitoring and controlling activities.

Although, few studies (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018; Youker, 1999; Khang & Moe, 2008; Ika et al., 2010; Leiderer, 2012), have recognized ID projects success, PM professionals have yet to agree on the criteria used to determine success and the factors that contribute

to it. In other words, formal PM literature has been criticised for its lack of clarity about ID project success. Again, research focus on the success factors that are critical for project planning in ID projects is minimal. Khang & Moe (2008) support the assertion that a lack of understanding of these factors results in the inability to assess the project functional requirements early in its life to immediately identify issues that are confronting ID projects success. Moreover, in recent years, project methodologies and tools used to manage ID initiatives based on classical view of project management independently have been penalized for impeding ID projects success. The problem is that inappropriate PM methods and tools are often used for development projects that results in project failure in the development sector (Svejvig & Andersen, 2015). By responding rigidly to the rising degrees of uncertainty in ID initiatives, traditional project management puts at risk their long-term targeted outcomes.

Management of foreign development projects is a difficult topic that has received little attention (Hermano et al., 2013; Diallo and Thuillier, 2012). Despite the importance of ID projects, there was no specific project management approach accessible until the 1960s. Project management principles have recently been examined in other sectors such as construction and software development; but, because to their unique character, there are few tools and bodies of knowledge for managing ID initiatives (Hermano et al., 2013; Ika et al., 2012). Furthermore, the majority of the attention of project management was dedicated to project assessment criteria or project management tools, while little focus was on the important success aspects of ID initiatives, despite the presence of literature covering ID project management methods (Hermano et al., 2013). For donors, project

administrators, and beneficiaries alike, the management of ID project and the determination of each project's vital success factors are essential (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018).

In order to contribute to theoretical knowledge, policy-making, and sustainability in the field of international development projects, this study identified critical success factors of international development project planning using the Wa Municipality as a case study, which has benefited from the Integrated Social Services (ISS) initiatives. This study thus focused on planning-related factors that are essential for the effectiveness of ID initiatives.

1.3. Research Questions

1.3.1 Main Research Questions

This current study is to interrogate:

"How does planning-related critical success factors improve understanding of ID projects success in Wa?"

1.3.2 Specific Research Questions

1. How critical are the planning-related success factors for ID projects success?
2. How do planning-related difficulties hinder ID projects success?
3. How is the CSF framework used to assess ID projects success?

1.4. Research Objectives

1.4.1 Main Research Objectives

In line with the above research question, the general objective of this current research is to "investigate how planning-related critical success factors improve overall understanding of ID projects success."

1.4.1 Specific Research Objectives

This research is a qualitative multiple case embedded study used;

1. To identify and examine critical success factors of ID project planning.
2. To examine the challenges that inhibits ID projects success during planning.
3. To assess and understand the current status and future prospects of ID projects success, using the CSF framework.

1.5. Relevance of the Study

This research study has some important scholarly and practical ramifications, particularly for project planning and, to a lesser extent, the ID sector. The in-depth conversation with the practitioners leads to the identification of few critical success variables that are not mentioned in earlier research but are crucial in general for ID initiatives. This thesis work investigates how planning-related critical success factors can improve the success of international development projects. For the purpose of developing theoretical implications for ID projects, the CSFs are examined and related to qualitative empirical findings.

The current research supports the claim that ID initiatives are by far deeper examples of PM (Ika & Hodgson, 2014). As a result, this research project is not only going to benefit the field of ID projects as a whole, but investigators of traditional projects can ponder on these findings to generate thoughts for future research.

A competent ID project/program manager might be assigned keeping in mind the competence required based on the nature of the project. By methodically identifying the important success variables to be utilized to gauge project effectiveness, the current research has given a place to start. However, in order to have a comprehensive list of criteria and validate its validity and reliability, these need to be further researched across other fields and projects within the aid industry. Later, more extensive research that is industry-specific can be conducted.

The current research findings are meant to provide organizations with a kind of checklist to identify and assess areas where success is certain during the initial planning stages so that they may be managed effectively when further developed.

The results can be used to assist governments and donors in conducting an accurate needs analysis to determine where there are development gaps in the recipient nations and to correctly direct their limited resources toward those regions where projects are most likely to succeed.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

The current study is unable to take into consideration the variations in the success variables for different project stages throughout the project life cycle due to time and resource constraints. Thus, it focuses on only the planning phase in the project life cycle.

Organizations that only represent a small percentage of the population are included in this research. This limits the range of topics that may have emerged if the study had a bigger sample size, but it is anticipated that all relevant thoughts appear. The study anticipates delays as a result of several participants' busy schedules making it quite challenging for them to keep interview appointments. This is another limitation to the study.

1.7. Scope of the Study

This thesis work looks to better understand the effectiveness of ID initiatives by examining planning-related critical success factors. This current study of ID projects focusses on the Integrated.

Social Services (ISS) initiatives in Ghana, precisely, WA Municipality-upper west region. These projects source their funding from the multi-lateral and bilateral organizations and share similar project complexities.

A small sample of 10 people with substantial years of experience in the aid industry from two international NGOs and the public sector in Ghana are considered in this current study, which is a qualitative, multiple embedded case study. The study requires all participants to consent to taking part in interviews that last 40min to 1 hour.

1.8. Organization of the Study

To stay in line with the study format and effectively address the study question on "how planning-related CSFs do improve understanding of ID projects success", the current study is organized in a logical sequence to comply with the objectives of the study. This current study on CSF for project planning in ID projects takes the following format as represented below:

Figure 1: the study format

Chapter 1- Introduction: In this part of the study, the problem statement is analysed through conceptual and theoretical reviews to ascertain a research gap in recent literature. The research questions, objectives, significance, scope and limitations and structure are spelt out. Brief highlights of the research methodology and an overview of the study area seal the chapter.

Chapter 2-Theoritical and Conceptual Review: This chapter two covers the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the current investigation. The chapter reviews relevant information focusing on ID initiatives effectiveness and CSFs of project planning. The literature search then includes key concepts such as; projects, project management, project planning, project success, success criteria, critical success factors and ID projects. A proposed framework for further studies concludes discussions in the chapter

Chapter 3-Research methodology: This chapter outlines the philosophical underpinnings and ontology of a qualitative research, qualitative case study design, research approach, sampling techniques, qualitative data collection procedures, consideration for interview guide, transcribing process, as well as strategies for validating findings.

Chapter 4-research findings and discussions: In this chapter, qualitative empirical findings and discussions of the empirical data collected following the method used are presented. It goes further to disclose the research findings, based on comparison with forgone inquiries, establish trends, patterns and relationships found in the foregone chapters. This chapter also suggests a new conceptual framework for CSF of Project planning for ID projects.

Chapter 5-Conclusion and Recommendations: To demonstrate that perhaps the results have complied with the goals outlined earlier in the study, a conclusion is reached by analyzing the key results of the research in regard to the study's topic and purposes. The study summery drawn on the additions and limitations to practice and theory of the inquiry. The chapter is sealed by giving recommendations for future inquiry.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL MODELS

2.1 Introduction

This part of the enquiry explores literature to validate the study's major themes. All deliberations are centred on ID projects success *(see fig. 2 below).* The chapter focuses on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for ID projects success. It aims to analyse the objectivity and validity of other people's work in order to contribute to the ongoing discussion over the effectiveness of ID undertakings. The term success is difficult to grasp. Project management professionals have yet to accept the elements and criteria that influence success. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) emphasizes efficiency. Efficiency and effectiveness are terms used in the aid industry to describe project performance (Ika et al., 2009).

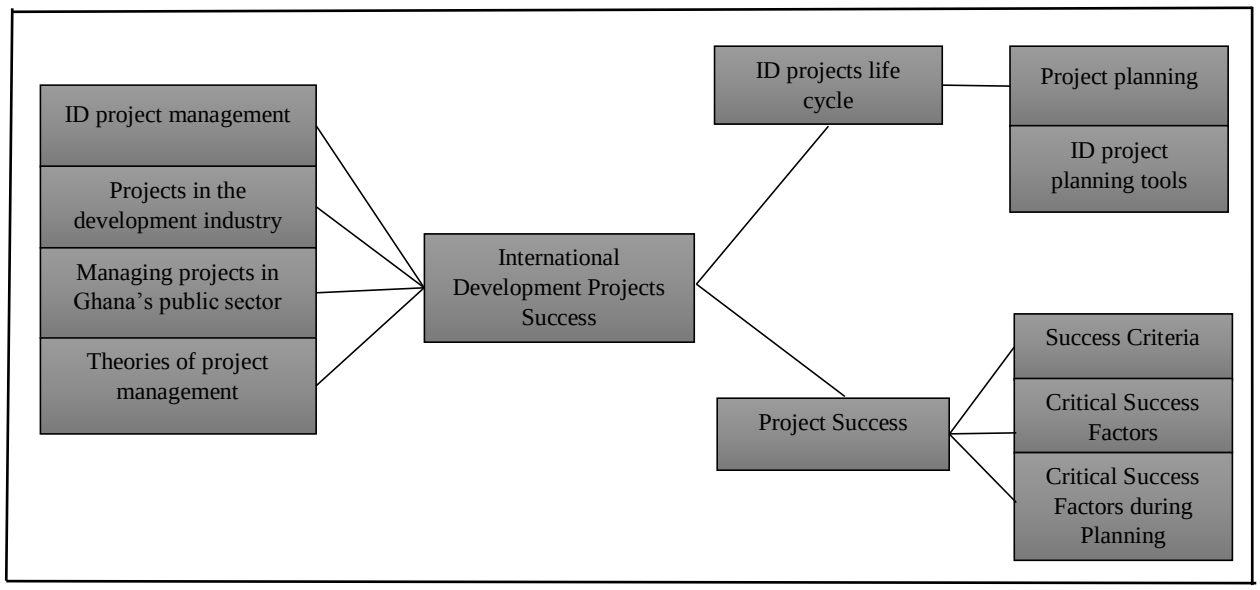

Figure 2: Proposed theoretical framework for the study

Source: Field Survey (2024)

2.2. International Development Project Management

Having a demonstrable history, PM has rapidly spread for decades, gaining academic and practitioner attention to appropriately handle projects (Whitty & Maylor, 2009). This could be due to the current business tendency of managing businesses through projects. Its reach has expanded to cover consumer products, information technology (IT), governance, development, and non-governmental organizations. It is used by various international organizations and developing countries like Ghana as a means of advancing a spectrum of goals in terms of social and economic growth. To some writers (Lazima & Coyle, 2019; PMI, 2017), PM is linked to project effectiveness. They assert that it is the strategies, methods, competencies, and rules used to guide an initiative to an accomplishment. The success of a project is a fundamental component of every organization, and the success of ID project management is a fascinating topic from both a scientific and practical aspect (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018).

International development projects are unique kind of endeavor involving social and economic aid giving to emerging regions or a sub-set of target recipients. They are public-sector initiatives supported by multilateral development institutions, bilateral systems (USAID, DFID, CIDA), government agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Ika & Hodgson, 2014; Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010). They are given in the form of concessionary loans, grants, or technical services given by NGOs or the governments of the emerging regions (Khang & Moe, 2008). These governments may develop policies and programs to ensure that these grants and loans for ID are only utilized to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This means that ID project funding and efforts should adhere to the SDG ideals. All UN members and the world's top development

organizations have supported the SDGs, which have been grouped into seventeen in all, seeking to lower poverty rates and promote sustainable development for everybody (UN DESA, 2022).

Heeks and Stanforth (2014) revealed that ID projects are essential to international development (ID), especially human development. According to Ahsan and Gunawan (2010), ID initiatives are public sector development projects or programs that are typically funded by a donor to address the social and economic requirements of developing nations. Given that some ID projects are transnational private-public partnerships, there are murky issues (Ika & Hodgson, 2014). Ika and Hodgson (2014) state that ID projects work in nearly every sector imaginable, including infrastructure, agriculture utilities, transportation, water, energy, electricity, mines, sewage, nutrition, health, education, population and urban development, reform and governance, social development, education, and the environment. Ika et al. (2010), held the view that the majority of the aid industry operates as a project-oriented enterprise that employs projects as crucial means of providing ID help. Humanitarian aids deal with immediate and urgent problems, while ID initiatives work in a more stable environment to facilitate a longer-term development process (Golini & Landoni, 2014); yet, of late, the lines between the two have blurred (Wu, 2016). Development-related organizations manage initiatives that transform the world (PM4NGOs, 2017), and policy makers have chosen to use these projects as tools (Ika et al., 2012). An ID intervention can initiate development even though it cannot control it (Ika & Donnelly, 2017). As a result, knowledge about these interventions is multidisciplinary and incorporates both project management and ID (development studies) expertise. ID is commonly used as a catch-all word for research and development practices (Horner, 2017)

that attempt to address major international disparities (Horner & Hulme, 2017). Development studies have adopted "inter-disciplinary," "multi-disciplinary," or "cross-disciplinary" methodologies due to the variety and complexity of issues that developing nations face (Currie-Alder et al., 2014).

Economics has dominated development studies compared to other disciplines, despite the fact that studies from a variety of subjects, such as geography, have demonstrated their importance to the understanding of the development process (Harriss, 2002). (Currie-Alder et al., 2014). Although specialization promotes the development of endogenous theories, complex societal issues are typically left unaddressed (Davies et al., 2018).

The complexity of ID initiatives is explained by factors including project objectives, stakeholders, financial arrangements, and environment. First, because an ID project attempts to raise population wealth and its details are frequently reliant on political decisions, it is seen as both a social and political endeavour (Diallo & Thuillier, 2004). As a result, project objectives and results may be ethereal (Golini et al., 2018; Yalegama et al., 2016), which might be interpreted as deviating from the typical project characteristics (i.e., non-development projects like commercial projects). Second, compared to traditional projects, the stakeholders involved in ID interventions are more diverse. According to Diallo and Thuillier (2004), the steering committee, project team, beneficiaries, task manager, national supervisor, project coordinator, and the general public are among the parties involved in World Bank programs.

Moreover, it should be mentioned that in the framework of international cooperation, through bilateral or multilateral contacts, donors or agencies finance ID projects (Bayiley & Teklu, 2016; Diallo & Thuillier, 2004, 2005; Hermano et al., 2013; Ika & Donnelly,

2017). The project becomes more complex due to the varied perspectives created by the stakeholders' disparate cultures and values (Landoni & Corti, 2011). They answer to a variety of stakeholders in terms of design, and the sponsor is usually not the one that benefits from the initiative. In addition, the context of ID projects is distinct and characterized by divisions among actors in the areas of politics, society, law, economy, culture, and geography in addition to organizational and technical difficulties (Hermano et al., 2013; Ika & Donnelly, 2017). IDPs face additional difficulties due to developing nations' inadequate infrastructure and lack of resources (Landoni & Corti, 2011). ID projects may thus have to deal with more difficult problems in order to succeed.

International development initiatives are distinct from business or manufacturing projects in numerous key respects, and understanding these differences has a significant impact on how they are managed and appraised. They primarily deal with human development challenges, social reforms, and poverty alleviation (Khang & Moe, 2008). The socio-economical, natural, and governmental context underlying their mission and targets is sensitive. They are created and carried out in emergent environments that constantly test project related predictions (Boakye & Liu, 2015). Since ID projects do not seek profit, their methods are not profit-driven (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Boakye & Liu, 2015; Ika & Hodgson, 2014).

2.2.1. Project in the Development Industry

The idea that a project leads to a sustainable effort put forth to create an original product or service as well as project objectives have both been made part of the definition of a project (PMI, 2017). The term temporary suggests that the project has a predetermined closing date, while unique denotes the good or service stands out from all others of a similar

nature (Duncan, 1996; Cooke-Davies 2001), implying that no two projects are identical. This uniqueness separates projects from their surroundings to focus entirely on completing tasks (PM4Dev, 2020). It is not unusual to see projects running nonstop to finish all of the tasks and activities stated in the log-frame while ignoring minor changes in their environment.

Project managers must think about projects in this context (PM4Dev, 2020) and collaborate closely with a wide range of stakeholders with whom they have informal ties in order to succeed (PM4NGOS, 2010). In contrast to conventional projects, ID projects work in a complicated environment with a diverse and distinct group of complex stakeholders (Diallo & Thuillier, 2004), and these stakeholders' perspectives often differ due to national values and culture (for example, a different sense of time) (Muriithi & Crawford, 2003).

Turner (1993) emphasizes the triple constraints variables of time, cost, and scope in his most widely cited study, "What are projects and project management." A project, according to Turner (1993, p13), is "an endeavor in which human, material, and financial resources are organized in a novel way to undertake a unique scope of work consisting of given specifications with cost and time constraints, in order to achieve beneficial change defined by quantitative and qualitative objectives." Marchewka et al (2006) point out that, this definition encompasses the three key triple constraint variables of scope, cost, and time *(see fig 3 below)*, and suggests the triple constraint as a critical project management concept that serves as the foundation for undertaking a project and provides guidance for framing it. It is vital to the monitoring and control process group since it is one of the key building blocks of the project plan (Marchewka et. al, 2006).

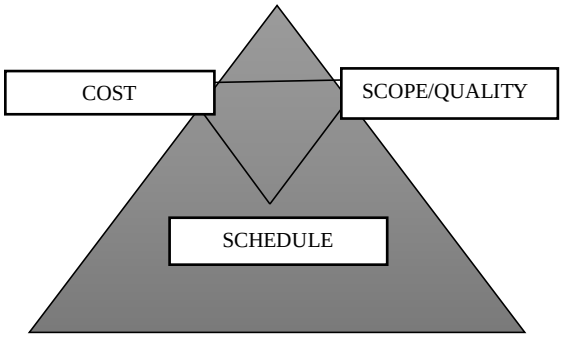

Figure 3: Project constraint variables

Source: PM4NGOS (2010)

The 'iron triangle' of cost, time, and quality (Atkinson, 1999) or, more recently, the 'triple constraints' of time, scope, and cost reveals the relationship between PM and project success (Catanio et al., 2013). It is an excellent technique to establish the connection between these three requirements (Lazima & Coyle, 2019; Pollack et al., 2018). The triple constraints are considered a limitation since modifying one requirement, such as project duration, can cause the other two requirements to suffer. Failure of one constraint may have an impact on the other two (Lazima & Coyle, 2019; Mokoena et al., 2013), affecting project success. As a result, project managers in ID projects are frequently forced to make trade-offs between requirements in order to obtain the intended results (Lazima & Coyle, 2019). There is a notion that even if all other project management tasks are given adequate attention, failing to keep these limitations (Triple constraints) under rigorous control may result in project failure. In fact, majority of project management literature claims that project management has three key goals: a project must be completed on time, on budget, and according to quality or performance criteria (De Wit, 1988). Contrary to popular belief,

Garrod (2021) postulated a New Triple Constraints (NTC) variable of planning, stakeholder, and uncertainty.

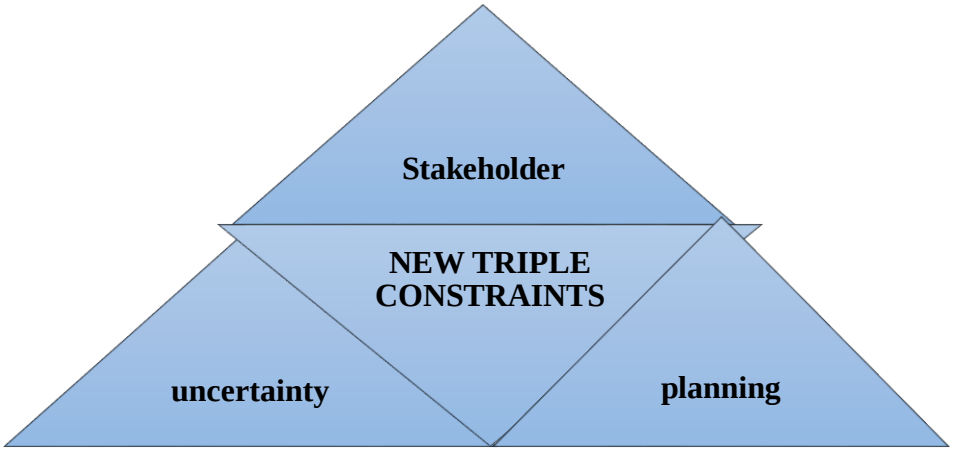

Figure 4: the New Triple Constraint

Source: Garrod (2021*)*

The three primary project constraint variables in this study, as in the literature, are scope, time, and cost but according to Garrod (2021), time has forced an update in the triple constraint variables ever since PMI recognized the need to change project domains. The new triple restrictions put forth by Garrod (2021) must include planning since it aims to manage stakeholder problems and remove uncertainty (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018). Project Management is effective management of uncertainty including quality planning, coordination, attainment of goals, implementing change and working to directly manage unpredictability (Atkinson, Crawford & Ward, 2006).

The triple constraints are divided into three categories: *Inflexibility* - shows that the constraint is important and must be limited. *Adaptability* – suggests that the limitation is negotiable, but that it should be minimized as much as feasible. *May surrender* – a

constraint that allows for trade-offs managing the inflexible constraint while maximizing the adaptive constraint. By discussing the classification of each of the limits, the project manager can engage in talks with project stakeholders (who are crucial components of Garrod's) to plan a discourse and lead a debate on identifying objectives. It is vital to establish and agree on this priority trade-off with all stakeholders early on in the project (PM4NGOS, 2013).

The application of knowledge, skills, tools, and procedures to achieve project requirements is what the Project Management Institute (PMI) defines as project management (PMI, 2008). Although project management's scholarly and professional applications have expanded, they still require development and upgrading (Winter et al., 2006). Many project management tools and strategies were developed to improve project management, according to several academics (White & Fortune, 2002; Morris, 2010; Besner & Hobbs, 2006). Others, however, think that organizations like PMI, the Association for Project Management (APM), the International Project Management Association (IPMA), and others have created various tools to help with the standardization and application of project management practices (Montes-Guerra et al., 2015). Furthermore, a variety of knowledge bases containing best practices, recommendations, and standards are developing to enhance project management (Morris et al., 2006). Despite the fact that project management was mostly used for software and engineering projects, research indicates that recipient nations of foreign aid have expressed interest in using project management techniques for development projects (Ika et al., 2010).

Various researchers examined the most widely used project management methodologies, such as the balanced scorecard (Barclay, 2008; Milis & Mercken, 2004; Stewart, 2001),

earned value analysis (Anbari, 2003; Cioffi, 2006; Plaza & Turetken, 2009), critical path method (Conde, 2009), and logical framework (Baccarini, 18 1999; Couillard et al., 2009; Crawford & Bryce, 2003). Montes-Guerra et al. (2015) claim that employing project management tools and procedures combines crucial components that, when used correctly, can affect the project's outcomes. According to a number of academics and my review of the literature, project success is still a complicated and arbitrary concept that depends on the various perspectives of the people involved. A project may succeed for some people while failing for others (Montes-Guerra et al., Scholars such as Baccarini (1999) and De Wit (1998) distinguish between the accomplishment of project goals and the effectiveness of project management. While Lim and Mohamed (1999) introduce two possible perspectives on project success, the macro-level success is concerned with the project's eventual operation, functions, and long-term gains, while the micro-level success is focused on the traditional triangle of whether the project is completed on schedule, within budget, and meets quality specifications (Ogunlana, 2010).

Cooke-Davies (2002) defines project success factors as the inputs to the management system that support the project and which contribute to project success. He distinguishes between project success criteria and project success factors as the measurements by which the project's success or failure is measured. Cooke-Davies (2002) and Ogunlana (2010) both agree that the metrics that make up the success criteria are sometimes called key performance indicators, or KPIs. According to the British Association for Project Management, meeting the needs of project stakeholders is a necessary component of project success, and it should be evaluated using a predetermined set of standards that were decided upon before project 19 was put into action (Yamin & Sim, 2016).

Subsequently, Ika (2009) provided a more thorough definition, stating that project success is attained through effectiveness and efficiency. Ika (2009) also defined project success as hexagonal, encompassing cost, time, quality, realization of strategic objectives, and satisfaction of stakeholders and end beneficiaries. Along the same lines, a more modern definition of project success according to the Project Management Institute (2013) is the accomplishment of a project within predetermined parameters such scope, time, quality, cost, and resources. Within the context of this study, project success is defined as meeting end users' and important stakeholders' expectations while completing the project's goals within predetermined time, money, and quality restrictions.

2.2.2 Managing Development Projects in Ghana's Public Sector

Ghana government is devoted to improving the success of ID projects and programs in order to fulfil its strategic goals and provide services to its people. As a result, PM concept has gained traction and appeal as a practical strategy for attaining project success in many developing nations, including Ghana. The country recently gave this prominence a boost by explicitly referencing and recognizing the title "project manager" in the procurement Act of 2003 (Act 663) (Ahadzie, Kissi, & Adjei-Kumi, 2012).

Recently, the international group, PM for Non-Governmental Organizations (PM4ngos) published The Project Management Development Pro 1 (PMDPro1), a project management knowledge book focusing on development projects, which says project management is using resources to plan, coordinate and ensure that certain initiatives goals, outcomes, and outputs are met. The ISS initiatives' organization, planning, documentation, and resource management at the assembly level ultimately are applied by encouraging best project

management practices to meet their targeted outcomes across all selected districts in Ghana. The major problem of the ISS development projects management is how to meet all of their objectives, outcomes, and outputs by including the five PM principles in their design, planning and implementation (PM4NGOS, 2013) while maintaining balance between the triple constraints' variables (Mejillano et al.,2007).

Table 1: The five principles of project management

P1	**Project Management is Balanced**: Projects should be managed in a balanced way, applying equal rigor through all of the phases of the life of the project.
P2	**Project Management (PM) is Comprehensive**: PM disciplines should be applied to manage consistently and deliberately all the work of the project through the entire life of the project.
P3	**Project Management is integrated:** All aspects of PM should be aligned and coordinated as means to ensure that all elements of the project design, planning, monitoring and implementation run smoothly
P4	**Project Management is Participatory**: include a variety of stakeholders in the identification, design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project helps to ensure transparency, improve quality, increase human capacity and strengthen buy-ins at all levels.
P5	**Project management is iterative:** revisit and repeat project management process through the life of the project to confirm that the project designs, project plans and intended results are still relevant. This practice also provides the opportunity to improve their accuracy of existing project estimates and to plan for the next steps in the project.

Source: PM4NgOs (2013)

The emphasis on efficient and effective project management and implementation when transforming Ghana's public sector for productivity ensures that projects are finished on time, within budget, and to the highest possible standards of quality. At every stage of

planning, execution, monitoring, and evaluation, the PM processes will be implemented. In order to improve management of projects for better and quicker results, project management should be one of the focus areas in Ghana's public sector transformation (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018). Consequently, projects should be managed using proper and proven PM tools and techniques in Ghana.

2.2.3 Theories of Project Management

Back to the 1960s, PM came up as a new scientific subject (Kerzner, 1987). Back then, projects were big, self-contained endeavours that took months or years to complete. Their rate of complexity was frequently rising, necessitating a cost estimate. In fact, much effort was expended to meticulously plan operations and then manage project implementation in accordance with previous predictions (Kerzner, 2013; Wyrozebski & Spalek, 2014). Traditional project management (TPM) has dominated project management thinking since then.

2.2.3.1 Traditional Project Management Theory

Traditional project management arose from the late 1950s development of the Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT), Critical Path Method (CPM), as well as the founding of the PM Institute (PMI) in 1969. Since then, TPM has developed a number of project management tools, including: the Earned Value Technique – EVT, work-breakdown structures – WBS (Zhang, Wang, & Zhan, 2013), Gantt charts (Spalek, 2014; Eppinger, 2001), Microsoft Project (MSP), and comprehensive budgeting (Goh & Hall, 2013). Furthermore, in managerial project practice, the triple constraint theory dominated (Spalek, 2014; Basu, 2014).

Strict contracts, predictability, control, planning, and the linear project life cycle are some critical TPM factors (Saynish, 2010). It assumes that the tasks to be performed are predictable and cannot be revisited once ended. It focuses on the importance of project planning and the basics of the project contract, which outline the entire project life cycle with the presumption that the entire project can be planned from the outset to remove any recurring risks (Wysocki, 2006; Ward et al., 2008). A well-written contract, according to TPM, is the foundation for a successful ID project. It determines the scope, sets the regulations, and frames the project. The project is planned to emerge directly from the donor-recipient agreement. In other words, the contract determines the project course, and changing it is not an option (Wysocki, 2006). It is often viewed as waterfall *(see fig.8 below).*

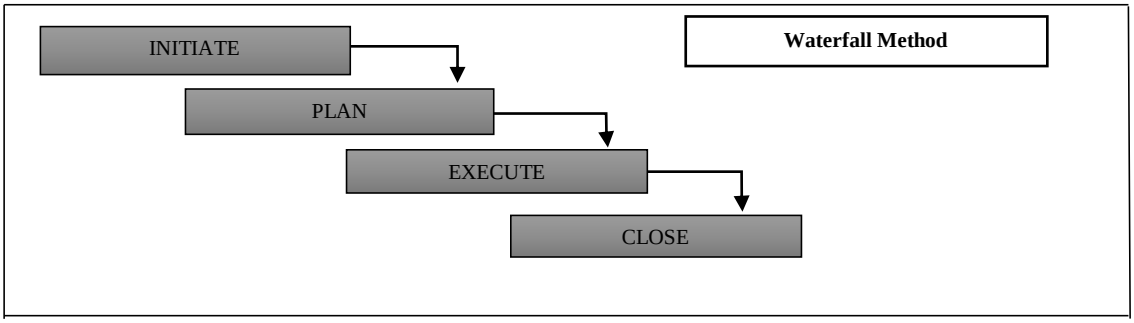

Figure 5: Waterfall project management method
Source: Retrieved from softwareadvice.com (2022)

It is a well-known theory in the project management literature, but it has been criticized in recent years for failing to keep up with the rapidly changing and ever more flexible project environment (Hass, 2007; Fernandez & Fernandez, 2008; Koskela & Howel, 2002; Williams, 2005; Saynish, 2010), and for being insufficient to counteract the repercussions

that are confronting organizations today (Hass, 2007; Fernandez & Fernandez, 2008; Spalek, 2014).

2.2.3.2 Agile Project Management theory (APM)

In 2001, the Agile Manifesto was proposed, and Agile Project Management (APM) was founded (Erickson, Lyytinen & Siau, 2005). This APM tendency started in the software development business and has recently gained traction in other industries (Conforto, Salum, Amaral, da Silva & de Almeida, 2014) especially the ID sector. APM was created in favour of more efficient, effective, and adaptive methodologies as a revolution against TPM approaches which are based on waterfall procedures, (Cobb, 2011). APM according to the Agile manifesto is the method of stress adaptability in the presence of constant change, which includes iterative development, incremental delivery, cross-functional teams, quick feedback loops, and dynamic requirements (Beck et al., 2001; Cobb, 2011; Silveira & Silva, 2015). APM culture consist of seven distinct factors that are vital for ID organizations and managers as the illustration below indicates.

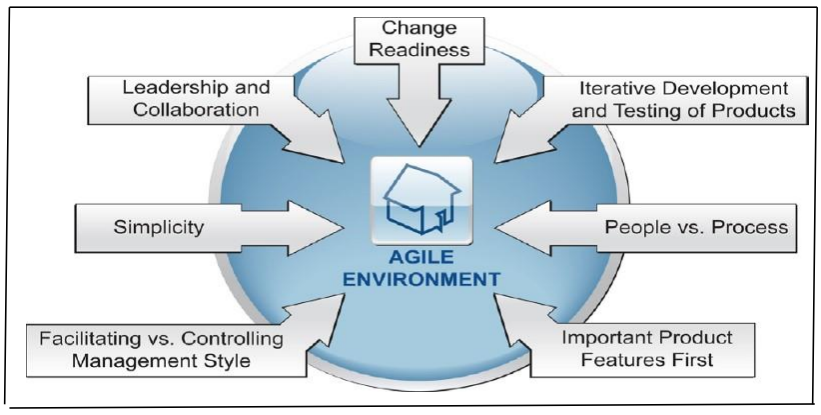

Figure 6: Agile culture

Source: Nee (2011)

APM includes numerous quick iterative planning and development processes, enabling the ID manager and team to continuously monitor and assess the challenges that are occurring as well as the strategies being implemented at each new step. The ID projects environment, in which PM approaches are frequently incompatible with difficult socio-political issues, literature has demonstrated the importance of APM. The concept of agile may define a more comprehensive organizational strategy. When tackling recurrent problems in ID project planning, CSFs such as selective flexibility, learning, ownership, communication, client consultation, leadership and collaboration, and adaptability to unforeseen objectives (Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018) have been identified for this study.

Agile approaches allow ID businesses to be adaptable in their planning, quick to react to risks and opportunities, and quick to act in response to input with the goal of keeping the attention on desired outcomes (Beck et al., 2001). Agile techniques focus on on-going planning and preparedness to accept change either constructively or responsively and to be enlightened from this change at the same time preserving equilibrium and control, which increases the so-called relevance of the product for the client (Sheffield & Lemétayer, 2013).

This study lends credence to the claim that agile theory is appropriate for ID projects planning since those projects' unique qualities align with it. The study will then propose a hybrid approach for planning ID projects that combines both classic and agile methodologies.

2.2.4 International Development Projects Lifecycle

International development projects, same as other projects, provide goods and services; they are limited, temporary and unique endeavours that pass-through project life cycle

(Sladjana & Iztok, 2019; Ika & Donnelly, 2017). However, each project has its life cycle according to the organisation. These project life cycles depict the logical sequence of tasks that project managers conduct from the start to finish in order to ensure project success (PM4ngos, 2013). Even though Biggs & Smith (2003) identify five progressive phases in their study which include initiation, planning, implementation, monitoring, and closure, the PM4Dev (2020) consists of six phases as presented in figure seven below.

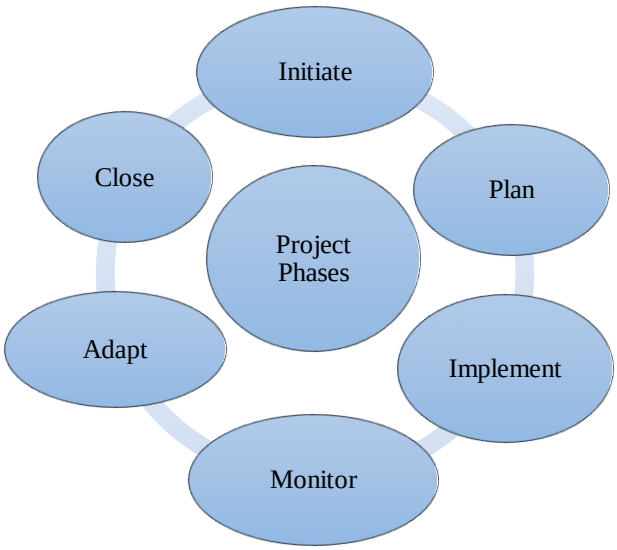

Figure 7: Project Management Phases

Source: PM4Dev (2020)

The above project phases are connected cyclically rather than sequentially. It is best to think of each step as part of an on-going management effort where the outputs from one phase serve as the inputs for the next. The monitoring phase updates the operational and planning stages of any review and discussions until there are no more updates and all project deliverables are completed (PM4Dev, 2020). Project management stages can be useful for the work being done on this current topic because each of the initiative's life

cycle stages consist of CSFs which vary in how important each is to the project success. The current investigator gives the reader a clear picture of the ID project life cycle in order to keep coherence with the project work's focus on the planning phase because this research is not entirely focused on all project phases. The objective is to investigate planning-related success factors that can improve understanding of ID projects success.

2.2.4.1 Project Planning

This study's scope covers project planning related CSFs. Project planning is the process of establishing specific project activities in accordance with the project charter and available resources. It entails determining the project scope, developing a project management strategy, and scheduling the project activities and timeframe (PMI, 2004). It is a continuous process that requires periodic revision when relevant data emerge that necessitate a modification in the plan (Rosa, et al., 2016; Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018) as a result of client demands and as a team tutorial mode for the project implementation (Heaton, Skok & Kovela, 2016; Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018). According to traditional methods, a fully prepared project plan allows PM to foresee all critical factors that can influence the project success, identify all potential hazards, and precisely estimate project costs. The hypothesis is based on the assumption that the future is predictable. (Wysocki, 2006).

However, many researchers concur that a project is a unique set of activities, a one-of-a-kind task that has never been carried out before. As a result, it is challenging, if not inconceivable, to predict exactly what activities must be completed so as to finish the initiative, as well as their time and cost required indicators, during the initial planning stage (Dvir et al., 2003).

The issue is made worse when the kinds of activities that are to be carried out are chosen based on the results of earlier efforts. As a result, people may believe that planning is not always advantageous and or wanted (Andersen, 1996; Dvir et al., 2003). This is because an unexpected change may negatively impact the project without being the fault of the project team instead of being the result of poor planning process (Wysocki, 2006). Thus, according to Andersen (1995), the conventional planning approach should be substituted with milestone planning (Andersen et al., 1995; Turner, 1993), where a milestone is a target that needs to be achieved. Because a milestone describes what must be accomplished but not the way it ought to be done, it emphasizes achievement-oriented thinking instead of action cognition (Dvir et al., 2003).

It has been suggested that formal control should be kept to a minimum since excessive formal control obstructs innovation from playing a crucial role in project implementation (Dvir et al., 2003). Even if we agree with this claim and keep planning to a minimum, this does not take away from the role that planning plays in lowering project uncertainties and difficulties and ensuring a project's successful completion (Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018). Deciding which tasks to do in order to meet the project's goals. This entails establishing realistic deadlines and timetables, allocating resources to complete the task, and, most all, making sure that everyone is aware of the action plan (Pierce, 2013). As soon as a project is initiated, the planning phase starts. The process of getting ready, which involves making strategies to guide the project team through the upcoming phases of the work, is also crucial. The plans created at this stage will be based on the objectives, parameters, schedule, and other previously determined factors. Every project needs a project plan in order to succeed (Kerzner, 2013).

The project plan can be modified as often as necessary and serves as a roadmap for the duration of the project. The client and the project team will use the project plan as a template to determine performance (Kerzner, 2013). A thorough planning helps with time, money, transitional process management, risk management, and quality control concerns. This results in the proper management of the staff and external stakeholders overseeing the timely completion of projects (Serrador, 2012). Efficacious endeavors possess distinct yet integrated strategies for many elements. It is necessary to create, for instance, a general project plan, resource plans, financial plans, quality plans, risk plans, communication plans, acceptance plans, and procurement plans (Serrador, 2012). Creating project plans is a difficult task, and not all project managers are able to complete them. Nonetheless, comprehensive planning is required for project performance (Serrador, 2012).

According to Dvir et al. (2003), there are three stages of project planning. The first is at the end user level, where planning is primarily concerned with the functional aspects of the project's final output. The technical level comes next, where the team working on the project has to develop the product and offers the technical specifications required to meet the functional requirements. Finally, organizing the tasks and procedures to be completed in order to enable the technical work to be completed successfully is the main focus at the project management level.

As stated by Bell (2001), 30% of the global economy is expected to be project-focused, while 70% of these undertakings end in failure. Given that worrying statistic, we must define success in order to carry out the project. From Zilicus Solutions (2012), a work plan of an undertaking embodies the objectives and specifications of the endeavor, encompassing the project's scope, timetable, resource requirements, cost estimate, quality,

and risk management. Project managers can create Job Breakdown Structures (WBS), Task Lists, Gantt charts, Asset Allocation, and Risk Registers, among other tools, while preparing projects. The Difficulties of Project Scheduling There are many obstacles that engineers, contractors, and project managers must overcome in order to accomplish successful and efficient project planning. The majority of these obstacles are described in further detail below. The results of empirical research are also included. This presents a challenge in and of itself because it is hard to plan properly due to the unpredictable nature of environmental conditions. There are many different planning strategies for construction projects, and planning is a technical process. Because of this, it is frequently challenging for project managers to come to a consensus over the tactics and techniques that would provide the most value for project plans.

To mention a few, they can select from a time-chainage chart, line of balance, network analysis, and Gantt chart. Selecting from this group can be difficult for a novice project manager. Risk, baseline cost-performance, organizational, and environmental factors are a few examples of the factors that can affect the program's prospective quality. Low-quality project outcomes are the result of low-quality plans. These kinds of projects could run over budget and miss their completion dates. This is a serious issue since it may make the business case as a whole less compelling. Stakeholder unhappiness could result from this as well (Dvir et al., 2003).

Numerous factors can also have an impact on the project planning process. Project planning techniques, for example, might have an impact on the planning process. On the other side, another important tool for project planning results is the type of organization managing the project. The results of project planning are also influenced by human or personal aspects.

According to Dvir et al. (2003), the source and implementation phases are when major decisions are taken, like determining the project's objectives and organizing its execution, and they have the biggest impact on how well the project goes.

Munns and Bjeirmi (1996) noted three problematic sections that can jeopardize the advancement of a project. They are overspending, underbudget, and delayed delivery. They came to the conclusion that project planning is crucial to solving these issues. These comprise, among other things, project plans, client information sheets, and frameworks for the task breakdown. In their work in Oman's construction industry, Al Nasseri and Aulin (2016) identified the following as the main barriers to a project's successful preparation: unclear instructions; inadequate support from project stakeholders for the creation of plans and schedules; poor judgment regarding the criticality of operation;

Lack of a backup schedule; a basic reporting and control structure among management tiers; a curriculum and planning and scheduling preparation that is not resource-constrained to meet issues of uncertainty; preparatory tactics' inconsistency with the work schedule's design (i.e., complexity and magnitude); Lack of modern planning and scheduling tools and applications. The construction industry encounters challenges with project planning due to inadequate scope definitions, imprecise estimates, and missing data. Since these are fundamental assumptions for the planning stage, the quality of project plans is negatively impacted by missing data or unreliable estimates.

Tesfaye, Lemma, Berhan, and Beshah (2017) view these problems as project planning risks instead. Whatever the term or description, these elements have the potential to reduce the project planning phase's efficacy. The absence of clear objectives in construction projects

is another major issue. Stakeholders frequently lack clarity about their goals and may refuse to cooperate. Still, when a project manager doesn't know what the priorities are, it's hard to plan and carry out the work. The absence of clear objectives may cause reach to change along the route. This is referred to as scope creep, and it is a well-known problem in project management since it can cause projects to run longer than necessary.

2.2.4.1.1 Project planning Tools/Approaches/Methods

The degree of socio-political uncertainties of ID projects considered to different sectors (Ika & Hodgson, 2014), instead of a one-size-fits-all ethos, it is essential to tailor PM methodology to the requirements set for specific ID initiatives (Ika, 2012; Lazima & Coyle, 2019). The project proposal document is written during the preparation, assessment, and approval phase, using tools like the Logical Framework (LF), a classic ID project management tool that can help with the planning process, especially for process projects (Ika et al., 2009). The LF emphasizes the relevance of higher-level significance, external factors, and monitoring and evaluation information demands for the changing process of inputs into outputs, as well as a quick overview of project objectives (Ika et al., 2009; Baccarini, 1999; Gasper, 2000; Crawford & Bryce, 2003). It can be linked back to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) from the early 1970s (Lazima & Coyle, 2019), as well as to Aristotle's hierarchical notion of "four causes"; down to top: the resources, the formal, the efficient, and the complete (Ika et al., 2009; Bell, 2000). In fact, it is currently seen as a tool that is integrated into the Project Cycle Management (PCM) strategy (Landoni & Corti, 2011; Lazima & Coyle, 2019).

The LF has been chastised for not following through on its pledges. It has proven difficult to impose the same level of clarity and a shared vision in a public process project because

the LF's origins are in organisational and military settings labelled by strong central influence and control, centred on a clear and dominant orientation (financial profit or military victory or survival) (Ika et al., 2009; Gasper, 2000).

Results-Based Management (RBM), which arises with the new public management or public administration policy implementation literature, is another instrument that is now used in ID project management. It has been regarded as a project management tool (Ika et al., 2009; Lazima & Coyle, 2019), whereas a large ID NGO considers it a designated project strategy (UN Habitat, 2017; Lazima & Coyle, 2019). It is a wide strategic management technique that emphasizes accountability and results-driven management (Binnendijk, 2000).

In another way, United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (2017) described RBM as strategies used to manage findings of UN system organizations by adding previous experiences drawn from practice into management decision-making (UNJIU, 2017; Lazima & Coyle, 2019). The problem with RBM is that it is now too accountability-for-results driven and not enough managing-for-results oriented, therefore it is necessary to solve RBM's and associated instruments like the LF's shortcomings (Ika et al., 2009). Project Management for Development Projects 1 (PMD Pro1) is a method that was recently designed by a non-profit named Project Management for NGOs (PM4NGOs). The PMD Pro 1 was developed in collaboration with Oxfam, World Vision, and Care International among others which are prominent NGOs (PM4NGOs, 2010). PMD Pro 1 conforms to the PMBok (Project Management Body of Knowledge) (Lopez-Paredes, Hermano, Martin-Cruz & Pajares, 2013; PM4NGOs, 2010) but have set parameters to accommodate ID initiatives (Hermano et al., 2013).

The handbook for the PMD Pro1 approach provides excellent guidance specific to incompetent ID initiative managers. It can be seen as the correct method for increasing the performance of ID projects because of its comprehensive data on project management relevant to ID initiatives (Hermano et al., 2013; Lazima & Coyle, 2019). The literature doubts if the LF approach prioritizes the implementation phase processes and difficulties over the planning phase's critical success factors. The PMDPro1 is relevant to this study as it validates all critical success factors identified from the planning stage, leading to more successful ID initiative management strategy and performance (Hermano et al., 2010).

2.3 Project Success

"There are few topics in the field of project management that are frequently discussed and yet so rarely agreed upon as the notion of project success." This quote by Pinto & Slevin (1988, p.67) is still relevant in recent PM practice. The studies of Albert et al. (2017) and Davis (2014) purported, there is no any generally acceptable definition of project success (Lamprou & Vagiona, 2022). Lim & Mohamed (1999) emphasise that project success is seen as the achievement of some predetermined project goals, which frequently include multiple parameters. Project success is determined by the efficiency and effectiveness of the project (Ika et al., 2012). However, project success is a nebulous, multifaceted, and equivocal notion, and its definition and measurement are constrained by a specific environment (Ika et al., 2009). It is customary to seek a simple formula that is unambiguous and easily available (Dvir et al., 1998). This formula is usually the triangle of time, cost, and quality, which are the clients' terms of reference within the aid architecture (Ika et al., 2009).

Projects have frequently been completed on schedule, on budget, and to the greatest quality standards, but later deemed ineffective. Profitable initiatives are also those that go above and beyond their budgets or timelines (Ika et al., 2009). Thus, some stakeholders may see a project as a success whilst others consider it a failure (Lamprou & Vagiona, 2022). As a result of this conundrum, De Wit (1988) proposes that project effectiveness and PM effectiveness be distinguished. The schedule frame and measurement of PM goals are linked to the misunderstanding between project and PM effectiveness (Ika, 2009). In fact, when the project objectives have yet to be met, the subject of project success is frequently brought up at the end of the PM process (Ika et al., 2009).

Project success, in addition to its conceptual ambiguity, is an issue of impression and differing viewpoints, lending credence to the opinion that there is no "absolute" success, only "perceived" success (Ika et al., 2009). At different periods, project success implies different things to different stakeholders. For each stakeholder, there is a different point of view (Lim & Mohamed, 1999; Davis, 2017). The differing viewpoint of project success is expressed by Freeman & Beale (1992, p.8):

> ‘‘Success means different things for different people. An architect may consider success in terms of aesthetic appearance, an engineer in terms of technical competence, and a human resources manager in terms of employee satisfaction.’’

In an ideal world, the project would end in a win-win situation for all parties involved, but reality is harsh, and it is natural to wonder if we are looking at the forest or the trees when we celebrate project success (Lim & Mohamed, 1999).

2.3.1 Project Success Criteria (SC) in ID projects

Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability are the five DAC criteria for determining project success (OECD, 2002). The degree to which the initiative is appropriate for the target group, beneficiary, and funder is referred to as relevance. The positive and bad changes that the project causes, whether they are deliberate or unintended, are referred to as impact. The term "sustainability" refers to whether the project's benefits will persist after donor funding is no longer available (Ika et al., 2009/2012). The Success Criteria (SC) and Critical Success Factors (CSFs) are widely recognized as two essential components of project success. The SCs are used to measure project performance and provide either rules or guidelines for determining project success (Alashwal et al., 2017), whereas the CSFs can help projects succeed in different ways (Ika, 2009; Judgev & Muller, 2012; Lim & Mohamed, 1999; Turner, 2009). The importance put on the key project criteria, such as cost, time, quality, performance, or safety, can lead to differences in project success criteria (Lester, 2021).

Despite the paucity of PM research on ID projects, Diallo & Thuillier (2004) provide a ten-dimension framework for analysing the perspectives of African development project coordinators (NPCs) on project success. Diallo & Thuillier (2004) provide 10 success criteria divided into three categories *(see fig 8 below)*: PM success (objectives, time and budget), Project Success/Impact (satisfaction of beneficiaries with goods and services delivered, impact on beneficiaries, and institutional capacity for the country), and Profile (conformity of the goods and services delivered to the project plan, national visibility of the project, project reputation among donors, and probability of traditional funding, if necessary) (Ika et al., 2009/2012).

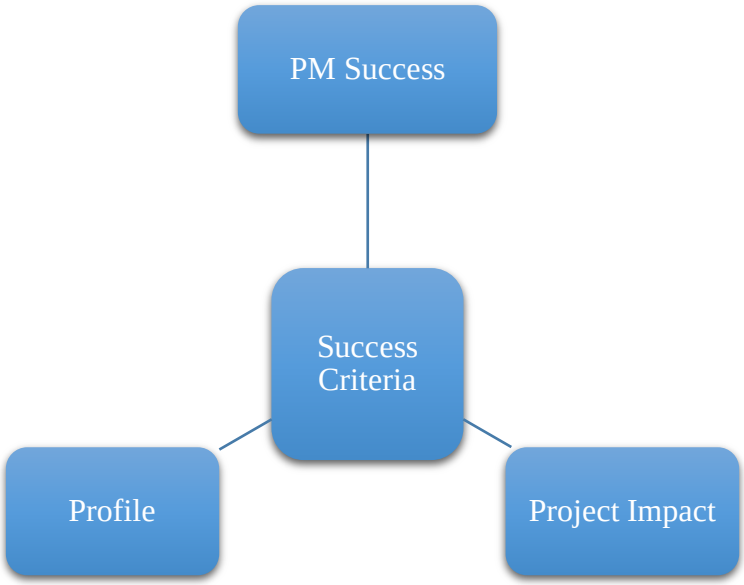

Figure 8: the three broad categories of Project Success Criteria
Source: Diallo & Thuillier (2004)

The success criteria are used in this current study to assess international development project performance in the Ghanaian public sector and provide the guidelines for determining critical success factors during project planning that can improve understanding in ID project success.

2.3.2 Critical Success Factors

Since the late 1960s, according to Cooke-Davis (2002), researchers have been trying to figure out what characteristics are critical to project success. As a result, a survey of the literature on CSFs reveals a variety of definitions. One of the most widely recognized CSF definitions is that of Rockart (1979) quoted in Amberg et al, (2005).

"…the limited number of areas in which results, if they are satisfactory, will ensure successful competitive performance for the organization".

The CSF identified in one organization may or may not be applicable to all other organizations. Rather, each organization must tailor their CSFs to meet their own unique goals and requirements. This is where the final factor, separating between perceived and true CSF, comes into play. The concept of perceived versus actual CSF, first presented by Ellegard & Grunert (1993), could have practical consequences by providing light on the awareness of disparities between actual and perceived CSF. For example, having greater experience in this subject could lead to more stable strategy formulations and executions (Amberg et al., 2005). Although actual CSF cannot be measured, Dess & Robinson (1984) imply that key decision makers will be confronted with these considerations more frequently. Decision makers may gain insight into their perceptions of both actually CSFs and those merely viewed as ones by doing so (Amberg et al., 2005).

Project management success factors, according to Radujkovi & Sjekavica (2017), are divided into three (3) categories or elements: project management competency, organizational competence, and project management methodologies, methods, tools, and techniques (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018). Project management (PM) competency is divided into two categories: project manager and project team competence, with projects requiring technical, behavioural, and contextual skills. The second category, organization, is made up of the structure of the organization, the culture of the organization, the atmosphere of the organization, and the competency of the organization (Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018).

The third group includes project management methodology, software and tools, decision-making procedures, risk-assessment tools, and support tools. Rosazlina & Hassan (2018)

use project management success factor classification structure on three projects, and three (3) future PM advancements are indicated, including PM competence education, project relationship and parent organization, and the value of PM methodologies, methods, tools, and techniques. Finally, the proposed classification of PM success methodology and characteristics are consistent with current project patterns (Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018).

2.4 Empirical Review

2.4.1. Critical success factors of international development project planning

The study examined critical success factors (CSFs) from the standpoint of project planning related to ID projects in the Ghanaian public sector. The primary foundation of project planning is the minimization of uncertainty (Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018). There is minimal evidence in contemporary research that focuses on ID project planning. Three (3) studies are used by Rosazlina and Hassan (2018) to identify several CSFs linked to project planning in the IT industry. First, a study by Tesfaye et al., (2016) looks at four (4) planning elements: human, managerial, technical, and organizational, and found a link between the planning input factors and knowledge areas (cost, time, scope, risk, quality, communication, human resources, and integration) (Tesfaye et al., 2016).

The findings show that human factors, such as the project manager and project team, have a detrimental impact on cost, time, and risk. Human component, on the other hand, is inextricably linked to procurement and integration. The results are particularly high in connection to risk, communication, and integration when it comes to technical factors. Time, scope, and procurement are all influenced by organizational considerations. Management, on the other hand, has an impact on scope, cost, and communication. In

comparison to other studies, this one show that cost and risk lead to project success (Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018).

Second, Laird's (2016) research discovers and emphasizes organizational factors that have a direct effect on project planning in small IT projects (Laird's, 2016). His study discovers that the project's mission, top management support, project schedule/plans, client consultation, personnel, technical task, client agreement, monitoring and feedback, communication, and trouble-shooting all have a strong positive link with project success (Laird's, 2016). His research also gathers information on the extent and efficacy of planning in major projects involving paperwork such as project management plans, project scope, requirements, design specifications, work breakdown structures, project quality management plans, and communication management plan, risk management plan and procurement management plan (Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018).

Serrador (2013) noted that the impact of the planning phase on project success varies across industries. He points out that the earlier errors are found the lower the cost of fixing them especially in software development projects. According to the researcher, the amount of time spent correcting and reworking is substantially lower in the early stages compared to the latter stages. The Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is a critical planning deliverable as well as an important planning tool for software project success (Rosazlina & Hassan, 2018; Serrador, 2013).

The findings from past research reveal comparable factors connected to project planning using multiple terminologies (see table 1 below). These variables are based on three (3) studies by Radujkovi & Sjekavica (2017) on project planning and adapt terminologies on project management success factors breakdown structures.

Table 2: CSFs Terminologies in Project Planning

Author	Factor of Project Planning	Terminologies
E. Tesfaye et al. (2016)	Human factor Management factor Technical factor Organization factor	Project Management Competence (Project Manager/Project Team) Project Management Methodologies, tools and techniques Organization competence
D. J. Laird (2016)	Scope document and quality document plan, Project schedule/plans, Mission of project, Support of top management Monitoring and feedback, Client consultation, personnel, Client agreement, Communication and troubleshooting, Technical task,	Project documentation Organization competence Project management Methodologies, tools and techniques
P. Serrador (2013)	WBS	Methodologies, tools and techniques

Adapted From Radujkovi & Sjekavica (2017)

Ika (2015) revealed that ID projects effectiveness in tackling challenges related to human development have lasted for years. The efficiency of ID initiatives can be examined from two angles: macroeconomically, in relation to macroeconomic metrics like economic growth and poverty reduction, and micro economically, in relation to particular or individual project objectives (Denizer et al., 2013). While the microeconomic perspective

is pertinent to projects and project management, the macroeconomic perspective is the purview of ID economists (Ika, 2015). (Ika et al., 2011). Due to their high failure rate, the effectiveness of ID projects and the programs' effects on human development are in doubt (Golini & Landoni, 2014; Tabbasum, 2015; Ika, 2015).

Numerous pieces of evidence suggest that, after 40 years of development assistance, the program has not been as successful as anticipated (Doucouliagos & Paldam, 2009). On the other hand, empirical research by Mishra and Newhouse (2009) and Gyimah-Brempong (2015) demonstrated that health relief has a major influence on human growth. There has been discussion over the disparity between the macro and micro perspectives on the efficacy of ID: macroeconomic data are depressing, whereas microeconomic data indicate positive outcomes (Tabbasum, 2015).

One of the main goals of PM is project effectiveness (Ika, 2009). Project managers should grasp the notion of project success since it sets performance standards that enable projects to achieve their desired performance goals. But the concept of project success is not always clear-cut (Davis, 2016; Millhollan & Kaarst-Brown, 2016); it can sometimes be dependent on subjective judgments (Lim & Mohamed, 1999) and be difficult to define (Baccarini, 1999; Pinto & Slevin, 1988). Success elements and success criteria are frequently covered in research on project success (Ika, 2009). Success factors are a collection of events, situations, or influences that lead to success, whereas success criteria are a set of guidelines or standards for evaluating success (Lim & Mohamed, 1999).

Success factors are those characteristics that correlate with higher rankings on whichever success criterion is being utilized in a given study, and success criteria refer to the manner in which project success has been measured in the current literature, followed by a review.

The inability to come to a consensus on an exhaustive set of project success indicators has led to challenges and unsuccessful attempts to define and assess success (Han et al., 2011). On the other hand, more successful project evaluation results from organizing crucial success variables and outlining how they affect project execution (Belassi & Tukel, 1996). Thus, for the purpose of analyzing project success or failure, it is crucial to create a quantifiable and meaningful construct of project success (Narrainen, 2017) and comprehend project success elements (De Wit, 1988). It should be highlighted, however, that no one definition of project success can meet the needs of every project participant (Shokri-Ghasabeh & Kavoousi-Chabok, 2009).

The success of ID projects has been questioned because to their complex nature and disputed effectiveness, particularly when it comes to defining success. To answer this question, a review of the literature that summarizes the research that has been done on IDP success factors and criteria is appropriate. In the topic of project management, a lot of literature studies have been done, especially on the success of commercial projects.

It is noteworthy that comprehensive literature evaluations in the field of ID have looked at the efficacy and impact of development and humanitarian interventions (Mallett et al., 2012; Peters, Lockwood, et al., 2015; Peters, Godfrey, et al., 2015). Nevertheless, no studies of the literature that particularly examine the success of ID projects have been found. So, completing a review of the literature on ID project success would close this gap. This study aims to investigate project success factors (the different ways that success has been operationalized from the idea of the effectiveness of ID initiatives) and project success criteria (the different ways that the concept has been operationalized). It also suggests valuable conversations between parts of the literature that are primarily housed in different

disciplines, particularly on project management and ID. Furthermore, by enhancing comprehension of related ideas, the review may contribute to the discussion on the efficacy of ID initiatives. Finally, by helping to provide practitioners with recommendations on how to successfully apply ID projects, this study will also help.

2.4.2 Challenges of International Development Project Planning Success

Many times, when time passes and new demands arise that call for a change in scope or a departure from the original plan, even the project scope is negatively impacted. All project stakeholders should be involved in planning to ensure support and agreement on specifications and scope. The project execution, which includes ongoing monitoring and control over all project aspects, is closely linked to the planning stage. This is especially true for long-term, expensive projects like infrastructure and development, where mistakes can have equally severe, long-lasting consequences that typically have some socioeconomic ramifications. Effective project monitoring, control, and evaluation during implementation increases the project success rate. Projects that are abandoned before they are finished are typically referred to as "project failures" (Pinto & Mantel, 1990).

The conventional definition, based on the 'Iron Triangle' baseline provided by Atkinson (1999), does not take into account the success or failure of initiatives that go beyond the parameters of money, duration, and scope. Numerous authors (Kappelman et al., 2006; El Emama & Koru, 2008) have come to the conclusion that projects should only be evaluated based on their ability to meet their budget, schedule, and quality standards. Nonetheless, in contrast to the traditional notion of project success and current advancements in ID projects management techniques, the impact and post-delivery phases are being prioritized more.

Scholars and practitioners have recognized the different stakeholders involved in ID initiatives, which has led to this tendency.

Daniel and Ibrahim (2019) suggest that a project is deemed unsuccessful if its objectives are not achieved, even if its budget and timeline align. Furthermore, fulfilling deadlines, financial constraints, and performance standards is not the only thing that makes a project successful (Baker et al., 2008). Therefore, the post-delivery phase should also be taken into consideration when evaluating the success or failure of ID projects, in addition to cost, schedule, and scope. The only goal of ID project is to effect the desired change in the community in question. As a result, the "triple constraints" should not be used to determine the success or failure of these programs; rather, their effectiveness should be assessed according to their impact and results, the real changes they make to the target communities, and—above all—their sustainability. Researchers have become interested in the rising rate of project failure, especially in developing economies (Damoah & Kumi, 2018).

Research shows that even in organizations with years of experience carrying out and assessing development initiatives, the rate of failure for aid projects is quite high. After evaluating 1324 Asian Development Bank projects and 3821 World Bank-managed projects, Bulman, Kolkma, and Kraay (2015) came to the conclusion that nearly half of these projects had not been able to yield the expected project outcomes. Comparably, 39 percent of programs fail according to an impartial Evaluation Group (IEG) impartial appraisal of World Bank development initiatives (Chauvet et al., 2010). Various factors, including economic, political, geographical, sociocultural, historical, demographic, and environmental ones, might have a negative impact on the success of ID projects (Moyo, 2009). Inappropriate project design, poor project planning, and insufficient

project implementation processes are additional important ID project failure reasons (Eja & Ramegowda, 2019; Arifuddin, 2016). Additionally, a human-related aspect that adds to the ID initiatives not succeeding is inadequate capacity and a shortage of qualified human resources (Arifuddin, 2016).

Critical project failure reasons also include limited administrative capacity, inadequate monitoring and supervision, political decisions and meddling (Eja & Ramegowda, 2019; Damoah & Kumi, 2018), and low administrative capability. Ika (2012) discusses four traps and three problem areas that affect ID initiative success in developing nations. The three areas of concern, in his opinion, are managerial/organizational, institutional/sustainability, and structural/contextual. However, the four traps that cause ID projects to fail are the one-size-fits-all trap, the accountability-for-results trap, the lack-of-project management-capacity trap, and the culture trap (Ika, 2012).

Government and development project failure in Africa is reportedly attributed to a number of significant factors, including corruption, inadequate project design, political interference, inept oversight and direction, and regular changes to the scope of the undertaking (Eja & Ramegowda, 2019; Damoah & Kumi, 2018). ID projects generally face a number of serious issues that are unavoidable due to their intricate situation and the larger environment in which they operate. The scope and goals of the material that is currently available on the causes of ID project failure in developing nations differ. They are by their very nature contradictory and boring. Furthermore, it is difficult to agree on a narrow range of variables as the exclusive causes of ID project failure.

Many international development projects in developing nations fail to finish for a variety of reasons, one of which is a lack of awareness on the importance of appropriate monitoring

and evaluation. According to Callistus and Clinton (2016), project monitoring and assessment are essential components of enhancing project performance. When contractors used fictitious photos to mislead the US Department of Defence about the status of warehouse construction and supplied materials in violation of the contract, a nine-million-dollar contract in Afghanistan was at risk due to a lack of an efficient monitoring system (Glass Jr, 2019). Furthermore, the team's devotion is essential to the project success. The team demonstrates their commitment to the project success when they value it highly and give it enough time and attention. However, given the enormous number of stakeholders involved in ID projects, project success is contingent not only on the dedication of the project team but also on the commitment of other stakeholders. Conversely, inadequate oversight in development projects leads to disagreements, worse output, anxiety, and strained collaborations.

Ghana faces numerous technical and non-technical project management issues as a developing nation. First and foremost, there is a paucity of empirical research on the effectiveness of project management in Ghana, which leaves no record of best practices. Second, while projects in general have difficulties in their implementation and, hence, in their success, development projects in particular face a distinct set of issues and difficulties. For instance, both governmental and non-governmental organizations face major challenges due to Ghana's unique project funding structure. Donors fund development programs to such an extent that they are now called development partners, a testament to how reliant Ghana's growth is on their assistance (Ofori, 2006). There are conditions attached to this financial support that impact the project from the pre-planning phase to the end of the project life cycle. The experience is that donor interests frequently put a spanner

in the works, leading to delays in implementation, changes in scope, and occasionally an abrupt cancellation of a project. This is in addition to projects that reflect the donor's thematic area rather than meeting a development need of the expected beneficiaries.

Moreover, Project management is frequently negatively impacted by cultural issues with respect, deference, hierarchy, taboos, and other aversions (Awuah, 2008). These challenges with project management have an effect on the general success and caliber of projects in Ghana. Cultural concerns are the least understood but most harmful within the context of global development endeavors (Ofori, 2006). Knowing culture is the beginning point for learning the meaning of development [management], the values that guide people's actions, and the behaviour of administrators (Ofori, 2006).

In the study of Staudt (1991), cultural variations can be found in a wide range of development contexts, including presumptions, project designs, technology transfer, and managerial approaches. As a result of recipient nations lacking the necessary technical or management capabilities, many finance institutions in international development projects mandate that recipient nations hire foreign consultants to help with project planning and implementation. The multinational consultants may not be conversant with local resources, come from a different sociocultural background than the beneficiaries, and are used to different engineering and project management methodologies.

Conflicts of interest, increased pressure on executives, and irritation result from this, which hinders or obstructs project progress and frequently results in missed opportunities, misdirected development efforts, project cost overruns, and timetable delays. Once the project objectives are not culturally aligned with the local knowledge and understanding, the intended beneficiaries may reject it. To ensure that project objectives align with the

values and customs of the beneficiaries, the project manager must consider cultural variables such as traditions, values, customs, and beliefs throughout the project design phase. Only then can these projects be successful. The use of technology is covered by technical components, which include design, engineering, procurement, construction, equipment installation, equipment operation, and equipment compatibility with project objectives.

International development initiatives are situated in poor nations with low productivity of human capital and insufficient technical and management capabilities. In order to ensure that project design standards, specifications, and construction methods are appropriate for the local resources; material, human, and financial necessary for the project development as well as its ongoing functioning, great attention must be taken in their selection. "The abuse of public office for private gain" is how the World Bank defines corruption. In foreign development initiatives, political meddling is unavoidable and is often accompanied by a lack of transparency, regulatory institutions, bribery, and corruption, all of which led to an inefficient use of development resources. The foundation of corruption is the use of illegal influence to demand higher prices in exchange for receiving or giving a project developer preferential treatment when an agreement is made. These expenses are included by the project developer in the project development budget.

Sánchez and Schneider (2023) declare that up to 75% of projects fail before they are put into action. Regardless of the size, nature, or industry in which they are executed, projects typically fail to be implemented. Ensuring commercial activities is the main purpose of any project. Sánchez and Schneider (2023) verify this as well. They go on to say that another

important aspect of the project is that commercial activities will enable improved resource redistribution to help reach the aim. Sánchez and Schneider (2023) contend that initiatives serve as an instrument for carrying out corporate strategy. If there's no label for a project success, it is hard to know why it fails.

Another typical reason why projects fail is ineffective communication amongst project participants. According to these writers, the projects receive little sponsorship as well. They spell down exactly who owns what and what authority the project manager has. The three project imperatives—cost, quality, and time—were used to investigate project success from the outset of project management. Effective project management has enabled the achievement of the intended outcome. The addition of an efficiency indicator today determines whether the project objectives have been reached and whether stakeholders and clients are happy with the outcome (Bulman et al., 2015). The project manager, the company as a whole, its organization and culture, its technology, or its business procedures are the most common causes of project failure. Bulman et al. (2015) claim that people (the project team) are responsible for 20% of project failures; technology is responsible for less than 10% of failures. Businesses who put money into training their employees are more successful and effective in the marketplace, and they also accomplish their goals more effectively. Bulman et al. (2015) declare that contented workers with the necessary training and experience are essential to a company's growth.

Talent management is also crucial since it is a major factor in both competitiveness and superior business outcomes (Bulman et al., 2015). Thus, diminishing talent presents business managers with more hurdles than budgetary ones. Even in organizations with years of experience conducting and assessing development initiatives, the failure rate of

aid projects is very high. After evaluating 1324 Asian Development Bank projects and 3821 World Bank-managed projects, Bulman et al. (2015) came to the conclusion that nearly half of these projects had not been able to yield the expected project outcomes.

In the study of Chauvet et al (2010), there is a 39 percent project failure rate in another independent assessment of World Bank development initiatives. In a similar vein, almost 40% of World Bank-managed development projects in Afghanistan from 2010 to 2019 are rated as inadequate or extremely inadequate. Furthermore, a recent SIGAR report to Congress indicates that U.S.-funded reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan are failing and resulting in millions of dollars of losses (Sopko, 2015). According to a different SIGAR analysis, a sizeable portion of the $104 billion provided for humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan may have gone into questionable initiatives (Pager, 2015).

Furthermore, an examination of all SIGAR inspection reports covering USAID rehabilitation projects in Afghanistan from 2009 to 2017 reveals that not all development projects have been finished in accordance with the technical specifications and project requirements (Laber, 2018). Researchers are examining the reasons for ID projects failure in developing nations due to the rising percentage of development project failure (Yamin & Sim, 2016). A few major project failure factors mentioned in the literature are: political decisions and political interference (Eja & Ramegowda, 2019; Damoah & Kumi, 2018); inappropriate project design and ineffective project planning (Eja & Ramegowda, 2019); inadequate project implementation procedures (Rondinelli, 1979); low capacity and the lack of skilled human resources (Arifuddin, 2016); low administrative capacity and inadequate monitoring and supervision (Damoah & Kumi, 2018). It is clear that the culture, politics, economy, and environment of the host nation can have an impact on the success

or failure of internally displaced people in developing nations, in addition to the previously mentioned elements. International development projects have received very little attention, despite the fact that extensive research has been done in the field of general project management (Khang & Moe, 2008: Ika et al., 2010).

2.4.3 Prospects of International Development Project in View of Critical Success Framework

The existing body of literature pertaining to the assessment of building projects performance indicates that the conventional criteria of time, cost, and quality have primarily been employed for this purpose (Kamrul & Indra, 2010). For many projects, using these three dimensions is still seen as a good practice; but, for other projects, it may compromise certain significant project objectives. These criteria have been criticized for failing to fully address all facets of performance measurement (Gardiner, 2000), being tied to one another (Shenhar et al., 2002), being inflexible in how projects are evaluated for performance (Bassioni et al., 2004), and having a short-term focus (Shenhar, 2001). Thus, in order to overcome limitations of the traditional performance evaluation criteria, Barclay and Osei-Bryson (2010) argued that project performance measurement criterion of construction projects should consider diversity and both technical and social needs of the project.

Project management researchers suggested the incorporation of additional measures of performance into the traditional performance metrics for evaluating the performance of large construction projects. These include safety of the project site (Tabish and Jha, 2011),

environmental impact (Eriksson and Westerberg, 2011) and community satisfaction (Shao and Müller, 2011). However, these additional criteria have hardly been utilized in evaluating the performance of large construction projects since the focus of both the funding agency and implementing body is to achieve success on the traditional three dimensions of performance.

The literature on project management is full of CSFs and other success variables that have the ability to significantly impact many aspects of the assessment of large-scale building initiatives. It is not practical nor wise to spend resources on this enormous number of success variables. Therefore, to guarantee the success of a big construction project, its CSFs must be developed using particular KPIs, and resources must be allocated to those CSFs in accordance with those KPIs. Large construction projects performance is typically assessed using the three conventional KPIs. Numerous success factors also have an impact on these KPIs. Success factors including project features, procurement system, project team performance, client and contractor characteristics, and design all have an impact on project time and cost performance team characteristics and external conditions (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010).

In addition, development projects must determine other success factors based on the environmental impact, site disputes, and safety KPIs. The quantity and frequency of fatalities, crashes, and occurrences, emergency response times, and other factors are key variables that impact safety performance measures. Tabish and Jha (2011) state that the following factors affect the performance criterion for site disputes: a thorough understanding and definition of owners; regular oversight and feedback from top management; effective communication between all project participants and the parties

affected; availability of sufficient resources; and prompt decision-making by top management.

Samaruskas and Turskis (2006), revealed that inefficient use of energy, air and water emissions, incineration and recycling processes, incapacity to use renewable materials in construction, and subpar construction techniques are the main factors that have been found to have a negative impact on the environment. The success of ID projects will be largely dependent on effective project management practices, which include the tools, techniques, and methodologies used in their management and execution, especially in developing nations. Due to their proven efficacy in project execution and adaptability in accomplishing the projects' aims and objectives, ID projects administering agencies, including implementing partners, employ several project management techniques. Project cycle management and its fundamental instrument, the Logical Framework, are used by the majority of international development communities to plan, carry out, monitor, and evaluate ID interventions.

Project management is defined as the planning, organizing, monitoring, and control of all aspects of a project and the motivation of all involved to achieve project objectives safely and within defined time, cost, and performance. Project managers need to possess this knowledge in order to ensure the success of projects (PMI, 1996). In order to fulfil project requirements, it also refers to the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities (PMI, 2008). Pinkerton (2003), noted that project management collects and organizes the skills of different people, allowing them to work together to accomplish the project goals and guarantee its success. When evaluating the effectiveness of projects and project management techniques, quality is a crucial component.

Project management rose to prominence in the 1980s as a more effective alternative for delivering development interventions, driven by donor-funded interventions and the demands of stakeholders actively funding the development and restructuring of all sectors of the Ghanaian economy (Ofori & Sakyi, 2006). The public sector and the private not-for-profit sector, which played a leading role in the economy's transformation, improved their ability to accept the development agenda's projectization for more effective and efficient management. Non-profit organizations, also known as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), typically employ a project management methodology to carry out their activities because it is in their best interests to do so.

This is a result of the project constrained scope, the deadlines for implementing development initiatives, the budget, and the resources allotted—all of which are set by funders and donors. Like the majority of developing nations, Ghana has been able to expand its infrastructure thanks to the help of donor partners, projects, and project management. The rehabilitation of elementary schools in different districts, the supply of water and sanitation, the encouragement of agriculture and agribusiness, the building of roads and highways, transportation, and the rural electrification project are only a few of these development initiatives (NDPC, 2005).

Corporate Ghana is using more and more creative project management techniques to accomplish company goals in response to the complex present business climate. This covers everything from the production of goods in the manufacturing, real estate development, and extractive industries to the supply of services like event planning. The difficulties encountered by international development projects persuade is that the industry's current frameworks for project evaluation need to be improved in order to

provide managers and other stakeholders with a more objective and consistent way to evaluate project performance. This can be accomplished by taking into account the project life cycle and assessing each phase's performance according to the results of its activities. The evaluation of the project overall success might then incorporate these incremental wins. Most projects have a life cycle that may be divided into phases that are separated by the technical work being done, the important players involved, the deliverables to be created, and the methods by which these are authorized and regulated (Project Management Institute [PMI], 2004).

2.5. Proposed Conceptual framework for the research study

The construction of a conceptual framework with five (5) components was influenced by the existing literature (see Figure 9 below). The conceptual framework was developed with the intention of examining project planning CSFs that are important to comprehending the success of ID initiatives. There are five (5) success criteria: (I) ID project management competence (ii) ID project manager/project team performance skills, (iii) ID organizational performance, (iv) ID planning methods, tools and techniques, and (v) ID projects documentation.

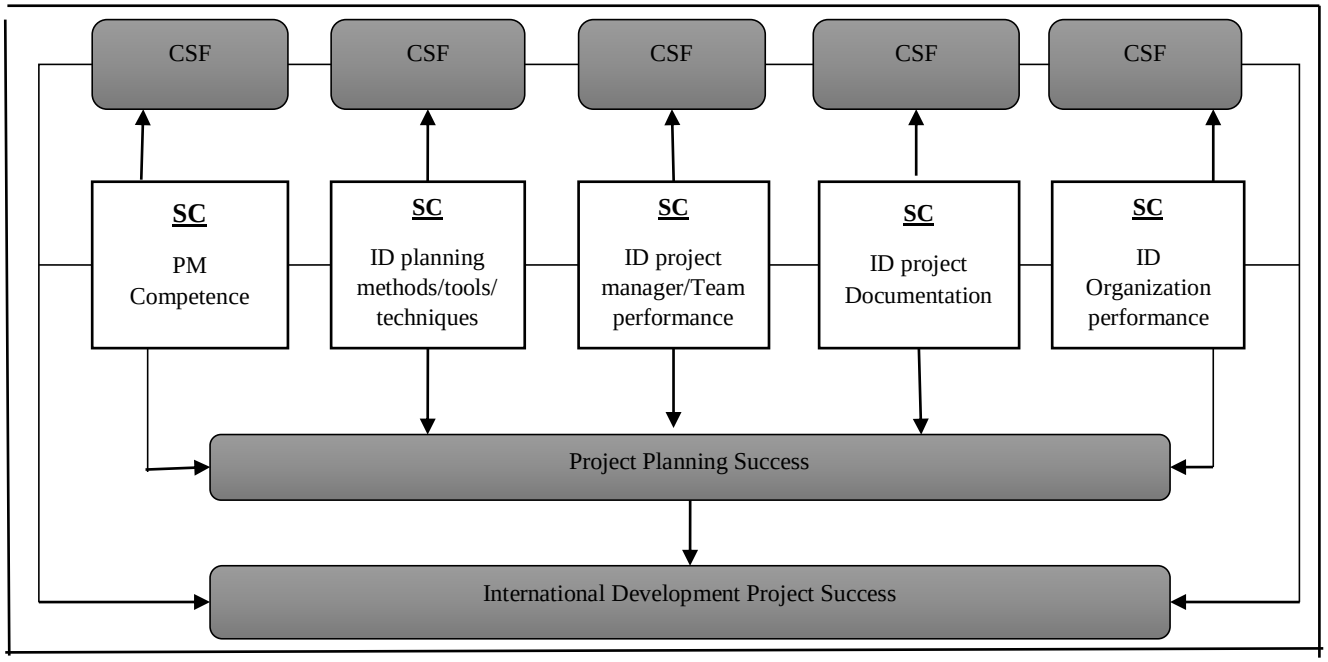

Figure 9: Proposed Conceptual framework for the study

The above framework shows critical planning success variables and project management components that are vital to ID projects management and ultimately to their success as a whole. The framework emphasizes ongoing proper coordination in planning and readiness to accept change in either a positive or responsive way and be enlightened from it while maintaining balance and regulation, which raises the perceived worth of the goods or services for the intended recipients (Sheffield & Lemétayer, 2013). The conceptual framework will be empirically validated in determining the success criteria and factors for planning with an effort to improving understanding of ID projects success.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methods and techniques the investigator employed to investigate the CSFs for ID projects based on project planning are laid out in this section. By maintaining cohesiveness with the layout, research strategy and approach, population and sampling techniques, ethical considerations, as well as in-depth reliability and validity of the research process, and how data is to be collected and analyzed, the chapter talked about the philosophical paradigms that supported the research. This Researcher considered how the philosophical presuppositions affect methodological decisions, research techniques, and tactics when attempting to use a consistent methodology (Saunders et al., 2012; Bryman & Bell, 2011).

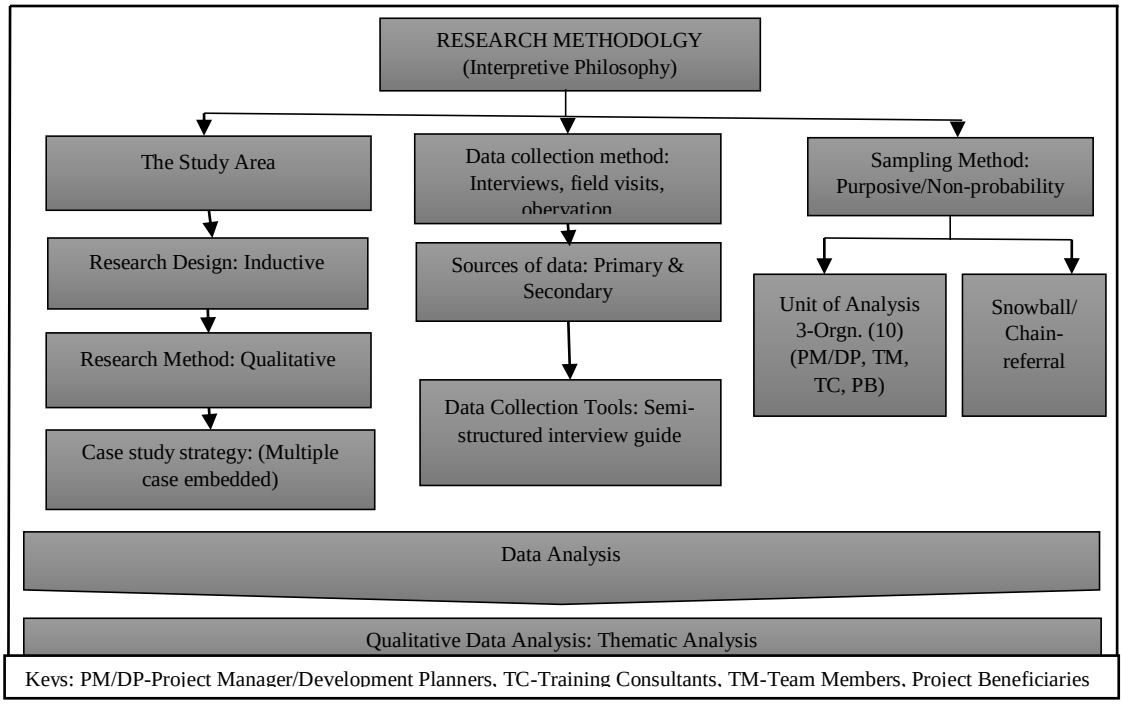

Figure 10: Proposed Research Methodology for the study
Source: field work (2024)

Interpretive, social constructive philosophy: The interpretive process through which humans construct the social world and consequently themselves is promoted by social constructionism (Packer & Goicoechea, 2000). To put it another way, ID projects are in the process of evolving and being revised as a result of social actors' cognitions (Saunders et al., 2012). Reality and knowledge are objective, autonomous, and open to everybody, according to objectivists (Long et al., 2000). This suggests that objects exist separately from social actors in reality (Saunders et al., 2012). That is, ID projects with objectivism have an external reality apart from social players that afford them impartiality. According to Objectivism, supporting ID projects is part of the standard framework that project managers must follow (Hermano et al., 2013). This paradigm emphasizes the structural aspects of ID projects and promotes the idea that all ID projects should be administered the same way**.**

The study asserted that the ontology of ID projects is subjectivism, or social constructionism, in the sense that ID expertise is limited to the perception of the different steps in their development and that the actuality of ID projects is a product of social actors (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). This current research tried to understand the world of ID projects and drew subjective interpretations from the number of viewpoints of participants rather than looking for originality because these subjective interpretations may be varied and numerous (Creswell, 2014). This current study is to improve theoretical and practical understanding of ID projects success focusing on the CSFs for project planning. It used the social constructive views of the participants to analyse their perspectives on ID projects success. With the removal of objectivity in analysis, deletion of social actors' functions and

realization of option in ID projects, and other measures, this will provide a complete grasp of knowledge of the current situation and future prospects of ID project effectiveness (Ghoshal, 2005).

3.2. The Study Area

Numerous socioeconomic growth strategies are pursued by Ghana's successive governments from the 1960s to the present, and as a result, the domestic economy is liberalized and international development projects are supported (Venter, 2005). Ghana, situated on Africa's West Coast, has maritime boundaries with the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Guinea to the south, Burkina Faso to the north, La Cote d'Ivoire to the west, Togo to the east, and Gulf of Guinea to the south (see figure 5 below). With a projected population of 29.6 million in 2018 and 30.4 million in 2020, Ghana has a land area of 238.500 square kilometers (World Bank, 2022). There are sixteen (16) governmental divisions in it, including the Upper West region, which is the focus of the current study.

Wa Municipality's administrative centre is located in the regional capital in the upper west, Wa whose land area is about 6.4% or 579.86 square km. its neighbouring districts to the south, east and west are the Wa-West and Wa-East Districts whilst the Nadowli District neighbours the north making up the legislative limits of the Wa Municipality. The municipality can be found between longitudes 9o32 and 10o20 and latitudes 1o40 and 2o45 (PHC, 2010). As the highest administrative and political authority in Wa, the municipal assembly is to facilitate national policy execution. The Assembly is recognized as the democratic, governing, and executive institute of the municipality in line with Section 10 of the Local Government Act of 426 (1993), (PHC, 2010). Wa Municipality, which comprises seventy-three (73) Unit Committees and adding up five (5) Zonal Councils (Wa,

Busa, Kperisi, Kpongu, and Boli), aims to encourage local participation planning and decision-making (PHC, 2010). Every municipality has a unit committee that advances via the Area/Urban Councils and Assembly to the next level. Currently, there are 44 Assembly members representing the Wa Municipality (40 males and 4 females); two thirds are voted for, while remaining a third being chosen by the head of state in consultation with the community heads (PHC, 2010). The five subcommittees of the municipality that are required include development planning, finance and administration, works, social services, and justice and security (PHC, 2010).

Physical Characteristics

The Wa Municipality sits on the peak of the savannah plains, precisely 160–300 meters over the sea level with mild undulations. Piisi, Dapouha, Boli, Sing, Biihe, and Busa to the south, and Zingu, Kperisi, and Charia to the north are the communities within the municipality that are low lying (PHC, 2010). The Municipality experiences two main seasons in a year; the *Rainy and the Dry seasons*. In the rainy periods, these low-lying valleys become waterlog because they collect and keep water for extended periods of time (PHC, 2010). The Billi and its tributaries to the north and the Sing-Bakpong and its tributaries to the south make up the two major drainage systems in the Wa capital. During the long duration of the dry periods, because the streams are seasonal, they dry up and thus decreasing the quantum of water ready for household purposes as well as for industrial and agricultural use (PHC, 2010).

Geology and Soil

In spite of little rainfall, high evapotranspiration, and scant vegetation, a great deal of the Pre-Cambrian, granite, and metamorphic rocks that underlie the Municipality have endured

weathering less than equivalent rock types elsewhere in the country (PHC, 2010). However, it has been demonstrated that drawing water from boreholes is effective due to the well-developed fracture structures in the rocks. This situation has allowed for the building of the Wa Busa road quarry. Laterites and savannah ochrosols are the two main types of soil. The others are clay from the village of Charia, which makes pottery, and sand from Nakore. The laterite dirt that covers the Municipality in large quantities is excavated for the construction of homes and roads. Conversely, the savannah's shallow ochrosols support the growth of a wide range of crops, such as rice, yams, millet, sorghum, soy beans, and groundnuts (PHC, 2010).

Vegetation

The guinea savannah grassland kind of vegetation, with little trees having little to no canopy and bushes of varying heights and luxuriance, covers the ground with grass during the rainy season. It is usual to find trees like baobab, kapok, shea, and dawadawa. Two foreign species that flourish here are the mango and cashew (PHC, 2010).

Climate

Wa Municipality has two seasons of the year: the rainy and the dry. Rainfall occurs from April to October due to the North-Eastern Trade winds from the Sahara Desert, whereas the lengthy dry season occurs from November to March due to the North-Western Monsoon winds from the Atlantic Ocean. The annual rainfall ranges from 840 to 1400 mm (PHC, 2010). The bulk of the precipitation occurs between June and September, and exceptionally high totals of precipitation are frequently concentrated in a few wet days. Rainfall patterns are typified by a propensity for intense downpours, which encourage

runoff rather than soil moisture retention (PHC, 2010). The erratic rainfall pattern, which is a reflection of the poor soil moisture state in the area, is clearly shown by the water balance. Four humid months have been found based on assessments of soil moisture; nevertheless, this time frame is only appropriate for crops such as beans, guinea corn, yam, millet, and groundnuts. Extended dry spells during the farming season can result from the erratic rainfall patterns, which could have a detrimental effect on crop productivity (PHC, 2010).

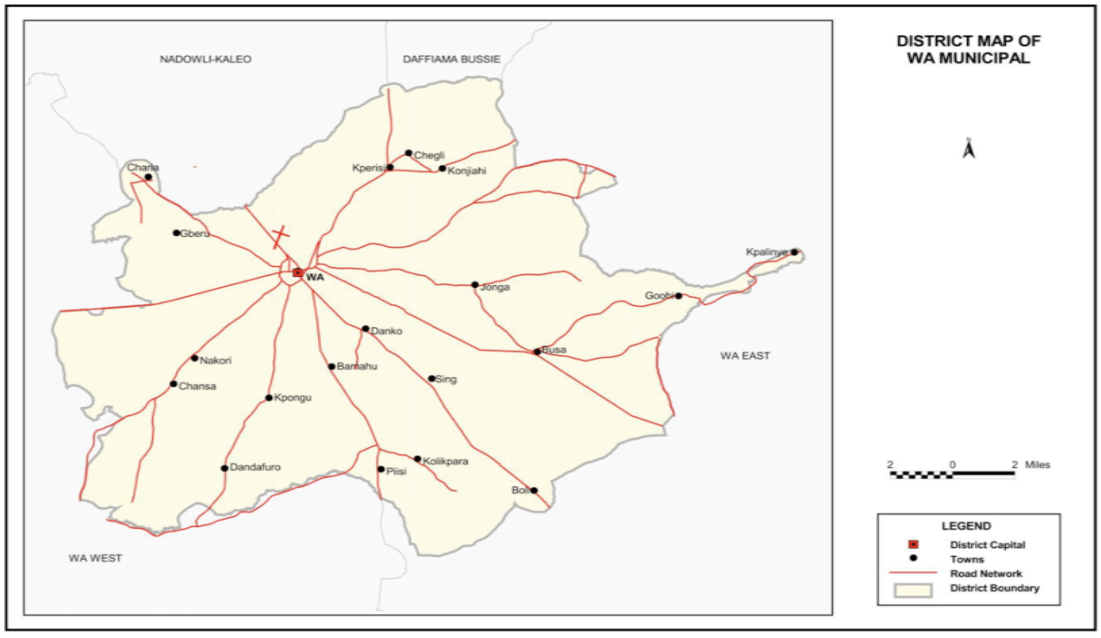

Figure 11: Map of the Republic of Ghana and Upper West

Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2014)

The macroeconomic models of the country have lately been severely strained by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has prevented the country from growing at its projected rate of 7% per year between 2017 and 2019 (World Bank, 2022). Projections also indicate that the poverty rate was slightly higher in 2020 than it was in 2019, at 25.5%. (World Bank, 2022). As a result, the government Integrated Social Services (ISS) program, which aims to improve the delivery of social services throughout the nation by strengthening cross-sectorial cooperation among social welfare, social protection, and health actors, is consequently supported financially and technically by a large number of international development partners *(see fig6 below).* ISS projects aim to assist in addressing multifaceted poverty and vulnerability with a heavy emphasis on encouraging connections between health, child protection, sexual and gender-based violence prevention, and social protection services. The Coordinated Program and the National Medium-Term Development Policy Framework (NMTDPF) for the Years 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 provides the grounds for the initiation of the ISS projects (MLGRD, 2021).

Figure 12: Overview of the ISS program

Source: www.lgs.gov.gh posted on December 23, 2021

The ISS initiative is put into action by sixty (60) MMDAs in sixteen (16) different areas in 2020. In 2021, forty (40) MMDAs joined the project. In 2022, sixty (60) more sign up, and the remaining MMDAs will follow in 2023 (MLGRD, 2021). In order to discover and strengthen cost-effective ways to coordinate services at the decentralized level for the benefit of the most vulnerable populations, UNICEF, USAID, EU, UNDP and IDA have provided technical and financial support to the ISS projects. For instance, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has since 2008 provided financial support for the Livelihood

Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), a component of the ISS program in Ghana. The LEAP program is a social cash transfer program that gives money to low-income households so that the vulnerable and underprivileged can "leap" out of poverty. This program benefits the elderly, orphans, vulnerable children, disabled people who are unable to work, pregnant women, and babies under the age of one year.

Disability Population in WA Municipal

The 2010 PHC Wa Municipal analysis report shows, 2.6% of the Municipality's entire population is estimated to be disabled. In the population, the percentage of men and women with disabilities is equal. The Municipality has disabilities related to sight, hearing, speaking, physical abilities, intelligence, and emotion. The greatest percentage was recorded by those with emotional disabilities (22.8%), followed by those with visual disabilities (18.2%).

On the one hand, compared to metropolitan areas, eye and physical disability are far more common in rural areas. However, compared to rural areas, emotional disabilities are far more common in urban areas. Out of all people with disabilities, 50% work, and 4.7 are unemployed. Approximately 45% of them do not engage in any economic activity. Of them in the Municipality, 41.9% have never gone to school (PHC, 2010). 38,133 Upper West homes are covered by LEAP (MoGCSP, 2018).

Plate 1: LEAP payment cycles in U/W

Source: Dept of Social Welfare, WMA (2022)

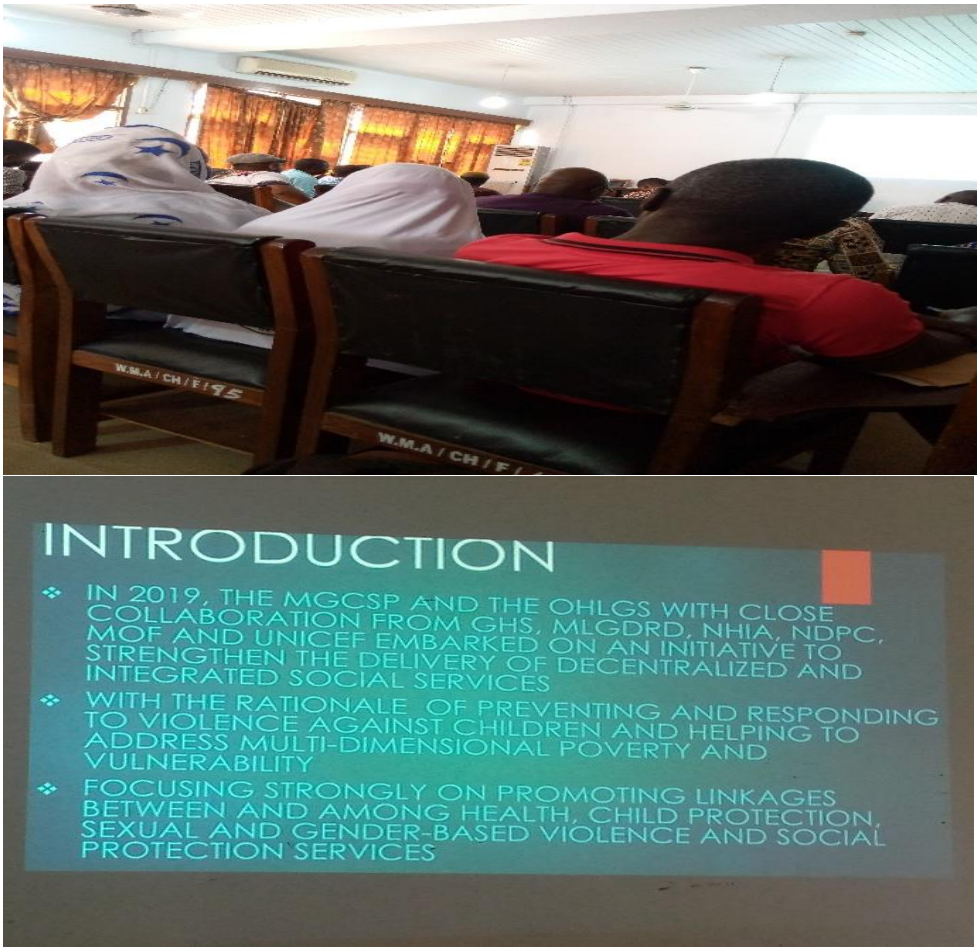

Plate 2: Stakeholder engagement meeting on the ISS projects planning process at the Municipal Hall

Source: field survey (2024)

In an attempt to avert effort redundancy and instead create an ideal system, government makes known which groups are pursuing similar concerns and connects their efforts to pursuing integrated social services to some selected districts and communities. Further inquiries indicate that Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), Ghana Health Service (GHS), National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA), LEAP, Local

Government Service (LGS) are among other government institutions that are genuinely active participants on the ISS program.

3.3. Research Design

3.3.1. Inductive Research Design

An inductive strategy is consistent with the study proposed by this current research because induction is frequently linked to qualitative research (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010). This current study's goal is to address the research question, "How planning-related critical success factors improve understanding of ID projects success in Wa?" The inductive technique in exploratory research is most congruent with the 'how' type of question (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010; Bryman & Bell, 2011; Ormerod, 2010). This approach has come under fire for being illogical and unreliable (Ormerod, 2010).

However, it could be justified using the Integrated Social Services (ISS) delivery projects in Ghana where their complexities and obstacles with which researchers are unfamiliar are similar to those with which they are acquainted (Ho, 1994). In fact, a small sample of ID experts was more suited in this current qualitative study using inductive rather than the deductive technique, (Saunders et al., 2009; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

3.4 Research Method

3.4.1 Qualitative Research Method

To retain continuity with the interpretive philosophy and inductive technique, this study of ID project success used normative case studies that benefited from the diversity of social entities and individuals used in this current qualitative inquiry (Lukka & Kasanen, 1995; Mogarn & SmircIch, 1980).

3.4.1.1 Case Study Strategy

The integrated social services initiatives in the Wa municipality was investigated using a qualitative case study method to support the conceptual underpinnings of this current research. This thesis work is time-bound and activity-based, requiring the researcher to gather comprehensive data on the success of these projects applying different data gathering techniques in a stipulated time (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2009, 2012; Stake, 1995). The case study approach is also quite effective at producing "how?"-related answers. This maintained coherence with the current exploratory study objective on how CSFs for project planning help in the understanding of ID projects success (Saunders et al., 2012; Yin, 2014; Thomas & Myers, 2015; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Considering the ISS projects, information was gathered from experts on the program at various levels in different organizations by using observations or interviews (Key informants) or a mix of them as data collection tools throughout the study (Saunders et al., 2012). As a result, the study considered multiple cases being examined within the ISS program so as to acquire a better knowledge of the phenomenon, population, or general situation of those projects (Punch, 2014; Saunders et al., 2012; Yin, 2003).

Given that the results could hold true for each situation that has been studied, replication was possible (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Hence, in order to generalize from these findings, this researcher ascertained whether the results of the first case was true in later situations. This is why using numerous examples in this study was necessary (Saunders et al., 2009). So, a literal replication was carried out because this researcher expected similar results to be analysed in each situation (Yin, 2003).

3.4.1.1.1 Case Study Limitations and way forward

The current study identified the following drawbacks of the case study methodology and described the steps that should be taken to overcome them.

a. Limited generalizability

The case study approach has been questioned by Thomas & Myers (2015) for its strength of drawing conclusions that are generalizable. Nonetheless, Stenhouse (1978) drew the conclusion that this approach presents a framework to generalize by building up information accumulated in history, significantly assisting the surpassing of case study's generalization limits. The real problem with case studies in this situation is capturing data in a way that allows for later comprehensive review, criticism, and triangulation (Stenhouse, 1980).

This study is not to generalize. However, by making the observational field notes and interview transcripts available, this study sought to avail its findings while also adding to the body of knowledge. Future academics could use the archival records to extend and improve the CSFs for project planning in ID initiatives, which is an exciting option.

b. Conceptual concerns

On the one hand, it is suggested that researchers frequently do not adhere to systematic processes and permit biased perspectives to impact the research and, as a result, impact their findings and conclusions (Lukka & Kasanen, 1995; Gummesson, 2007; Yin, 2009). By depending on the feedback and advice of the research supervisor, this study aimed to prevent influencing results with personal biases. For future use, a full copy of all existing findings, particularly participant encounters and transcribed verbatim, are kept. Another defence against biasness was that the researcher submitted the answers of the participants

and summaries to research subjects for validation. However, it could be recognised that critical thinking skills were articulated to ascertain the biases brought on by observer attachments (Stenhouse, 1980). To combat this, knowledgeable informants in a variety of positions and organizations were chosen, allowing the phenomenon to be examined and comprehended from many angles (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

3.5.0 Sampling Techniques

3.5.1 Purposive Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling is well suited for this current qualitative study. The researcher used the the purposive to reach participants with whom he has professional connections who may recommend other pertinent experts engaged in ID projects.

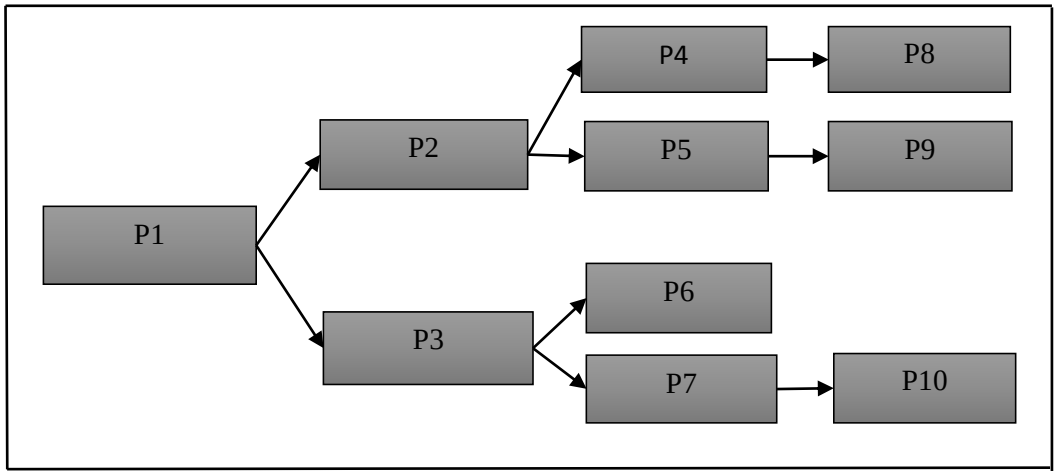

Figure 13: Chain-referral sample method

Source: authors own construct (2022)

The figure (fig.13) above showed how participants were reached out to for the interview process. Even though some participants for this current study were known, there were few to whom the researcher was referred for expert knowledge that contributed significantly to this research. This choice of purposive sampling made possible, the upkeep of impartiality

across the exercise by ensuring a good mix of professional and private boundaries with both colleagues and recommendations (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Palinkas et al., 2015). Through the participants, the researcher combined scholarly and practical viewpoints so as to accomplish theoretical saturation (Guest et al., 2006).

3.5.2 Target population

Organizations selection: The previously indicated sampling technique guided the choice of participating organizations. Using the purposive sampling methodology, this current researcher was able to locate and get access to three (3) organizations engaged in ID projects at various stages. These organisations include; *Unicef Ghana, Wa municipal assembly and the Light Foundation (TLF).* Two requirements have to be met for an organization to be chosen for this study:

- The organization must have expertise working on international development projects; whether through foreign activities or the use of resources with a global reach.
- The organization adheres to project management best practices.

The researcher divided organizations into administrative, execution, and career progression. Administrative level organizations was adequately treated in the sample since they provided the parameters within which participating NGOs and recipient governments operated in the ISS program.

Hence, with a better understanding of the administrative, execution, and career progression level organizations, the researcher elucidated the current constraints on project planning inside ID initiatives. See table 4 below.

Table 3: Categorization of Organizations

Organisation	Background	Context	level
TLF	An Organisation specializing in closely collaborating on sustainable project planning with recipients, aims to increase local economic growth through the use of resources, self-sufficiency, and communal resilience	Global/ Local	Execution
UNICEF	A multinational organization working to eradicate malnutrition, food insecurity, and hunger. Encourages social and economic progress by promoting sustainable management.	Global	Administrative
	A global NGO that promotes social improvement through education, projects in research, social innovation, and culture. Sets project priorities benefitting young people, children, and communities at risk.		
WMA	An organization that Put into practice successful project management practices inside businesses and NGO practice to raise the likelihood that a project will succeed.	Local	Execution

Source: field survey (2024)

3.5.3. Sample size determination

Participants' selection: The participants were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Professional involvement with ID projects, published research in the subject of ID projects, or beneficiaries of ID initiatives.
- Working knowledge of the project management office

The researcher divided participants into project coordinators, team members, training consultants, and beneficiaries based on their primary roles in ID projects. He took into account the participants' prior professional experience to ensure that ID projects could be viewed holistically. A brief overview of each participant is given in Table 5.

Table 4: ID Participants chosen for the Qualitative interview process

Participants' selection for the interview on CSF for project planning in ID projects' success				
RESPONDENT	**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**	**ROLE & LEVEL IN THE SAMPLING**	**INTERVIEW AREA**	**PROPOSED INTERVIEW DURATION**
P1-Proj. Coord.	10 years of focused expertise as a project coordinator in ID initiatives, credit risk analysis, policy consulting, and evaluation.	Administrative (Consultant)	PM competency factors	1:12h
P2-Proj. Coord.	Programs coordinator with extensive expertise in international organizations and development finance institutions.	Administrative (Director)	Organizational performance factors	40min
P3-Consutant	An expert in sustainable development concentrated on initiatives in Upper West-Ghana.	Administrative (Expert)	ID project documentation factors	46min
P4-Prog. officer	Programme officer with experience in project planning and evaluation for ID projects.	Administrative (Proj.Officer)	Organizational performance factors	42min
P5-Proj. Coord.	Project coordinator with vast knowledge in the critical success factors for ID projects planning.	Administrative (Senior project manager)	Project team/Mgr. skill factors	43min
P6-Proj. consultant	Expert in ID project with over 10 years work experience in west Africa specifically northern Ghana.	Administrative (Project coordinator)	Planning methods/tools factors	1:05h
P7-Proj. consultant	Top level practitioner with expertise in development programs for global relief, institutional capacity, and regional guidance.	Execution CEO	Project team/Mgr. skills factors	1hr
P8-KI	Professional with over 10years experience in the design and improvement of community sustainable development.	Execution CEO	PM competency factors	45min

P9-Proj. consultant	Senior lecturer, consultant and publisher of a number of articles on ID project planning that have undergone peer review.	Career Progression (Senior managing)	PM competency/ Project team/Mgr. skill factors/challenges and benefits	40min
P10-Proj. Beneficiary	Beneficiary of ID projects in Wa municipal with vast knowledge in ID project planning	Team member (Beneficiary)	PM competency/ ID project documentation factors/ Benefits/ challenges	1hr

Source: field survey (2024).

3.6. Data Collection Methods

To learn how planning-related crucial success variables enhance the understanding of ID project success in WA, a variety of data collection techniques were employed in this current research.

Interviews: Interviews are a more thorough approach of data collecting that led this current research to compile in-depth knowledge about the CSFs for planning. With a sample of stakeholders in an ID project, he did semi-structured interviews where he asked key players working on the ISS project, open-ended questions on the subject of interest. ***Observation*** is a technique for gathering data that entails actually watching the procedures and planning stages of ID projects in Wa Municipality. Unstructured observation of the planning-related important success variables, such as project planning meetings, status updates, and risk assessments, was how this current researcher gathered data. He also made site visits to project communities to see project plans being carried out and evaluated the contributions made by planning-related important success elements to the project success. This gave him the ability to acquire information about the performance of planning-related CSFs in a practical setting and to pinpoint potential improvement areas.

Data sources: Information for the ISS initiatives considered for the case study here came from both raw and supplementary sources (Saunders et al., 2012; Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010). Primary data is the unpublished summaries and raw data this researcher gathered from the participants as the study was on-going for varying reasons (Saunders et al., 2012; Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010). The supplementary analysis carried out to add to the initial data acquired in terms of knowledge, interpretations, and conclusions is the secondary data (Saunders et al., 2012) that was also used. This kind of data is of documentary and

originated from administrative reports on ID projects leading institutions that were used for this current study, media, and interview scripts (Saunders et al., 2012; Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010) of some administrators reached out for data.

3.7 Data Collection Tools

3.7.1 Semi-Structured Interview (guide)

The study adopted semi-structured interview. This was because the use of semi- structured interview guide was more beneficial to the study since it ensured the process of completing the questions in conformity with the theoretical model offered (Bryman & Bell, 2011). These semi-structured interviews were focused on questions covering specified subjects but gave the subject a lot of latitude in their responses (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders et al., 2012). The current researcher created ***an interview guide*** (see appendix 1) to collect data for this current study. This guide gave more room for modifications and new questions raised upon information provided by interviewees (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The study developed questions that are connected to the theoretical and conceptual framework themes in order to maintain interviewers' objectivity, as questions did not compel particular response from the participants.

3.7.1.2 Conducting the interviews

Qualitative interviews have the inherent drawback that one can never be certain of what will happen (Roulston et al., 2003). However, it was the responsibility of this researcher to prepare for specific narratives, events, and descriptions from the interviewees (Roulston et al., 2003). To achieve this, the study carefully planned and conducted the semi-structured interview to prevent unexpected outcomes and, as a result, ensured the successful gathering of pertinent data for the research.

3.7.1.3 Semi-structured interview planning

In addition to creating the interview guide, this study was concerned throughout the planning stage with three issues that might arise when the exercise is ongoing: unanticipated interviewees' attitude, the effects of the interviewers' biasness, and framing and negotiating interrogations (Roulston et al., 2003). He made appropriate plans in order to be ready for each of these problems.

a. unexpected interviewees' attitude

Unanticipated interviewees' character was frequently present at the start of the exercise, associated with participants who arrived late, those who conducted other tasks concurrently with the interview with disturbing backgrounds and the likes (Roulston et al., 2003; Saunders et al., 2012). Such attitudes were expected by the investigator (Roulston et al., 2003). To address these issues, the study kept the interviews and schedules participants so that each one would last 40minutes to an hour. This helps provide 20-minute break between interviews. Additionally, the study created a peaceful and suitable atmosphere for the interviews in his space at work and home to interview distant participants (Saunders et al., 2012; Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). He had little control over the interviewees' personal environs because he used WhatsApp video chat, emails, and phone calls for the interviews. However, he sent helpful advice for averting these problems along with the interview guide.

b. Repercussions of the researchers' own behaviours and subjectivities

Providing participants with deceptive instructions or subjectivities in an effort to sway their replies could pose issues for the interview (Roulston et al., 2003). These presumptions influenced how the interview proceeded and how the interviewees responded. Therefore,

an attempt was made in this current research to improve listening skills, limit the contributions to the conversation, and strive for an 80:20 interviewee/researcher discourse ratio (Saunders et al., 2012; Roulston et al., 2003). However, in addition to encouraging information sharing, the researcher also encouraged conversational interactions that allowed for easy dialogue in this current study.

c. Framing and negotiating questions

The primary goal of conversational interviewing was to maintain consistency in the interview exercise based on the research question (Roulston et al., 2003). Next, the study anticipated what kind of answers the research questions were to elicit based on how they were phrased (Roulston et al., 2003). Paraphrasing open-ended questions was one way to improve participants' comprehension. The current researcher sent the guide for the interview, days before the exercise, asking for feedback from the interviewees in order to clear up any misunderstandings about the questions and their intended purposes prior to the scheduled interviews. Second, he practices alternative sentences for each interview question, and assessed the accuracy using inputs from his supervisor.

3.7.1.4 Interview proceedings

The current researcher used WhatsApp video chats, emails and phone calls to conduct synchronous online interviews with participants who were difficult to reach in person and when doing face-to-face interviews was not financially feasible (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004; Janghorban et al., 2014; Saunders et al., 2012; Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). He ensured that he protected the participants' rights in accordance with ethical standards and requested authorization to record the interview (Oppenheim, 1992). This help in gaining participants trust and build the researchers' reputation (Saunders et al., 2012).

3.7.2 Transcribing

The study recorded and evaluated all WhatsApp video calls, emails, and phone calls with the consent of the research subjects. Thorough transcriptions to make ensure data validity and a reliability (Roulston et al., 2003). As a result, the interview focused on the theoretical presumptions underlying the investigation and demonstrated by the transcripts (Roulston et al., 2003). Analysis and interpretation are part of transcriptions (Bird, 2005). This researcher added pauses and nonverbal cues that could be picked up during video chats in the transcriptions (Janghorban et al., 2014). He evaluated each transcription for approval to lessen the chance of errors in the final transcripts (Oppenheim, 1992).

3.7.3 Time Horizon

This is how far this researcher gathered adequate data on ISS initiatives that is beneficial for the study (Philips, Claxton & Palmer, 2008). In social research, there are two different time horizon categories; Cross-sectional and longitudinal (Saunders et al., 2012).

3.7.3.1 Cross-sectional Time Horizon

Data was gathered from a variety of ID projects' specialist at various managerial levels and organizations, the proposed research methodology for the current study meets the cross-sectional requirements. Cross-sectional studies examine specific occurrences at a specific period (Saunders et al., 2012). When information will lose its value in the future, the researcher would adopt a finite time horizon (Philips et al., 2008). The collection of data from multiple sources at one time is another concern of a cross-sectional design (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This study applied a cross-sectional time since time restrictions based on

the academic calendar apply to the current research topic. This might make people wonder how future ID projects decisions would be influenced by a constrained time horizon (Philips et al., 2008). However, one of the objectives of this current research is to examine the current ID projects issues and offer a suggestion based on the information gathered. Hence, the research results cannot yet be tracked.

3.8.0 Ethical Issues

Study ethics are the rules of conduct that will direct researchers' actions with regard to the rights of research subjects or others who may be impacted by it (Saunders et al., 2012). The most important moral principles for both individual and career behaviour is to respect and uphold ethical guidelines and refrain from engaging in unethical behaviour during this research process. The researcher ensured that ethical issues did not come up during various stages of this study effort, which the current researcher must process and resolve in accordance with those ethical standards. Everyone who participates in this research has the right to respect for their rights and dignity (Saunders et al., 2012). Participants in this current research have the option to willingly engage or withdraw from it; and against participants were informed of the guiding principles and goals prior to giving consent (Saunders et al., 2012). The study obtained an introductory letter from the Simon Diedong Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies (SDD-UBIDS) outlining the study objectives and rationale; this helps establish rapport and credibility with participants. This letter together with the interview guide and scheduling are posted to participants in person and through official emails to participants that cannot be reach on a face-to-face engagement.

The interview guide was previously approved by the research supervisor to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines and data collection objectives. Even though the interviews have to be conducted through social media, telephoning and emailing because of distant participants, he commits to maintaining a formal and friendly atmosphere in order to ease interviewees (Sinha & Back, 2014). This researcher plans and carries out the interviews with the intention of protecting research participants' privacy (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In order to avoid fraud, he sends the interview transcripts to the participants and comes to an agreement with them on the final interpretation of their responses (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Given that some interviewees have had a formal or informal work relationship with the current investigator, he takes precautions to reduce the possibility of humiliation, troubles, or disagreement with the study subjects (Saunders et al., 2012). He makes an effort to use socially responsible, dialogic, and participative methods (Sinha & Back, 2014). Among these actions is a voluntary informed consent to participate. The limitations and the study scope as well as the responses are evaluated and presented, in line with the information control ethics, and are all explicitly revealed in the informed consent (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researcher also gave participants a written guarantee of data confidentiality and anonymity, reiterating free entry and exit (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

3.8.1 Data Management

Meyrick (2006) recommends that excellent qualitative research meets both the key characteristics of transparency and systematicity. This current study supports Meyrick's (2006) holistic viewpoint, which identifies two overlapping requirements for qualitative

research: validity and reliability. The combination of conventional terminology with option for trustworthiness and authenticity given by Guba & Lincoln (1994) serve as motivation for choosing this set of criteria.

The consistency of the data gathering process or conclusion of procedures is referred to as reliability. In other words, it is concerned with whether other researchers would reach the same findings or observations, or whether the interpretation of the raw data is sound (Saunders et al., 2012). You can evaluate it by responding to the following three inquiries (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002, p.53):

- Will the measure yield the same results on other occasions?
- Will similar observations be reached by other observers?
- Is there transparency in how sense was made from the raw data?

The research also identifies the following four risks to reliability (Robson, 2002, page 58):

- Subject or participant error happens when respondents provide inconsistent responses at various stages of the study process.
- Subject or participant bias happens when the interviewee frequently says what is anticipated of him or her.
- The possibility of getting responses that are different from those of the other observers causes observer error (s).
- On the other side, observer bias happens when one observer may interpret responses differently than another (s).

The current researcher for this study ensures that these requirements are satisfied by offering a thorough description of the study's basic methodology and practices that can be

evaluated through audit trails. This describes the steps taken to gather, process, condense, transform, and display data as well as make conclusions. By doing this, he can assess whether a connection between the conclusions and the impartial display data exists. Additionally, conflicting theories or contradictory findings are taken into account throughout this research and extensively and subsequently discussed. Consistency is the cornerstone of reliability (Meyrick, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010).

Utilizing methods like data comparison, thorough data utilization, argumentative analysis, and deviant case analysis, the researcher for this study uses reliability evaluation approaches. This document provides a detailed explanation of all aspects of the study approach, including strategies for data collection and analysis. In order to ensure trustworthiness, the current researcher was fully involved in the study process and the analysis of the findings. Additionally, a research supervisor with vast knowledge in peer reviews is consulted during this thesis work to ensure trustworthiness.

3.9.0 Qualitative Data Analysis

The framework for the examination of the collected data is represented by a choice of qualitative data analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

3.9.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a popular method used to analysing qualitative data (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is a technique for summarizing data, but when choosing codes and creating themes, it also involves interpretation.

In this study, the researcher comprehends participants' collection of experiences, thoughts, or behaviours across the data gathered, hence the most effective and influential method to

use is thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2012). The ability of the researcher to comprehend and interpret the examined ID projects phenomenon more fully is one of the benefits of thematic analysis to the current researcher's goal, which is to "investigate how planning-related CSFs improve understanding of ID initiative effectiveness." This current qualitative multiple case embedded study on the effectiveness of ID initiatives is well suited for thematic analysis because it seeks to identify common or shared meanings. In this inquiry, the inductive method was employed to provide a richer, more thorough analysis of the entire body of gathered information. Some predetermined themes have been designed from the literature using the deductive approach. The six widely acknowledged thematic analysis phases outlined below by Braun and Clarke (2006) are relevant to the examination of the current qualitative data *(see the table 6 below).*

Table 5: Phases of Thematic Analysis

No.	PHASES	DESCRIPTION OF ANALYSIS PROCESS
1.	Familiarizing myself with data	1. Narrative preparation ie transcribing data 2. (Re-)reading the data and noting down initial ideas
2.	Generating initial codes	1. Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across entire data set 2. Collating data relevant to each code
3.	Searching for themes	1. Collating codes into potential themes 2. Gathering all data relevant to each theme
4.	Reviewing themes	1. Checking if themes work in relation to the coded extracts 2. Checking if themes work in relation to the entire data set 3. Reviewing data to search for additional themes 4. Generating a thematic "map" of the analysis
5.	Defining and naming themes	1. On-going analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tell 2. Generating clear definitions and names for each theme
6.	Producing the reports	1. Selection of vivid, compelling extracts examples 2. Final analysis of selected extracts 3. Relating the analysis back to the research question, objectives and previous literature reviewed

Source: Brown and Clarke (2006)

3.9.2 Coding

Coding facilitates the organization of the current data for this study at a detailed, precise level as the first really analytical step in the above procedures. The researcher makes notes on prospective data items of interest, queries, linkages between data items, and other early concepts after familiarization work. Instead of themes, at this stage of the job he generates codes. According to Boyatzis (1998), code is ‘‘The most fundamental segment, or element, of the raw data or information that may be judged in a meaningful way addressing the phenomena’’ (p. 63). Following the definition of the coding framework or template, by labelling data excerpts with the appropriate codes, this researcher applies similar codes to the entire information gathering, noting whatever known to have similar characteristics or links between elements that can guide the development of future themes (Braun & Clarke 2006).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the research and a discussion of same with emphasis on CSF and their role in enhancing understanding of ID projects success in Wa Municipality. Estevez (2004) asserts that case studies and surveys built around interviews are the most common methods used by researchers to obtain insight into the significance of CSF. In order to get information from participants, the researcher for this current study uses literature review and interviews in a qualitative case study.

4.1. Objective One: To identify and examine critical success factors of ID project planning.

The participants come up with some critical success factors after being asked to make a list of the most important planning-related CSFs that improve understanding of ID projects success *(see table 6 below)*. An interviewee has this to say;

> "*After planning and working on more than twenty development projects over the course of the previous 20 years, I can declare with confidence that I have gained sufficient experience; I can draw the conclusion that the integrated social services delivery projects' total success is mostly dependent on the critical success factors of the planning phase; unfortunately, planning inefficiencies are enormous; for the most part, we concentrate on merely fulfilling project deadlines in order to appease national or donor interest, failing to recognize crucial areas where project success is guaranteed throughout planning" (20/05/2024).*

Another participant had this to add;

> *"The problem is that a greater proportion of these donor-funded projects has international guidelines attached to them that must be closely adhered to. These guidelines frequently do not take local realities into account and do not allow for local input when significant changes arise during the planning and implementation of the plan; it implies that the planning process is not owned by local assemblies" (20/05/2024).*

An interviewee's views on resource availability reveals that;

> *"Resources that are available for the ISS initiatives during the pre-planning phase are another important consideration; before funding is disbursed, we plan; as a result, not all relevant stakeholders could be invited to participate in planning sessions for the project, and as a result, important issues were left out of the plan. The lack of resources, in my opinion, also makes collaboration practically impossible" (21/03/2024).*

This in in line with the view held by Ofori (2006), which indicates that donor financial support projects in Ghana are subject to guidelines that have an impact on the project from the pre-planning stage until the project completion. Donor interests often throw a wrench in the works, resulting in scope revisions, implementation delays, and sometimes even the sudden termination of a project. This is on top of programs that reflect the donor's subject area rather than fulfilling the expected beneficiaries' development needs.

Table 6: Identification and validation checklist of CSF

How planning-related CSF do improve understanding of ID projects success?											
Objective: To identify and examine critical success factors of ID project planning.											
SC & CSF FOR IDPP			**PARTICIPANTS' VALIDATION (PV)**								
			P-1	**P-2**	**P-3**	**P-4**	**P-5**	**P-6**	**P-7**	**P-8**	**P-9**	**P-10**
1.	**Theme: ID initiative management competence**		yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	a.	Administrative capacity	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	b.	Monitoring and supervision	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	c.	Development priorities/National interest	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	d.	Project context	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
2.	**Theme: ID project manager/ team performance**		yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	a.	Leadership qualities	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	b.	Team motivation	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	c.	Project management expertise	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	d.	Communication	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
3.	**Theme: ID organizational performance**		yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	a.	PBs' consultations & involvement	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	b.	Top management support	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes
	c.	Collaboration	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
	d.	Mission and vision	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
4.	**Theme: Planning tools/methods/ techniques**		yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
	a.	Project scope	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
	b.	Project schedule/ time required	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
	c.	Project resources	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
	d.	Project flexibility	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
5	**Theme: ID project documentation**		yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes
	a.	Requirements/ specification records	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes
	b.	Change readiness	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes
	c.	Data base of lessons learned	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes
	d.	Final PM documents approvals	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	Yes	yes	yes	Yes

Source: field work (2024)

The themes identified (in table 6 above) directed the empirical interview process through which the CSFs that are essential for improving ID projects success have been gathered from and validated by participants in this current study. The data revealed that critical success factors for the management of international development projects are significant. Details are provided below;

Theme-1: International development project management competency factors: The interviewees express growing concern about the factors that make up an international development projects management performance, including administrative capacity of recipient governments, monitoring and supervision during pre-planning stage and throughout the project lifecycle, national or donor interest that takes precedence over those of the communities and project context. In some studies (Eja & Ramegowda, 2019; Damoah & Kumi, 2018), political decisions, poor monitoring and supervision, and limited administrative capacity are all significant causes of ID project failure. One interviewee's opinions are obtained concerning the administration of the Wa Municipal Assembly's project management competency level. This is his view on project management competency;

> *"I sincerely think the project management office (PMO), in my opinion, ought to be in control of PM operations within the assembly; planning units under central administration is the office available to oversee project planning in the assembly; these offices lack the ingenuity necessary to perform as PMOs; the municipal assembly's development planning officers and ISS program focal persons are not well-versed in project management; to effectively manage development projects,*

they must enhance their project management skills and raise their PM competency level" (15/03/2024).

As a developing nation, Ghana's public sector organizations face both non-technical and technical project management constraints. The success of project management in Ghana has been the subject of relatively little empirical study, making it difficult to identify best practices. The availability of the monitoring systems in the wa municipal assembly is discussed by a focal person for development projects who says;

"In regards to monitoring and supervision, our focus is not on developing any tool but rather on how much resources are available to carry out monitoring; the monitoring systems, even if available, are weak in my opinion; I must be honest with you, the municipal assembly does not have any generally accepted monitoring and evaluation tool that they use to check progress of work during and after project design and implementation" (18/03/2024).

This view is confirmed in the study of Callistus and Clinton (2016) that many international development projects in developing nations are severed with project management competency factors, one of which is lack of awareness on the importance of appropriate monitoring and evaluation. Callistus and Clinton (2016) states that project monitoring and assessment are essential components of enhancing project performance. The focal person at the municipal assembly adds that;

"Whenever, we are planning for the ISS projects we do not take into consideration the cultural variations of the people we plan the project for. We will go to the community and realised we should have engaged the community members to incorporate their cultural values into the project design" (Field Survey, 2024).

In the literature, it is stated that cultural problems with respect to hierarchy, taboos, and other aversions frequently have negative effect on project management (Awuah, 2008). The general success and quality of projects in Ghana are impacted by these project management difficulties. Within the framework of global development initiatives, cultural issues are the least understood but most dangerous (Ofori, 2006). One of the participants stated;

> *"I think that as a result of public sector institutions in Ghana being challenged with technical and non-technical project management issues, many of these donors mandate that government employs the services of consultants to facilitate project planning and implementation; the consultants may not have acquaintance with the project settings, the sociocultural background of the beneficiary communities, and therefore will design project plans that will not reflect local realities; they usually design the project to reflect national or donor interest and not to satisfy beneficiary communities' needs" (12/06/2024).*

Knowing culture is the beginning point for learning the meaning of development management, the values that guide people's actions, and the behaviour of administrators (Ofori, 2006). In Staudt (1991) view, cultural variations can be found in a wide range of development contexts, including presumptions, project designs, technology transfer, and managerial approaches.

Theme-2: International development project manager or Team performance skills: On the skill factors of a good ID project manager and project team performance, participant opinions are gathered. An interviewee has this to say;

"I am of the view that district planners as project managers at the assembly need to recognize field officers' obligation and maintain effective communication with top management in the assembly, the project team, and other stakeholders involved in the project. They must communicate effectively with stakeholders; adding to this they should keep it in mind that motivation is critical to boost the morale of field officers" (20/05/2024).

In recent study of Roszalina and Hassan (2018), they claim that the expertise of the project leader positively affects the project success. The interviewees agree that district planners on the ISS initiatives require PM expertise with good leadership and creative planning to oversee the projects from their inception to their completion. As the field officers completes the project tasks, the team leader guides them to success. Success is correlated with strong leadership, team motivation, governance, and technical expertise of the project manager (Roszalina & Hassan, 2018). The team's capacity through its core competences typically, ensures that the project is timely and finished. An experienced project manager and senior lecturer speaks up, stating that:

"Based on my experience leading development projects, I believe that the team's commitment is crucial to the project success; when the team places an excessive amount of importance on the project, they devote maximum time to it and focus on areas where success is promising. However, because there are so many parties involved in ID initiatives, the success of the project depends not just on the dedication of the crew but additionally on that of other parties with an interest on project success. Consequently, collaboration and participation are essential for the success of the ISS project" (24/05/2024).

A project focal person at the municipal assembly also shares some experiences;

> *" In my own observations, officers in this assembly occasionally clash over projects that fail to clearly define leadership roles and delegate authority to any designated office within the assembly; Additionally, those in closer proximity to the top executives frequently have a tendency to snatch and take on leadership responsibilities for development projects that were not initially assigned to them; for certain projects, this is more akin to "survival of the fitters" (20/06/2024).*

The literature examines these topics in relation to the significance of organizational formation of settings for suitable leadership. This must be accomplished to the extent that participation in the project execution results in an appropriate assessment of the clients' realities (Yamanganta et al., 2013; Namwata et al., 2015; Ward, 2010). Organizations would highlight the project manager's position in this scenario and its capacity to simplify project goals, account for cultural difference, and integrate crucial relationships for a project's successful completion (Small & Walker, 2010).

Theme-3: International development project planning methods/tools/techniques: The type of methods accessible to complement the planning process is another issue that participants do emphasize enough. A well-defined scope, time required, resources available, and the degree of flexibility or simplicity of the project are frequently referenced by the participants for this study as critical variables for a successful planning process which determined the overall success of those projects they have worked on. These variables usually constrained the whole planning process which affect the project life cycle. Marchewka et al (2006) point out the scope, time and cost as the foundation for carrying out a project and provides guidance for planning it. Rigid PM methods frequently confront

growing complexity and unpredictability in development projects, which inhibits success (Boakye & Liu, 2015; Svejvig & Andersen, 2014). A major actor on ISS project shares his views.

> *"I want to admit that; the success of the ISS projects I was directly involved; largely depended on the tools, techniques, and methodologies our team employed to plan, manage and execute them; our team employed several project management tools, techniques and methods by considering their proven efficacy in project planning, execution and adaptability in accomplishing the projects aims and objectives" (21/05/2024).*

The responses disclose identifying and defining a community problem is a common first step in the planning process. Planners usually analyse community problems using tools such as problem tree, pairwise ranking among others. The Logical Framework (LF) are techniques and tools often used throughout the planning phase. One of the participants makes the following statement in an effort to recommend suitable techniques and strategies for planning development projects:

> *"Though the LF is widely accepted by donors, we sometimes use tools such as participatory budgeting, participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E), participatory learning and action (PLA), or participatory rural appraisal (PRA), which involve stakeholders in project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation" (20/06/2024).*

These methods encourage modifications, knowledge of the area, and ownership; incorporating stakeholders into the budgetary process promotes accountability and transparency while guaranteeing that resources are distributed in line with local interests.

Muriithi and Crawford (2003) claim that because cultural settings are constantly varied, no single PM technique or tool is applicable to such development projects (Muriithi & Crawford 2003; Geraldi, 2008). There should be variations in their usage when applicable. These theoretical reasons are supported by the participants' view that each project is unique despite having the same intended goals and that project planning in aid architecture typically follow conservative top-down techniques. This is what a key player on ID projects has to say;

> *"We often use waterfall model to construct the LF design in development projects; meanwhile, the project is being created and executed in a constantly emerging world with growing needs, so agile methods should be employed to maintain the stakeholder involvement and benefits" (20/06/2024).*

Responses indicate that using agile approach for development projects is a comprehensive and analytical strategy to solve the many complexities and uncertainties that a project may encounter. Significant changes could happen as a project develops due to numerous ecological or situational circumstances (Ika et al., 2014; Caron, 2013; Nogueira & Raz, 2006). Again, due to alterations in social, environmental, political, economic, and cultural factors, the environment in which these projects are planned and then put into action is continuously changing. When the project is implemented within a matter of times, the current plans may be significantly changed. During the planning phase, project management tools are very critical. *Participatory Budgeting, Participatory Monitoring And Evaluation (PM&E), Participatory Learning And Action (PLA), Or Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Problem Tree Analysis (PTA), Outcome Mapping (OM), Risk Assessment and Management (RAM)* and others are a few of the examples provided by this

study's participants as in the literature. They also emphasize the importance of carefully taking into account decision-making strategies during the initial planning phase in making optimal choice possible. An interviewee states this;

> *"I believe the focus should be on assessing the risks and managing those risks to minimize the impact on the project, whether the effect is good or negative; therefore, it is crucial to take risk management into account in the processes throughout the project planning phase" (19/05/2024).*

Project risk is a state or unknown occurrence that, if it happens, could affect at a minimum, one of the project objectives (Rozsalina & Hassan, 2018). A project team member (TM) reiterates in his statement that;

> *"I have the notion that government makes decision and set project objectives, typically confined by accessibility and allocation of resources, without thoroughly taking the political and social setting into account" (19/06/2024).*

Fritzen (2007) discovers that although donor organizations frequently take into account the culture and context of the country, the development and administration industry has yet to provide systematic instruments for linking the governance framework and aid policy (Fritzen, 2007) implying that there is no one best explanation of policy acceptance, according to Yamanganta et al. (2013), because the value of each policy depends on the circumstances. The ID project cases are particularly difficult and turbulent due to political and social uncertainties (Ika & Hodgson, 2014; Small & Walker, 2010). As a result, the initiative has to identify an exchange of project safety, good standard of program resilience, and a sturdy initiative's capacity to modify plans without changing quality and aims (Nogueira & Raz, 2006; Caron, 2013).

Theoretical deliberations indicate, through the integration of the planning tools and techniques with the log frame or their independent use, project planners can create more comprehensive, contextually relevant, and flexible methods for planning and managing development projects.

Theme-4: International development projects documentation:

Gomes and Romo (2016), study indicates that the project written documentation process should begin at the inception and continue until the finish to facilitate time management, budgeting, and clients' desires (Warren, 2014). This is supported by a participant who suggests this;

> *"All departments and institutions on the ISS initiatives would have to document their proposed methodology prior to starting those projects they work on; the project documentation should include at least the bare minimum of project planning factors, such as requirement specifications report, data base of lessons learned, assignment of authority charts, recording relevant changes made and approvals for all relevant project documents with top management support; more in-depth preparation may be necessary; in my view, a key factor in the failure of the ISS program is the lack of top management support causing delays in the final approvals of project plans" (10/06/2024).*

Effective project management processes should provide guidelines that define modification criteria and offer sufficient collaboration, interaction, and change reporting (Atkinson, Crawford, & Ward, 2006). Various project planning documents, including the project plan, cost management plan, quality assurance plan, risk management plan, change management plan, communication plan, and document contract, have been uncovered by

the interviewees as in the PM literature. The project manager, project team, and stakeholders all benefit from project documentation over uncontrolled records.

Theme-5: International development organizational performance skills: In international development projects, organizational performance is the ability to provide or enhance products and services that assist a business in achieving its strategic objectives (Sanchez et al., 2017). A participant of the study has this to say;

> *"I am of the opinion that the ID organization should have a defined scope, vision, objectives, and business plan before the project begins; the project expectations and goals must also be reasonable and attainable; ID organizational strategy should also be designed appropriately during project planning, whether it is based on a functional, matrix, or other applicable frameworks; ID organization should prioritize beneficiaries' contentment and solicit their opinion both during and after each job is finished; we evaluate those projects after implementation to obtain lessons learned" (23/06/2024).*

Availability of resources and top management support are marginally more significant during the planning phase. Top management within the decentralised assemblies usually do not provide maximum support for the planning process. They cause delay in the process. Project objectives are often established to suit national interest and donor requirements rather than the needs of the beneficiary communities. According to Kyamusugulwa (2013), the community will be the project real driving force if they are extensively involved in the projects. During the interview process, one of the interviewees reveals this;

> *"I can say that people in this our assembly (Wa municipal) are not always willing to collaborate with others in their programs; everybody works alone for his/her*

personal gains rather than seeing to it that development projects succeed" (19/05/2024).

Another participant emphasises that

" Those I know are the key implementing partners for the ISS project are; NCCE, School SHEP, DSW, DCD, NHIS, GHANA POLICE, CHRAJ among others; the actuality is that only department of social welfare and community development (DSW/CD) do plan and budget the ISS activities and implement them; when you enquire, they will say funds were not adequate enough to involve everybody in stakeholder engagement meetings; sometimes they will even finish the project implementation before they unofficially call you to follow them for monitoring" (21/05/2024).

One of the interviewees also adds his view that

"I think that the planning process of the integrated social services initiatives should be participatory and encourage effective collaboration between partners" (20/05/2024).

This view is supported by Roszalina and Hassan (2018) who see the need for other functional units or departments to participate in project planning. There must be clear objectives to satisfy peoples' needs if development projects should succeed. This is in line with the McMichael (2008) view which states that the major objective of development initiatives is to increase people's alternatives in order to make development more democratic and inclusive. However, the responses did not show this. Project success is more likely if stakeholders are kept informed and actively involved in its planning. Success is not assured if all pertinent stakeholders are not fairly represented during the planning

phase. There are also relatively limited possibilities that the efforts will be worthwhile and the benefits will last over time if all pertinent parties are represented.

The projects flexibility, requirements, available resources, settings, schedule, expertise of management/team and the degree of PBs' involvement in the planning processes all affect the ISS projects success. Consulting project beneficiaries (PBs) to gather their opinions is an essential task that also makes sense from a PM practical standpoint. According to the responses however, PBs are not taking part in project planning. In conclusion, after seeing the vitality of CSFs during the planning phase of the integrated social services programs within the purview of every municipality, interviewees decided that CSF's multi-criteria degree is adjustable.

4.2 Objective Two: To examine the challenges that inhibit ID project success during planning.

The findings show that the donors, state authority, and implementing institutions (e.g. MMDAs, NGOs, GHS, and NHIA) are the key players taking major decisions on the ISS projects when they try to explain which stakeholders are genuinely active during planning. The PBs do not engage enough or any involvement in the ISS planning process. After further inquiry, a participant argues that;

> *"In my views, only a small number of individuals are actually requested to give their success stories about the ISS program during stakeholder engagement meetings with the department of social welfare; the donor partners do not ask about the strategic role the communities play during planning except that information about them is only collected in the Medium- Term Development Plan (MTDP) to determine what the Ghana government's answer would be on the SDGs attainment*

based on the success of the ISS projects in the country rather than to learn how PBs would approach their own challenges" (18/06/2024).

Another participant emphasises that

"I want to reiterate the point that the genuine needs of the PBs cannot be ascertained because the work flow of the program is mostly influenced by the government's priorities" (Field Survey, 2024).

Planning-related difficulties come in a variety of forms according to responses *(see fig.15 below)*. The ISS projects such as Child Protection (CP), LEAP, and Social Welfare Information Systems (SWIMS) get their funding mainly from UNICEF, USAID, UNDP and EU. This makes the ISS, an international development initiative. These ID organizations collaborate with the government of Ghana to design Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSP) consisting of (CP, LEAP, SWIMS, and CLTS e.t.c) long-term (5 to 10 years) social protection projects in order to meet the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. As a result, each project is chosen and created with these SDGs in mind. In the views of a beneficiary of the ISS project, he states;

"It means to me that the Government does not fully own the entire planning process. The development partners will only finance a project if it fits with their existing priorities. As a result, if the planning process goes on for too long, it will become out-dated and no longer reflect the donors' current position and PBs' needs" (15/05/2024).

The project plan is impacted by numerous political and technical issues which the district planners for the ISS projects and project teams would have to tackle. It might be

challenging to properly assess success of the ISS projects at times due to such political influences and the fact that these projects have intangible goals.

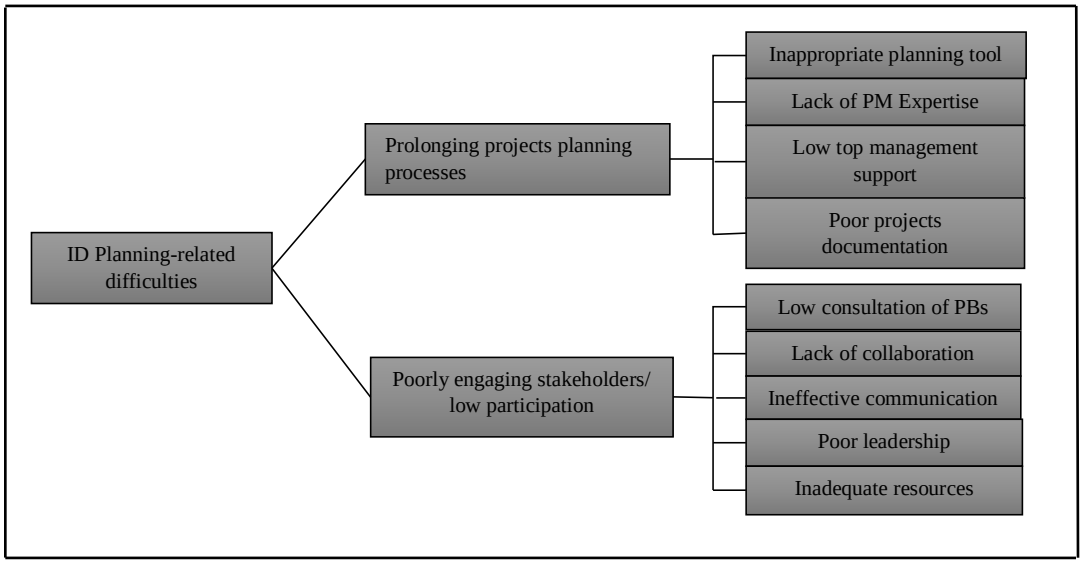

Figure 14: Planning-related difficulties

Source: Field survey (2024)

Theme-1: Prolonging projects planning processes: There is a widespread worry among participants that prolonged project planning processes result in irrelevant planning outcomes or out-dated plans leading to expired interventions. The suggested solutions no longer satisfy the needs of project beneficiaries when they eventually wish to adopt them. They attribute this challenge to the lack of project management expertise on the part of district planners, application of inappropriate project planning tools, low top management support and poor projects documentation.

The LF is perhaps the tool used often for development projects planning. Most foreign agencies supporting development projects want the LF (Akroyd, 1999). However, the problems mentioned by participants regarding the planning process (i.e., unstable political

contexts, prolonged planning process and minimal engagement of essential stakeholders) do not correspond to the kind of issues for which the LF was initially envisioned. Participants draw attention to the fact that the ISS initiatives in Ghana are frequently prescribed using the LF. One of the participants gives his views on the LF approach saying;

> *"In my opinion, the log frame is extremely rigid when we apply them in our projects, which causes the focus to be on outputs rather than impacts or outcomes of the projects; this inflexibility makes it more difficult to adjust to shifting conditions or urgent demands of the communities we planned for; in designing the LF we often do not call for grassroots involvement in the project planning process, which causes the project aims sometimes to become misaligned and ultimately lead us to project failure" (15/05/2024).*

Another interviewee says;

> *"I want to emphasise that; development projects frequently take place inside intricate systems where it is not always clear what causes what; the LF alone therefore would not be appropriate tool for planning the ISS initiatives" (15/05/2024).*

Another participant speaks on project management expertise of district planners and recommends that

> *"I recommend that district planners urgently require training in project management techniques and tools. Although district planners may have a high degree of technical planning experience which makes them comprehend the technicalities of the ISS projects, they still require more knowledge in the field of ID project management" (21/05/2024).*

Another participant indicates that;

> *"It is common for us to use old activities scheduled in an old plan as a new plan in order to meet deadlines; why? Because often not enough time is available to thoroughly evaluate the issues the projects will attempt to solve; in these circumstances, the district planners and field officers adapt an earlier project for the current circumstance in order to meet deadlines as donors required; the community where the project team wants to re-send such projects most often fail to recognize the projects because the planners did not involve the community from the onset" (28/05/2024).*

A participant has this to say;

> *"I can claim that the municipal assembly may do re-planning of the ISS project following the general strategic plan; a significant amount of time is spent on re-designing the projects scope at the district assembly level though many of the presumptions and risks have evolved throughout the initial planning stages where major decisions are taking at the sponsor level; project implementers at the Municipal Assembly level do rely on previous related interventions to prepare and submit reports and data (28/05/2024).*

The most frequent response given while discussing the difficulties encountered in ISS projects planning is low top management support. An interviewee states;

> *"My experience in this assembly is that the administrative bureaucracies in the wa municipal assembly make it quite challenging to getting approvals on relevant ISS projects documentation especially the budget and final draft or project plan. Top management of the assembly frequently have unrealistic expectations when it*

comes to them releasing project funds which hinder the entire success of the project" (28/05/2024).

Another participant shares his experience that

"Last time I was invited by management to have a discussion on the project funds only to hear how a chunk of the monies has been misappropriated. It is possible that the district coordinators, finance officers and other departmental heads are to blame for such issues; I want to add that it takes longer to begin project implementation as a result of delays in the planning process and release of funds but the moment the funding is given, the field officers hastily begin reporting results upon request in order to meet deadlines'' (28/05/2024).

It is observed that the data base in relation to the ISS projects organization, planning documentation, stakeholder information, financial lessons learned and the success stories shared by the selected communities who benefit from the project's implementation and any other relevant projects documentations at the assembly level are not properly managed or somewhat not available.

Theme-2: Poorly engaging stakeholders and low participation:

In soliciting participants' views on poor stakeholder engagement, a participant noted;

"Stakeholders are extremely difficult to manage since they will not cooperate with the process. Meeting the demands of all stakeholders is a constant challenge for the project decision-making process at the initial planning stage. Rivalry between partners on the ISS projects is as a result of lack of effective collaboration between them" (28/05/2024).

A participant further added;

> *"Stakeholder synergy is a major problem in terms of ISS projects planning and implementation at the Wa municipal here; major government entities that are supporting at the ground implementation of the project do work in a secretive environment and are not willing to share data and reports though we do organize quarterly review meetings at the municipal hall; it appears everyone in his own interest wants to exert authority and not ready to account for the work being done; for that matter collaboration becomes weak" (28/05/2024).*

Another participant indicates;

> *"It is my opinion that members of this assembly (Wa municipal) are not always eager to work together on projects; instead of ensuring the success of development projects, each person works independently for their own benefit" (28/05/2024).*

Regarding departmental collaboration on development projects, a participant highlights that;

> *"Unclear or redundant orders from multiple departments in this assembly is the results of the confusion and inefficiencies we encounter during project planning and implementation; It is necessary to define roles and tasks precisely in order to avoid disagreements that leads to an abrupt cancellation of some development interventions in the municipality" (28/05/2024).*

Regrettably, one of the interviewees raises a concern that

> *"In practice, though they must work together, only the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development (DSW/CD) plans, budgets, and implements*

the ISS activities; If you inquire about this, they will claim that there were insufficient funds to include other stakeholders in stakeholder engagement sessions; I think that the planning process of the integrated social services initiatives should be participatory and encourage effective collaboration between partners" (25/05/2024).

This view is supported by Roszalina and Hassan (2018) who see the need for other functional units or departments to participate in project planning.

The communities that are enrolled into the program are not consulted enough or effectively communicated to in the planning process and so the presumptions that lead to the final design often, do not reflect their interest. An interviewee indicates that;

"I can perhaps attribute this challenge of not involving the right people on the program to the scarcity of resources, inadequate monitoring and supervision, leadership issues and perhaps delay in release of funds if available" (25/05/2024).

One interviewee talks about the difficulties of keeping track of the ISS initiatives as stated by him,

"I find it quite troubling that the assembly does not have the administrative ability to properly oversee and manage development initiatives in Wa Municipal; after project funding are disbursed, donors wait for reports; in most cases, field officers use old reports which include made-up images to mislead donors about the status of social interventions in the municipality, which is against their contract; consequently, the project as a whole is at risk due to a lack of an effective monitoring system in the assembly" (24/05/2024).

One of the most important variables included in this study is communication. A project coordinator discusses the difficulties with communication in the Wa Municipal Assembly. He declares:

> *"I have noticed that bureaucratic hierarchies hinder communication and lead to centralized, top-down decision-making processes within the WA Municipal Assembly. Field officers are reluctant to discuss project-related concerns with higher-ranking authorities, and senior management is hesitant to share project information with grass root stakeholders, which compromises transparency, accountability and consequently, project success" (25/05/2024).*

Consequently, the claim that issues like poor leadership style, irrelevant design outcomes, a haphazard movement from the planning to the execution stage, the project leader's disconnections from the complexities and inferences leading to the completed write-ups, no clarity, and the impression of hostility by many stakeholders are due solely to the underrepresentation of interested parties (Kyamusugulwa, 2013; Hayward et al., 2004).

4.3. Objective Three: To assess and understand the current status and future prospects of ID project success using CSF framework.

Theoretical discussion is based on the observation that the Wa municipal assembly lacks a formal, organization-wide evaluation system or frameworks for determining the effectiveness of projects. Talking about project success from responses, it is observed that district planners make efforts to provide their own categories of the various projects and what expectations there are for each category before explaining why they see one project as more successful than others in each self-created category of project because there is no specific framework for projects success in the aid industry. An interviewee stated this;

> *"We do not have standard criteria for determining whether a particular social project is successful or not for local assemblies' social projects. Success relies on the situation. The categories only describe how an accurate assessment of the project environment and composition throughout the planning stage should result in adaptive ways to determining the optimum strategies to reach project success and positive project effect on development projects" (28/05/2024).*

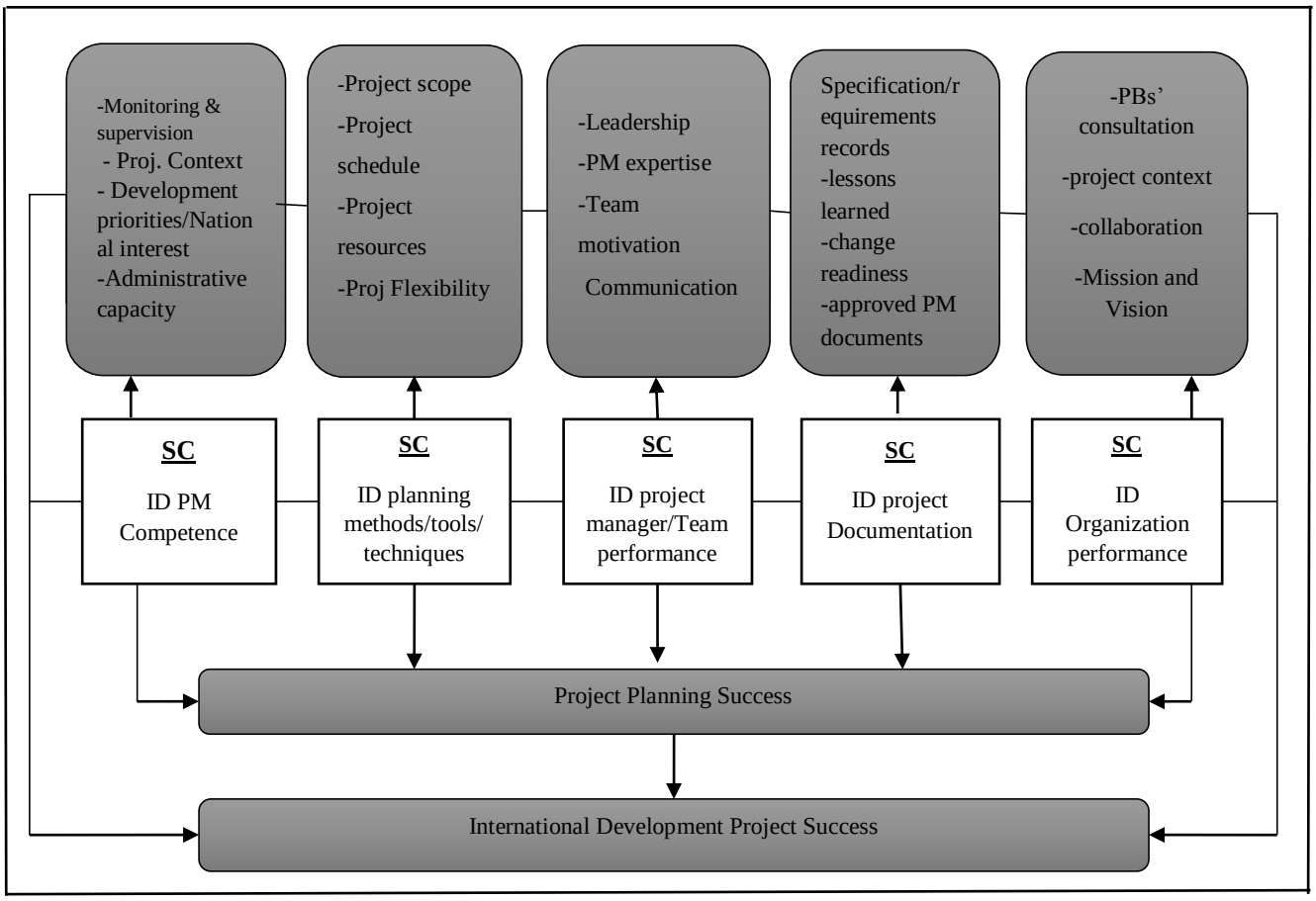

Figure 15: New CSF framework of the study

Source: field survey (2024)

The above framework is developed from the data gathered and literature to assess and understand the current status and future prospects of ID project success. A participant states that;

> *"I am of the view that creating a useful framework leads to a deeper comprehension of CSFs, which in turn makes it easier for an organization to do proper planning; This framework should in turn give businesses a form of checklist to identify and*

evaluate areas where success is guaranteed during the initial planning stages so that they can be managed efficiently" (28/05/2024).

Another participant added,

"In my view, realizing how vital it is to evaluate project planning and create a CSF framework that is appropriate for an organization, tailored to its project settings is the first and most important step; this framework should provide meaningful and practical ways to raise awareness of the complexities and uncertainties that can be understood and assessed, and only then can proper planning be done to manage such uncertainties" (25/05/2024).

The model above demonstrates the effectiveness of project planning. Criteria and variables are linked to ID initiative success following through iterative development processes, enabling the ID manager and team to continuously monitor, identify loop holes and assess the challenges that are occurring as well as the strategies being implemented at each new or incremental step. The framework emphasizes ongoing proper coordination in planning and readiness to accept change in either a positive or responsive way and be enlightened from it while maintaining balance and regulation, which raises the perceived worth of the goods or services for the intended recipients (Sheffield & Lemétayer, 2013).

Understanding the criticality of planning-related CSFs for ID initiatives

The participants are asked to consider their past experiences working on ID initiatives and provide their knowledge on the most CSFs for those initiatives. Out of those CSFs identified in this study, four have been covered as most critical; Ownership, Clear mission and vision, leadership, and communication.

- ***Ownership***

Ownership of the planning process is cited by participants as one of the key project success factors because it aids in prioritizing community needs in accordance with the national PRSP. The supporting departments would organize their workload according to the government's strategic plan. One participant says;

> *"Since the government's priorities dominate the work flow, it is impossible to determine the project beneficiaries' true needs" (28/05/2024).*

Governments' focus is diverse. Functional departments work on multiple projects. The work usually gets prioritised according to the strategic significance or by the focus of the government or national interest. Another participant adds that

> *"Prioritizing community needs in accordance with the national PRSP is made easier when communities are involved in the planning process for international development initiatives" (28/05/2024).*

Ownership plays a crucial role in development initiatives' success. An interviewee in the current study says;

> *"Whenever we feel an impression of ownership over any projects we work on as stakeholders we are always actively involved, committed, and accountable throughout the project lifetime" (28/05/2024).*

Ownership by local stakeholders increases the likelihood that the project will be customized to the unique requirements, community priorities, and environment. Greater relevance and acceptance result from initiatives that are culturally acceptable, responsive to local dynamics, and in line with community ambitions when they are owned locally. Project management frequently suffers from cultural issues related to taboos, reverence,

hierarchy, respect, and other aversions (Awuah, 2008). These project management challenges affect project overall success and quality in Ghana. Cultural concerns are considered the most dangerous and least understood within the framework of global development programs (Ofori, 2006).

- ***Mission and Vision***

The interviewees named "mission and vision" as one of the factors most responsible for the success of ID projects. The project should have a clear scope, goal, objectives, and business plan before it starts, taking into account the input received. Expectations and objectives for the project must also be sensible and doable. A clear purpose and vision statement outlines the project's direction, reduces uncertainty, and makes it clear what needs to be done. Senior management declares;

> *"To communicate a clear vision and mission to the team, as well as real goals, in order for them to know where they are headed what they are doing, and how they can contribute to the vision require both soft and hard skills; A well-defined purpose and direction for the project contribute a lot to achieving project success." (field survey, 2024)*

- ***Leadership***

In this situation, participants agree that working on challenging new projects under the ISS initiatives within a newly recruited districts require a futuristic leadership style, the capacity to foster a team that is credible, interconnected, and versatile, as well as the capacity to make prompt, seriously evaluated risks and decisions in order to win the team's respect, particularly when there is project ambiguity. A team member expresses his concern on this issue that;

"I believe the leader needs to know when to become cooperative and assertive with the team when necessary; He needs to move further than the project management methods and daily activities; People need to have faith in the program's success, have confidence in the leader, and feel sympathy for him or her, in my opinion" (28/05/2024).

The single most important leadership quality is prompt issue resolution. An organization intend to delay issues confronting projects, which increase uncertainty. You need to have a well-defined set of leadership qualities that are mostly results-driven.

- ***Communication***

Another important success component that has been emphasized is communication. With that said, communication is critical to multi-location, multi-disciplinary ID projects because it has such a significant impact on the project as a whole. The preceding discussion of communication as a critical factor places more emphasis on elements like formal and informal team communication, team spirit and cohesiveness maintenance, general team inquiry, which fosters a sense of belonging and attempts to address difficulties, and management work updates. In the views of one of the key players on ID projects, effective communication at all levels is essential for projects. He says;

"Communication to the best of my knowledge is a general key success component of every kind of project; I really believe that poor or ineffective communication is accountable for 90% of the problems the integrate social services program has encountered" (28/05/2024).

The interviewees concur that the success factors they suggested are critical to the success of those international development projects they work on. They widely regarded planning

methods, tools, and techniques as the most significant criteria throughout the project planning process. They describe the degree to which these variables are evident in the integrated social services delivery during planning in order to confirm whether these variables really do contribute to the performance of those projects. Contrary to common belief, which holds that project managers' and project teams' performance qualities are most closely associated to success (Khang & Moe, 2008), actual data demonstrates that ownership of the planning process, leadership, clear mission and vision and excellent communication are significantly more critical for affecting these ISS projects success.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations on how planning-related CSFs do improve understanding of international development projects success. Based on prior empirical reviews of the literature and conceptual research on CSFs of ID projects, a comprehensive framework is created and modified with specific attention paid to the components and context of the effectiveness of ID initiatives. To lower the rate of project failure, the model can be used to examine ID initiatives.

5.2 Summaries of Major Findings on Critical Success Factors

5.2.1. Objective One: To identify and examine critical success factors of ID project planning.

The goal here is to figure out whether project planning is associated with any specific vital success factors. The results show that, with an emphasis on project planning, there are five main themes that may be utilized to evaluate the CSFs of ID initiatives. These are: project management competency, ID project manager/team performance, organizational performance, planning tools/methods, and ID project documentation.

The results demonstrate that twenty critical success factors influence the overall effectiveness of ID project planning. The recognition of additional CSFs to the planning factors listed in the literature such as change readiness, a database of lessons learned, and final ID document approval as well as prerequisites for the project planning phase, like comprehension of the tasks necessary and excellent input from the parties involved in the planning phase, are what distinguish this case from the others. The most important critical

success factors during the planning stage of ID initiatives have been identified as ownership, a clear goal and vision, communication, and leadership.

Involving the community in the planning phase of international development projects facilitates the process of prioritizing needs in accordance with the national PRSP. The possibility that the project will be tailored to the particular needs, community priorities, and environment rises when local stakeholders own it. Initiatives that are owned locally have greater relevance and acceptance because they are more culturally appropriate, adaptable to local dynamics, and consistent with community goals. Flexibility is essential when managing many teams operating in different locations, and leadership is essential when managing stakeholders both internally and externally.

5.2.2 Objective Two: To examine the challenges that inhibit ID project success during planning

Here, the goal is to pinpoint the obstacles that stand in the way of successful ID projects. Owing to the research, the project stakeholders appear to have trouble collaborating and communicating because of the intricacy of their work and the unstable environment in which they operate. The results indicate that there is little to no engagement of the project beneficiaries in the ISS planning process. The results demonstrate that postponing project planning procedures results in outdated plans and expired interventions, which, even if accepted by project beneficiaries, provide them with no satisfaction. This is ascribed to low top management support, improper project planning tool use, insufficient project management expertise on the side of district planners, and inadequate record keeping. Theoretical results show that the success of ID projects can be raised by including all

relevant parties, ensuring good communication, and expanding the project knowledge base during the planning stage.

5.2.3 Objective Three: To assess and understand the current status and future prospects of ID project success using CSF framework

To achieve this goal, a framework for evaluating and comprehending the present state and potential for future ID project success is developed using the data collected and existing literature. The model emphasizes the importance of effective planning and coordination and being prepared to adapt to change in a planned or unplanned manner. Owing to the results, the possibility that the project would be tailored to the particular needs, community priorities, and project environment rises when local stakeholders own it.

The planning methods, tools, and techniques are the most significant criteria throughout the project planning process. Contrary to common belief, which holds that project managers' and project teams' performance qualities are most closely associated to success (Khang & Moe, 2008), actual data demonstrates that local ownership of the planning process, leadership, clear mission and vision and excellent communication are significantly more critical for affecting these ISS projects success. This illustrates their importance and practical applicability for ID initiatives, and they are consistent with and beneficial to the CSF idea. This emphasizes again how important it is to consider the project reality in addition to the social and cultural dynamics around the project settings.

5.3. Conclusion

The analysis of the contribution of crucial success components in the planning stage of ID projects concludes that the most important criteria for success are ownership, a clear mission and vision, communication, and leadership.

The study's findings enable theorized deductions regarding the barriers to project success notably that the lack of participation from key stakeholders and recipients hinders planning for development initiatives. The donor organization, local assemblies, and the government are the main players in planning. The project beneficiaries (PBs) don't participate nearly enough, if at all, in the planning stage. Long project planning processes result in expired interventions, as empirical evidence shows. Should project participants choose to implement the recommended fixes, they will no longer fulfill their requirements.

The study's conclusion, which uses the CSF framework to assess and comprehend the present state and potential future success of ID initiatives, also emphasizes the value of the design model and its practical applications in enterprises and ID projects, as well as its support of the CSF idea. This emphasizes again how important it is to consider the project reality in addition to the social and dynamic interactions around the project settings.

5.5. Recommendations

In the current research on "An Exploration of the Success Criteria and Factors for International Development Project Planning: A Case Study of WA Municipal," there are a number of recommendations based on the findings that can be made to increase the success of upcoming ID projects. The project plans effectiveness is crucial to the success of global development initiatives. Therefore, it is advised that project planners create a thorough plan

that considers all pertinent variables and stakeholders. The plan should outline the project objectives, goals, and schedules and be crystal clear, succinct, and well-documented.

Needs analyses are essential for determining the community most urgent requirements. To make sure that the project is planned to effectively satisfy the needs of the community, project planners should undertake detailed needs analyses.

Stakeholder engagement is essential to the success of projects aimed at international development. Project managers should consult with all pertinent parties, including the neighbourhoods, residents, elected officials, and non-governmental organizations. This will ensure that the project is in line with the priorities and needs of the neighbourhood.

Successful ID efforts depend on sustainability. As a result, it is advised that project planners give sustainability top priority during the planning and execution of projects. This includes creating projects that are socially inclusive, culturally acceptable, commercially feasible, and environmentally friendly.

To ensure the long-term viability of international development projects, local ownership and capacity building are essential. Therefore, it is advised that throughout the course of the project, local ownership and capacity building be given top priority by project planners.

Successful international development efforts depend on collaboration and knowledge sharing. To make the most of everyone's expertise, project planners should encourage collaboration among stakeholders and knowledge sharing.

Monitoring and evaluation systems are crucial for gauging the effectiveness and impact of ID projects. Clear monitoring and assessment procedures should be established by project planners to track progress and pinpoint opportunities for improvement.

Project managers can increase the success of global development initiatives and support sustainable development in local communities by implementing these suggestions.

This research project is not only going to benefit the field of ID projects only, but investigators of traditional projects can ponder on these findings to generate thoughts for future research.

5.6 Area for future research

The current study is unable to take into consideration the variations in the success variables for different project stages throughout the project life cycle due to time and resource constraints. Thus, it focuses on only the planning phase in the project life cycle. Future research can further look at other areas of the project lifecycle in a quantitative study.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name of Organization……

Organizational type……

Department…….

Portfolio…….

Sex of participant…….....

Interview date…… Duration…….....

A. Introductory Questions

- Can you please share your experience working in the aid industry?
- What are the names of the projects you are currently working on?
- What are the goals and objectives of those projects?

B. ID project planning

- Can you please give a brief background about the planning procedures of this or any other projects you have taken part in?
- What can you say about collaboration with other stakeholders during the planning stage of these projects you are working or have worked on?
- Who are/ were the active participants?
- How is the degree of involvement of the beneficiary communities during the planning phase of those projects?
- How were the needs for development identified by the organization?
- What were the methods or tools used during the planning phase of the project life cycle?

- What are the positive and negative practices you can recall from this phase?

C. Project Success Criteria and Critical Success Factors

- Are there any specific CSFs for ID projects planning? If there are
- Can you please help identify and validate under the following themes at least one CSF for ID projects during planning?

  Theme: Project management competency

  Theme: ID project Manager/ Team performance skills

Theme: ID organizational performance

  Theme: Planning methods/tools/ techniques

  Theme: ID projects documentation

D. Significance of CSFs

- How do these criteria and planning factors contribute to the success of ID projects you are currently working?

E. Challenges in ID projects

- What common challenges have you encountered in ID projects during planning phases?
- How do those challenges relate to the project management methods employed?

F. Interview Closure

- What are the most urgent improvements in ID projects planning phase?
- Can you please relate that to the overall success of ID projects?

APPENDIX 2: THEMATIC ANALYSIS

General Theme: Overall success

- Most projects have issues with sustainability of their outcomes.
- Projects visibility implications and recognition are critical for project success.

1. Organizing Theme: Project Management Competency

Basic Themes:

a. There is not a standard method to assess beneficiaries' needs.
b. The needs identification is done by governments based on national interest.
c. Governments set development priorities with the SDGs in mind.
d. Private funded projects identify needs based on pilot methodologies.
e. There is a prioritization of organizational needs over beneficiaries needs.
f. Donor organization, government and implementation organization are called to participate.
g. Beneficiaries are called to provide baseline information, rather than fully participate in the design process.
h. Local partners and NGOs are contacted to provide information on their capabilities and experience, but not to give input on their strategic role.
i. Project managers and implementation team do not participate during the design process.

2. Organizing Theme: ID projects planning methods/techniques/tools

Basic Themes:

a. Logical Framework Matrix is the main tool employed for ID projects planning.
b. Additional tools include Problem Tree Analysis and Resource-Based Management.

c. Sometimes, ad hoc tools relevant for the context and the funding organizations are employed.

d. The ID projects planning methodology is Waterfall

3. Organizing theme: ID project manager/ team performance

Basic theme:

a. Project success is correlated with strong project manager expertise in leadership

b. Project leader must effectively communicate to all stakeholders.

c. Motivation is critical in building team confidence.

APPENDIX 3: CSF CHECKLIST GUIDE

How do the planning-related CSFs improve understanding of ID projects' success?

CSF FOR PROJECT PLANNING			PARTICIPANTS' VALIDATION									
			P-1	P-2	P-3	P-4	P-5	P-6	P-7	P-8	P-9	P-10
1.	Project management competence											
	a.											
	b.											
	c.											
	d.											
2.	ID project manager/project team performance skills.											
	a.											
	b.											
	c.											
	d.											
3.	ID organizational performance											
	a.											
	b.											
	c.											
	d.											
4.	Planning tools/methods/ techniques											
	a.											
	b.											

	c.											
	d.											
5	ID project documentation											
	a.											
	b.											
	c.											

Source: field survey (2022)