PROJECT PLANNING IMPACT ON PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF PAKISTAN TELECOMM SECTOR

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Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to assess the planning process and their role in the sustainable development. This technical paper presents the planning process in telecom sector of Pakistan. The paper is based on content analysis. Besides this, practices and experiences of the professionals were accumulated followed by the human audit. The study proclaimed that telecom sector in Pakistan is contributing to the social, emotional, environmental, and economic development. However, there is a dire need for delivery of value and sustained development. Community liaison centers need to be developed the active feedback for the balanced development. This short study presents unique perspective for the sustained development of the telecom sector. Moreover, the study also recommended to adopt agile/adoptive approach for sustained development. Furthermore, the study also proclaimed to involve internal and external stakeholder in the planning process, as inclusive planning remains more proactive and contribute more to the sustained development.

Keywords- Project Planning; sustained development; social development; economic development.

Introduction

World in today's era has great impact of innovative communication by rapidly and regularly technological changes which have altered the ways the professionals and ordinary human being communicate (Wang, Liu, & Parker, 2020). It has also been proven that inspired communication innovative results into an overall industry innovation thus, converted the world into global village (Wiyono, et al., 2019; Wang, Liu, & Parker, 2020)People wants to remain constantly connected with their fellows, friends and family (Al-Rahmi, Alzahrani, Yahaya, Alalwan, & Kamin,

2020). Therefore, responsibilities of the telecommunication companies are rising with each passing moment. The stakes are high for everyone. However, it remains the prime responsibility of the telecom sector to provide with the best of the services, facilities and functions to their valued customers (Fulk, 2017). Although, telecom sector operator in Pakistan has been successfully running its business operations across the country, including urban and rural areas.It directly translates company's revenue, embellish company's brand and also capture the competitive share in the national telecommunication market (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2019; Okundaye,

Fan, & Dwyer, 2019). However, there are some constraints which are affecting, both internal operations, and also the value delivery to the customers (Singh, Luthra, Mangla, & Uniyal, 2019). Among other, one serious constraint is the lack centralized planning department and repository. Different departments are dependent on the input and feedback of the predecessor departments, and it make a long queue for the sub-departments for submission, approval and execution of the plans. Such anomalies create redundancies and duplication, which consume more resources, increase costs and waste (Muneeb, Yazdi, P. Wanke, & Chughtai, 2020 ; Ullah, Pinglu, Ullah, Abbas, & Khan, 2021). The study recommends to have a permanent forum in the form of Project Management Offices (PMO) to get executive support and align all sub planning departments in the shape of a more formal structure. PMO may enable the telecom sector to mitigate unforeseen events and to avoid inefficient duplication of efforts in planning and later in project execution.

Literature Review

Since the inception of mankind, every passionate and human loving across the globe, is endeavoring to create the unique product or service in order to make the life easier and comfortable than ever before (Jamil, 2021). Undoubtedly, ancestors on the globe have changed its shape and rising sun on each day has witnessed the tremendous rapid development that man has ever made. Subsequently, 21st century has also proved the same development in the fields of Science and Technology,

Medicines and Management. Leading organizations are undergoing such developments through multifarious small to mega projects in order to achieve the competitive advantages over the competitors (Nizam, et al., 2020; Jamil, 2021).

Industries throughout the world is moving towards the sustainability development. Similarly, the telecom industry is playing its role in environment, social and community maintainability, preservation, sustainability and development (Jing et al., 2021). Current needs should be met at the cost of the future generations' resources. In the same way, environmental sustainability is one of the main focuses of telecom industries (Murshed, Chadni, & Ferdaus, 2020). They are developing different ways to be more efficient, which can consume less energy, renewable energy and clean environmental resources. In contrast to past practices, e.g. tower installation of different companies on similar land were deteriorating land, air and was causing pollution, caused by the generator and electromagnetic waves. Besides this, the process was costly and not even eco-friendly. Similarly, consumption of fuel by the generators, and emission of Carbon dioxide have been replaced by use of solar energy (Javed, 2020; Kabir, Gilani, Ullah, & Rehman, 2021; Javed, 2020).

Moreover, through mobile infrastructure sharing with other Telco Operator decreases the cost of network deployment in remote and urban areas (Muneeb, Yazdi, P. Wanke, & Chughtai, 2020).Thesharing of same land and some particular resources like Shelter/Room, tower and masts havereduced the waste of material, cost, time and energy (Abid, Ikram, Wu, &

Ferasso, 2021). Infrastructure sharing may also be encouraged, where ever the areas are not easily accessible and operational management of cell site cost is too high. Though there is a concept of active sharing exists as well, where entities of mobile network can be shared, such as Base station itself, Radio units, Wireless antennae, micro wavesequipment's and Power equipment but in Pakistan passive sharing is more prevalent (Shah, Longsheng, Solangi, Ahmad, & Ali, 2021; Murshed, Chadni, & Ferdaus, 2020).

Furthermore, the trend is shifting towards the use of fiber optics cable. This method is faster, saves energy and eco-friendlier as compared to the microwave transmission (Ullah, Pinglu, Ullah, Abbas, & Khan, 2021; Singh, Luthra, Mangla, & Uniyal, 2019). It provides faster and better data coverage, since the fiber optics cables are laid underground, which looks more aesthetic in the society (Imran, et al., 2021; Jamil, 2021).

Mainly areas of focusing of Telecom industry is to reduce the power consumption, efficient use of energy and providing a green healthy environment to the subscribers. Exploring the innovative technologies, optimal usage of existing power resources and the possibilities of using solar power resources would be a great step towards Green Telecom. Using the solar energy for powering up the telecom equipment especially BTS cell sites would definitely reduce the operational cost of cell site and decrease the dependency on commercial power and generator usage, subsequently the requirement of fuel would significantly be decreased. This could be more productive and beneficial for remote areas, where national grid is not available or difficult to deploy mainly in rural and hilly areas of the country (Halou et al., 2019).

Pakistan Telecom sector is launching new projects, accommodating new graduates, career growth, and enhancing business opportunities, which is increasing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and rationalizing Pakistan's economy(Shahzad, Jianqiu, Hashim, Nazam, & Wang, 2020). Telecommunication industry across the globe in general and within remote areas of Pakistan in particular has proved itself in best way in shaping the lives of community and fulfilling their basic needs. Especially the communities belonging to North of Pakistan are connected now with the telecommunication technology, which were isolated earlier; hence, helping them in developing and grooming their generations through consistent connectivity with the rest of world communities(Said, Toumi, & Zaidi, 2017; Javed, 2020). Non-availability of highly educated and trained staff at all places around the country, especially at remote areas was a big challenge for the community as far as the quality of education is concerned. In this regard, telecommunication industry has played vital role in imparting the virtual education by means of virtual class rooms and training them virtually as per their convenience and comfort(Okundaye, Fan, & Dwyer, 2019; Abid, Ikram, Wu, & Ferasso, 2021).

In the contemporary world, females are equally contributing with their male colleagues. Telecom Industry has helped everyone in Pakistan especially the dedicated females in providing the opportunity in creating and maintaining the business ventures. This aspect of Telecommunication has not only boosted the morale of community in establishing

the business but also stabilized the economy of the community(Godil, Sharif, Agha, & Jermsittiparsert, 2020). In recent past, COVID-19 has challenged almost every tear of the world; resultantly, it has changed the mindset of community, almost fully. Even many dedicated and competent employees were laid off. Like other regions of world, telecom industry has done tremendous job in Pakistan, in helping the people in accessing the new jobs and maintain the existing assignments / jobs(FahadAldosari, Shunaifi, Ullah, Muddassir, & Noor, 2019). Furthermore, the telecom infrastructure helped people residing in remote areas to work from home, while utilizing the free-lancing strategies to cope up the situations and ensure the community survivals. Moreover, prevailing law and order situation in the country is being monitored and controlled with the effective and efficient utilization of telecommunication, which has enabled the security agencies to cater the security issues at strategic and community levels. Thanks to telecommunication due to which community feels safe and sound and also exercises strong grip over the domestic and global security situations(Fulk, 2017; Muneeb, Yazdi, P. Wanke, & Chughtai, 2020).

Methodology

This short paper is based on the content analysis, followed by experiences and practices of the knowledge workers. Similarly, the process also followed the human audits, where workers and customers were asked for the role of the telecommunication sector in the sustainability of the society and the country. The thematic analysis of the responses were that, they were happy from the telecommunication sector role in the stabilizing their lives, roles and keeping them engage in the period of COVID-19. The support was productive and sustainable, as many professionals started their roles, jobs, working and learning from their home. This social, psychological, emotional and the pragmatic support was possible because of the active role and engagement of the telecom sector and this role was also appreciated by the public, government and the elected Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Recommendations

Although telecom is contributing to the social, emotional, psychological and economic development of the country. However, they need to do more for delivery of value and sustained development. They need to community liaison centers, where they can take external stakeholders on board, to get their feedback and engage them in project planning, execution and implementation. In the same way, they may establish an executive steering committee with the aim to interact with internal stakeholders of planning and rollout departments in order to keep them in unified loop. They can structure operational areasand can help Project Management Office (PMO)in their programs like training/development, auditing & review processes and awards & recognition. For the best utilization of resources, establish PMO, who would develop procedures, processes, and knowledge repositories accepted by entire planning and rollout departments and ensure project governance of the performing organization. In the era of change, adequate authority to PMO

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needs to be ensured for the implementation of project management plans, and also PMO need to be more adptive in nature to accommodate changes. Likewise, tower sharing is an important factor that if worked on more actively can save a lot of cost and resources specially in remote areas.

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