

Using Project Management Strategy to Evaluate the Challenges of Managing a Renovation Project at the Chancellor College Library, University of Malawi

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Abstract

This paper is based on a study which analysed the use of the project management methodology, Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) to manage the University of Malawi, Chancellor College Library floor covering renovation project in various stages from initiation through to closing. A case study approach was used in this study, with data collected through observation, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and document analysis. The data was analysed qualitatively using thematic content analysis, and quantitative data was analysed using statistical analysis. The study findings reveal that the project management methodologies were not properly used; and where they were used, they were used unconsciously, which led to a number of challenges through the projects lifecycle in terms of the nine knowledge areas. Recommendations on the best practices of managing a renovation project using a standardised methodology were made to improve future planning of projects of a similar kind.

Keywords: Project Management, Library Projects, Library Renovations, Floor Coverings, Malawi, University of Malawi.

Introduction

Moving a small library to a new library, or in times of renovations, has been regarded as an exercise that does not involve much planning and organising or even need for research. As a result, Swanepoel (2002) observes that such views lead to bottlenecks, uncoordinated activities, delays and mistakes. But the recent rapid proliferation of complex library services such as virtual reference and digital repositories suggests that the role of librarians is becoming increasingly project-oriented (Kinkus, 2007). Therefore, work in libraries today often involves coordinating projects with numerous tasks and engaging various levels of people assigned to complete the projects within a specified time limit and often under very challenging budget constraints (Massis, 2010).

While organisations in both the public and the private sector have embraced formal project management (PM) methodologies such as those espoused by the Project Management Institute (PMI), there is little evidence that libraries are using formal or standardised approaches (Howarth, 2012). Kinkus (2007) explains that it is unclear whether current library science literature and education adequately address project management skills or other traditionally “extra-librarian” leadership qualities now needed to effectively manage project based initiatives in libraries. Stewart-Mailhoit (2015) indicates that a quick scan of any article on project management in libraries shows one of the two things (and usually both) mentioned: the lack of literature on the topic and the lack of training in PM among librarians. Burich et al. in Stewart-Mailhoit (2015) note that when project management techniques are used in American libraries, most often they are used informally, often without managers being conscious of their use.

In the past years, the University of Malawi libraries have been involved in a number of projects such as automation of the library (Wella, 2011; Eneya, 2008) which led to the introduction of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), online cataloguing and circulation of dissertations and theses and establishment of institutional repositories (Mapulanga, 2014). However, the environment in which these projects were conducted were constrained financially (Nampeya, 2009; Chaputula, 2011; Chiweza, 2000; Kachoka and Hoskins, 2009) and most of the projects were successful as a result of donor funding for example, the automation project was sponsored by Rockefeller Foundation in 1992 (Wella, 2011; Eneya, 2008). In the course of the year 2015, the University of Malawi, Chancellor College Management after receiving subvention from the government decided to rehabilitate the library building as a project. The manner in which the project of replacing the carpet with a linoleum (marmoleum) floor covering was conducted is what prompted the study to establish the challenges that such a project experienced in terms of the Project Management Body of Knowledge's (PMBOK), project management methodology knowledge areas.

The main purpose of the study was to establish the challenges encountered when managing a floor covering renovation project at the University of Malawi, Chancellor College Library. The research answered the following research questions:

1. Whether the library management applied a standard project management approach, PMBOK when managing a floor covering project?
2. What were the challenges that affected the project in the terms of the PMBOK, project management nine knowledge areas?

Literature Review

The literature review focuses on project management, floor coverings and related studies on project management in libraries and challenges of managing renovation projects in libraries.

Project Management

Project Management Institute (1996) describes a project as a temporary endeavour undertaken to

create a unique product or service. Organisations performing projects will usually divide each project into several project phases to provide better management and control. Collectively the project phases are called the project life cycle. Cervone in Green (2010) and PMI (1996) summarises them into five categories: initiating, planning, executing, controlling and closing. The project life cycle generally defines what technical work should be done in each phase and who should be involved in each phase. Project life cycle descriptions may be general or detailed. Highly detailed descriptions which may have numerous charts, forms and checklist to provide structure and consistency are often called project management methodologies (PMI, 1996). Thus, project management as described by Project Management Institute's (PMI) and the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) is the application of knowledge skills, tools and techniques to project activities in order to meet stakeholder's needs and expectations from a project (Burke, 2003; Kinkus, 2007; PMI, 1996). Massis (2010) points out that it is critical that all projects have a defined start, a work-breakdown structure (a grid designed to capture all the work of the project in an organised way) throughout the process, and a conclusion. If these three essential components cannot be identified, then the work was probably misdiagnosed as a project at the onset.

Project Management Knowledge areas describe project management knowledge and practice in terms of its component processes (PMI, 1996). The PMBOK describes project management under the following nine knowledge areas: project integration, project scope management, project time management, project cost management, project quality management, project human resource management, project communications management, project risk management and project procurement management (Burke, 2003; Kinkus, 2007). Burke (2003) explains that the body of knowledge can be divided into core elements which determine the deliverable objectives of the project, namely: scope, time, cost and quality; and into the means of achieving the deliverable objectives, namely: integration, human resources, communication, risk and procurement. According to PMBOK (2008), project integration management describes the processes required to ensure that the various elements of the project are

properly coordinated, and it consists of project plan development, project plan execution and overall change control. Project scope management describes the processes required to ensure that the project includes all the work required, and only the work required, to complete the job successfully. Project time management includes the process required to ensure timely performance of the project, and cost management includes the process required to ensure that the project is completed within the approved budget (Burke, 2003; PMI, 2008). Kinkus (2007) discusses that human resource management reflects the project manager's ability to identify and acquire needed staff and to develop a productive team. Communications management refers not only to the project manager's competence in sharing information and feedback with the project team, but also in reporting progress and performance issues to key stakeholders. Procurement management, which is the ability to identify, solicit, and hire subcontractors for specific project segments, and quality management, which entails planning the standards of implementation and stakeholder satisfaction that must be achieved, comprise the most visible parts of project realisation.

Most authors have concluded that the use of project management techniques within higher education libraries is not only beneficial but also necessary (Howarth, 2012). Some of the benefits include: well-planned and resourced projects, clearly defined and realistic expectations, clearly defined products and resulting outcomes, well formulated business case, effective project controls, effective scope, time, cost and quality management, integrated risk and issue management, benefits clearly linked to project outcomes, and robust information for decision making at all levels (Massis, 2010; Howarth, 2012).

The impact of carpeting in home environments on health and safety is an active area of scientific research. Some aspects of carpets can benefit the health and safety of occupants, while other aspects can contribute to illness and injury (Jacobs et al. 2008). Steinhagen and Kay (2000) suggest that the most important consideration for new floor covering in the library is to have a healthy and attractive environment with good air quality conducive to good staff morale and user comfort.

Howarth (2012) took a first step to understand how libraries were managing their projects and to uncover their activities, tools and techniques, best practices, challenges, success criteria and success factors of projects taken in the library, especially in Ontario. The results of the survey and interviews showed that the respondents had not overwhelmingly embraced a formal approach to project management. Instead, approaches tended to be informal or ad hoc, with only a few libraries employing mature strategies with formal approaches such as consistent use of templates and forms and a project management infrastructure that supported monitoring and controlling throughout the project life cycle. The results largely indicated that where project planning did occur, it happened on an informal basis; for example, communication channels that could have been established, but a communication plan was not documented, and while a project could be monitored in some fashion, regular status reports were not distributed.

Winston and Hoffman (2005) emphasised on the importance of educational preparation and training in the principles and techniques of project management for those who have responsibilities on project management in organisations. In their research, they indicated the need for a more enhanced focus on project management in degree programmes and in professional development. Further, they highlighted the importance of project management in libraries and the extent to which graduate programmes in library and information science should provide such preparation. The results reflected the overall focus on the importance of management principles, including the coverage of specialised aspects of management, such as human resources and financial management, and the limited focus on project management in library and information science programmes. The aspects of project management, which were addressed in the curricula, were discussed as the need for project management expertise for large- and small-scale projects in libraries.

Massis (2010) highlighted that communication is a main challenge of project management methodology. He noted that project management methodology operates most successfully if all of the components were learned, understood and utilised properly and strategically, especially the

communications piece. He cited reasons for the failure of a project as a lack of communication and explained that proper management of the communications component throughout the lifecycle of each project is essential to project management's ultimate success. He further pointed out that communication not only keeps everyone up-to-date on the project progress, but also facilitates buy-in and ownership of major project decisions and milestones. To ensure the success of a project, much information, including expectations, goals, needs, resources, status reports, budgets and purchase requests, needs to be communicated on a regular basis to all the major stakeholders.

In a research study done by Kinkus (2007), she conducted a content analysis of several years of library job advertisements and compared the numbers of times project management skills were included as required. The study found that the number of job advertisements explicitly requiring project management skills increased greatly between 1993 and 2003, from 4.1% to 11.2%; and in 2004, it dropped again. The study concluded that as the technological aspect of most librarian jobs continues to grow, and technology-based projects in libraries can no longer be performed by an individual or a few staff members in one department, and implementation of technology-based projects requires expertise from across the library. The study further recommended that librarians in training may find that their Master in Library Science or Master in Library and Information Science curriculum offers a course, and possibly courses, in project management; and if project management courses are not offered by their home department, interested students could seek out project management training by cross-registering with other departments.

Yeh and Walter (2016) identified the most salient critical success factors (CSF) for implementation success for integrated library systems (ILSs) migration success through a qualitative study with four cases. The study found that careful selection process, top management involvement, vendor support, project team competence, staff user involvement, interdepartmental communication, data analysis and conversion, project management and project tracking, staff user education and training, and managing staff user emotions were the most salient

CSFs that determine the success of a migration project.

Steinhagen and Kay (2000) advised that the library administration should nominate a floor covering design task force to work with vendors, the administration and with the campus plant operations on the actual types of floor coverings, areas to be refurbished, timing of work, pattern and colour coordination; library administration to approve the use of different types of floor coverings for different areas of the building and consult with staff on their preferences in work areas and offices and replacement of the present flooring material to be done gradually. On moving the library, Swanepoel (2002) emphasised on the ways to calculate shelf space, mark and prepare shelves, pack, unpack and reshelve books and periodicals, and pointed out on the need for timely planning and the role of planning committee. Further, Lindsay (2007) highlighted the need to deploy office movers who were prepared to move a library collection by chronological, alphabetical, or classification order, failing which they need to be supervised.

Although renovations could not be done without challenges, the best results occurred when library planners and other participants demonstrated respect for each other's perspectives and priorities and thus were able to negotiate compromises as observed by Somerville (1988 in Lam 2006) and when library staff work with a supportive administration, a generous budget, and architects who listened to them and understood their needs (Lindsay 2007). Mix (2012) rightly observed that in times of disaster and renovations, stress can be a challenge which may lead to resistance to change. Some strategies to relieve stress during disaster and renovation include time-outs or enforced breaks, treats, recognitions, and praise. The more staff know, the less likely they are to fear the unknown. Lam (2006) suggested that librarians need to maintain patience and calmness, which are panaceas for the frustrations commonly encountered in any renovation project.

In a study by Gust and Haka (2006) at Michigan State University, USA, a number of aspects of renovations were done which included relocating the reference section, adding a cafe, adding new carpeting and furnishings, expanding library hours, providing alternatives for coming to the library, and greatly increasing computer technology. In the study,

the actions taken by the library increased users' usage of the library's physical location, increased user activity and numbers in the main library and made it a more welcoming environment.

In a study on renovation of the Li Ping Medical Library of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Lam (2006) established the following challenges the project encountered: funding constraints, space limitations, abbreviated planning time, stakeholder agreements, structural problems of an old building with dated infrastructure and construction restrictions of a hospital environment. The renovation project took six months to complete and the library remained open throughout much of the construction.

Research Methodology

The study was carried out at the University of Malawi, Chancellor College Library. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches and used a case study methodological approach. The study population was a group of 173 workers comprising of 65 (37.6%) library staff, 12 (6.9%) outsourced library cleaners and 96 (55.5%) hired casual labourers. A sample population of 21

(12.14%) respondents was reached through both data saturation and purposive sampling. Of the 21 research participants sampled, seven (33.3%) were library assistants (team leaders), six (28.6%) were hired casual labourers, five (23.8%) were ordinary library assistants, two (9.5%) were assistant librarians and one (4.8%) was the College Librarian (See Table 1). In terms of gender, there were 17 (80.95%) male, and 4 (19.05%) females.

The data was collected using participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. Scheduled and unscheduled observations were done on the staff, the library and rooms where items were taken to during the project. Focus groups discussions were conducted with selected library staff, hired casual labourers and the team leaders. In-depth interviews were done on selected librarians who were involved in the project. The project files were studied to view the dates of letters written to Procurement Department and the delivery notes of the items procured and the extra hours that the staff worked on the project. The study took place between 6th December 2015 and 27th April 2016.

Table 1: Categories of sampled population of study

Category of staff	Number of respondents	Percent
Library Assistant (Team Leaders)	7	33.3
Hired Casual Labourers	6	28.6
Library Assistant (Ordinary staff)	5	23.8
Assistant Librarians (Senior Library Staff)	2	9.5
College Librarian (Senior Library Staff)	1	4.8
Total	21	100

A semi-structured interview schedule which was divided into parts according to the PMBOK knowledge areas was used to solicit answers from all the respondents. The project notes, the delivery notes and the staff registers were analysed statistically in order to know the factors that affected the implementation time and have a better analysis of availability of labour force. Thematic analysis was

used to analyse data which was obtained from the focus group discussions, observations and in-depth interviews to interpret the challenges that were encountered through initiating to closing phases of the floor covering renovation project. Issues that emerged were categorised into the nine knowledge areas of PMBOK which determine the deliverable objectives of a project and the means of achieving the deliverable objectives.

Findings and Discussion of the Study

This section presents the major findings and discussion of the study.

Demographics of the Population

Out of the 21 participants who were involved in the focus group discussions and the interviews, only four (19%) were females. The age range of those who participated in the interviews was 25 to 60, with most in their thirties. All three (14.3%) senior members of staff were holders of Master's degrees in library studies, nine (42.9 %) were library assistants with Certificates in Library Studies; three (14.3%) were hired casual labourers with Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE); three (14.3%) hired casual labourers were holders of Junior Certificate of Education; two (9.5%) library assistants who were also team leaders of working groups were holders of Diploma in Library Science; and one (4.8%) library assistant who was also a team leader was a holder of a degree in Library Science. All the library members of staff who were involved in the study had worked with the library for not less than three years.

The study results reveal the following stages of the project:

Use of Standardised Project Management

Methodology

The study found that the project did not use the PMBOK, project management methodology or any standardised project management methodology to conduct the project. Similarly, the five phases of the project lifecycle as described by PMI (1996), namely: initiation, planning, executing, controlling and closing were not consciously followed. The results concur with the observations by Howarth (2012) that the respondents of the survey had not overwhelmingly embraced formal approach to project management methodologies.

Challenges of the Project in Terms of PMBOK

The study reveals that the speed at which the project began led to some critical issues being ignored. The results indicate that all the areas of integration –

planning, execution and controlling of the project were a challenge. The project plan and performance reports which are the essential inputs to overall change control (PMI, 2008; Howarth, 2012) were not available. Instead, a work plan which is just one of the ten components of the project plan, according to Dingle (1997) was developed after the project was already initiated. However, the results show that the work plan was drawn by the library management that had no knowledge of the terms of reference between the College and the contractor as recommended by Steinhagen and Kay (2000) who advise that library administration should work with administration and vendors during the whole process of planning through to implementation of a library renovation project.

On a positive note, on the other hand, status review meetings were held regularly with the members of staff of the library. The lack of essential documentation such as the project plan could be attributed to what Dingle (1997) described as weak project leadership at college management level, as well as library level and lack of project management skills by both librarians and college management as indicated by (Stewart-Mailhoit (2015) and Kinkus (2007). Dingle (1997) subsists that good project procedures supported by a good administrative system will not compensate for weak project leadership. Communication skills should be promoted by management and the project manager should ensure that everyone is aware of the need to give attention to: correspondence, reports and management meetings.

Project Scope Management

The study reveals that the staff was not clear on who the project manager was, as reported by the College Librarian. In addition, the line of authority was not clear; and almost all the members of staff from the college management and other academic and nonacademic members of staff whose role was not clear were coming to the library to issue instructions at any time which led to conflicts between college management and library management. The project manager may influence the success of the project by creating an environment where stakeholders are encouraged to contribute their skills and knowledge (Burke, 2003) and

promoting good communication (Dingle, 1997). The results are contrary to the guidelines of PMI (2008) which recommends that a project manager should be assigned prior to the project plan execution. Further, there was a simple work breakdown structure which was done by library management using basic management skills rather than any standardised project management methodology. The results are in tandem with what Howarth (2012) found that the project management approaches tended to be informal or ad hoc with only a few libraries employing mature strategies with formal approaches such as consistent use of templates and forms and a project management infrastructure that supported monitoring and controlling throughout the project lifecycle.

Project Time Management

The funding of the project came at the time when the college management did not anticipate it, as the results showed. The project started almost one month after the semester break, at the time when most library staff were on holidays and some were to start their holidays. The work took three months to complete contrary to the planned six weeks, thereby disrupting the school calendar and triggering unrest among some students who threatened to go on strike on 2nd March 2016 due to lack of access to the Library's general collection. When all the twenty-one research participants were asked about the time frame of the project they said that it did not run within the planned time. The study participants expressed resentments with the whole planning process as expressed by one of the members who said: "*The College could have planned to start the project soon after the closure of academic year on 9th October 2015 rather than starting on 6th December 2015.*" The actual period that the project took is in line with the results of the study done by Lam (2006) where the work was done for six months and time was one of the challenges for the project. The delay could be attributed to the fact that linoleum is labour intensive to install (Jacob et al. 2008), and the process of applying sealer to ensure proper bondage takes some time (Steinhagen and Kay, 2000). Besides, marmoleum was ordered from Holland which is very far from Malawi. The results show the need for realistic planning time of at least

six months rather than the planned two months. Further, Howarth (2012) indicates that one of the success factors of the project is the completion of projects in time according to the schedule determined at the project outset.

Project Human Resource Management

The findings reveal problems with a number of human resource management issues. The absence of staffing management plan as recommended by PMI (1996) which describes when and how human resource would be bought onto and taken off the project plan could be observed by the researcher. The respondents during a focus group discussion indicated that the administration took time to respond to the urgent need of working overtime by the library staff (65) and providing lunch and supper for all the staff (173) who were working on the project. In addition, the results indicate that when conducting roll calls some members could sneak out and not everyone participated in the work during overtime hours (Figure 1); the administration took two months to pay its staff the overtime allowances when the job was completed; the terms and conditions of service for the hired casual labourers were not clearly spelt out regarding welfare and safety issues such as meals and in cases of injury on duty respectively; and due to lack of clarification on the vote from which the meal items were to come from and some logistical problems in the signing of the cash imprest, the food items were not always available, especially for the casual labourers.

Further, the results indicate the lack of strategies to relieve stress by administration thereby creating lack of motivation on the part of staff which slowed the whole project. The senior members of staff were supportive throughout the project and worked tirelessly to motivate the junior staff through meetings. Library management relieved the stress of the members of staff by clarifying most issues related to the project.

The study findings are in line with the study by Olney, Backus and Klein (2010) where the project coordinators demonstrated deep commitment to the project at times, keeping the site running under very difficult circumstances and through the employment of temporary workers to assist with the project.

Project Procurement Management

In line with the guidelines by PMI (1996) the library

developed a list of items to be procured as part of the procurement planning, although this was done without following any project management methodological approach. However, due to time constraint as discussed earlier the project experienced a lot of challenges in terms of procurement as the study revealed. The study also found that working materials were not purchased and delivered on time which led the work coming to a halt on a number of times as expressed by the members of the focus groups and observations made from the delivery notes. At times, due to poor communication, the procurement office could order incorrect materials and stationery which had to be returned, or the order was cancelled. The researcher also established that apart from inadequate time, procurement procedures and inadequate funding were the major reasons for the delays in the procurement of the working materials. Despite the bottlenecks, the researcher observed that the librarians stuck to the best practices on the moving of the library.

Project Cost Management

The study revealed that the floor covering project was one of the most expensive projects that the library executed since its establishment. The study findings indicate that the library had tough time to identify funding; and even when it was identified, it was difficult to get approval from the University's main office; the members of staff got their allowances two months after the project; the temporary staff were not paid on time; some suppliers were not yet paid at the time of writing; the school calendar was interrupted; and the demarcations which were pulled down were not replaced. In addition, the study established that the College Library incurred unplanned cost as such the need to put rubbers under the library tables and chairs and later the buying of new chairs and tables. The results are in line with the study by Green (2010) where the project was costly in terms of time, finances and human resource.

The findings indicate that the cost estimations were done by library management, especially for small items. As observed earlier, the library management did not take part in the selection of the floor covering, hence the library management was not involved in the initial budgeting of the project.

The results are contrary to the findings by Howarth (2012) in the studies of project management practice where a good budget contributed to the success of the projects, and where project management methodologies were practised, librarians were involved with the management of the project from the initial stages.

Project Quality Management

The results reveal that the actual fixing of the floor material was impressive. The library management applied general management skills to ensure that quality was adhered to during the implementation of the project. The study established that the estates development office and college management assisted with regular inspections in order to ensure that quality of the final product was not compromised, citing an example where some temporary demarcations were pulled down at the last minute after the library management had insisted on keeping them for fear that they would not be replaced. Furthermore, the college management organised training on how to care and handle the marmoleum floor covering to ensure that the end product could adhere to the international standards. The results were within the scope of the PMI (2008) guidelines which recommend that attention should be given to the project quality management processes such as quality planning, quality assurance and quality control, although the attention was not given to detail.

The findings reveal that apart from the library being made aesthetically attractive (Lindsay, 2007), some issues which required attention benefitted from the project. The library also paid attention to the end product. For example, the old book collection was cleared from the library building; the whole library was painted; the rotten window frames were replaced with new window frames; the metal chairs and shelf stands were fitted with rubbers in order to protect the floor as recommended by Forbo (2004); temporary structures which were blocking proper lighting and ventilation and were made from cheap material were pulled down to bring an ambiance of beauty to the library, making it a welcoming environment and new demarcations of the library building were done thereby creating new spaces (Gust and Haka 2006). The findings of the study are in line with the recommendations by PMI (1996) which

states that quality management should address both management of the project and the product of the project.

Project Communications Management

A number of communication issues surfaced in the management of the floor renovation project as the study revealed. Although PMBOK (2008) recommends that information need of various stakeholders be analysed to develop a methodical and logical view of their information needs and sources to meet those needs, the study found that this was not the case. For example, the library was not involved with the initial selection of the floor covering material, contrary to the recommendations by Steinhagen and Kay (2000) that library administration should be the one to nominate the floor covering design, approve the use of different floor coverings for different areas of the building and consult with staff on their preferences in work areas and offices.

The results indicate that as suggested by Massis (2010) the College Management used communication, through meetings to buy-in the ownership of major project decisions and milestones as a way of covering up the gaps that were created at the onset of the project which created feelings of uncertainty with the floor material. Thereafter, the Library Management continued holding meetings at regular intervals to give updates on the progress of the project and encourage the members of staff. Further, the researcher observed that a formal training of proper care and handling of the marmoleum floor coverings as recommended by Forbo (2004) was also conducted after the management observed a shortfall in the care and handling of the floor covering. The results are in line with the recommendations made by Massis (2010) where communication to various stakeholders was used to ensure the success of a project through much information on expectations, goals, needs, resources, status reports, budgets and purchase requests and needs, although they were not done to the satisfaction of the stakeholders.

Project Risk Management

The library staff had a tough time in identifying the storage area for all library materials that according

to Adcock, Varlamoff and Kremp (1998), could safeguard the library materials against man-made and natural disaster, theft and mutilation, pest and mould attack and poor storage and handling practices as the results revealed. The researcher observed that a number of places were identified to safeguard the books and library materials. The suggested rooms were cleared, secured, fumigated, and the floors provided with stands to ensure that books were not put directly on the floor in order to minimise the risk of damage. In the absence of stands, blankets or old carpets were used to overcome dampness from the floor. The study further shows that the books were kept in the computer laboratory and the basement in the same library building in order to minimise cases of theft. The books were packed in standard boxes which could be easily carried to avoid the risk of losing books to damage. The study findings are in line with the findings of Lam (2006) study where space limitation was an issue.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study shows that renovating a library is a challenging exercise. Renovating a library is a major project and should be done with much planning and the involvement of all stakeholders. Renovation cannot be avoided as materials undergo wear and tear and technological changes, and new user demands necessitate changes which are always accompanied with the need to refurbish or redefine new spaces.

The study established, although the project was successful, it experienced financial, human resource and time constraints, and the actual management of the project was not within any standardised project management approach such as the PMBOK. The project was actually run as operations rather than a project. As a result, most of the recommendations by PMI (1996) were not followed, and where they were followed, they were done informally (Howarth, 2012). Some of the observable weaknesses in the management of the floor covering renovation project were: failure to identify a project manager; poor communication channels; lack of proper documentation such as a project plan, a communication plan, a staffing management plan, a budget plan, a procurement plan and a project report; lack of proper monitoring and quality control

mechanisms to ensure that planned targets were being met; poor risk management; poor cost estimations and cost control, and poor procurement planning. The strengths of the project were: understanding members of staff who worked tirelessly even under very difficult conditions to see to it that the project was completed and the contractor who tried to understand the environmental constraints that he was working on.

Based on the results, the study makes the following recommendations: the University of Malawi should adopt standardised project management methodology practices such as PMBOK at college management and library management levels and plan for formal project management training at college level which will benefit the members of staff who are mostly involved with projects, including the library management. The adoption of the project management methodologies such as PMBOK will benefit the library and the whole college in that it will assist in coming up with well-planned and resourced projects, clearly defined and realistic expectations, clearly defined products and resulting outcomes, effective project controls, effective scope, time, cost and quality management, integrated risk and issue management.

While the results show that the use of a standardised approach can help to improve the outcomes of the project, the study recommends that a simple standardised approach be developed for use in small libraries and where resources are limited, but needs to be able to cater for pertinent issues of project management.

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