

PROJECT METHOD MANAGEMENT ORGANIZING CULTURAL EVENTS

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Annotation. Globalization processes and impact to society, knowledge society formation tendencies conditioned culture management transformation in Lithuania make impact to various areas including culture itself. Activity of modern culture institution employees is a project creation and practical implementation. Project method application becomes universal and problem solving oriented, this is why project activities attract a lot of culture managers' attention and becomes a method to use and apply knowledge and practical skills acquired. Research found that project activity changes in cultural events organization contribute to united personality maturity stimulation and is relevant to time period culture features.

Keywords: globalization; project method; culture management.

INTRODUCTION

Democratic society highlights personal activity, creative activities and experience which should harmonize to general European culture development tendencies. Rapidly changing artistic culture stimulates cultural activity modernization (modern artworks, expression forms, sense assessment) as well as ability to express in globalization corrected environment (assess social interest, art dissemination forms, foreign nations art).

Fuchs and Heinze (2004) analyzing culture existence conditions organization come to conclusion that culture restricted by existing possibilities was a self-organizing process from old times. Every modern cultural organization, public or private, carries on some activities related to cultural services provision or cultural product development. Therefore, it is important to cultural organization implementing activities to have available particular technical structure helping activity planning, developing employee's intellectual and creative powers.

In the rapidly changing and involved into globalization processes culture World project has dominating positions, because it is a successful business organization scheme helping to reach organizational strategic goals. Interest in project method and its management nowadays is increasing, because this method involves community into more active problems' cognition, defines goals realization: goal fragmentation into particular stages; works (tasks) list formation; definition of relations between tasks; estimation of works' scope and duration; distribution of resources; cost estimation and decisions (Laučius & Vasilecas, 2007). H. Woodrow (2003) states that project management is defined as realization of particular processes by validation of proposed idea real implementation possibilities (managerial criteria) and acceptability to process participants (processual criteria). Implementing this method lacks in project planning, project participants' activities may become evident et cetera.

Project method is defined as action research (Carr, 2006; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006; Lessel, 2007). Action studies and researches are intensively analyzed and promoted in Western scientific literature from the last decade of XX century (Elliot, 1991; Ellis & Kiely, 2000). Action research is understood as practical verification (check) of prepared action model based on effective criteria application, ideas revelation (Mertens, 2010). Theoretical meaningfulness is not required for project, therefore project implementer is free to decide how to base verified idea – by scientific publications, experience, technological features or other methods. Quite liberally presented novelty of checked idea: from relatively simple e.g. small event organization, up to really complex likes new museum conception creation and implementation. It is obvious that understanding of this method principles and effective management should become an important part of every company strategy impacting not only cultural activity but also providing favorable environment.

Object of article research – project method management.

Goal of the research – to research project method management in cultural institutions.

Tasks of the research: to analyze and reveal project method management in culture sector; to evaluate project method application possibilities in cultural events.

Article research **methods**: theoretical insights and generalization; experts' interview; qualitative research content analysis.

Research ethics. Respondents were explained that participation is voluntary assuring anonymity, privacy. Right to decide was given on participation in the research and free thoughts expression.

IMPORTANCE OF PROJECT METHOD IN CULTURAL ACTIVITY

At present time project method becomes important in scientific research and practice but implementation in cultural sector is quite slow. It is important to note that using this method stimulates employees' autonomy, creativity, directional activity planning and harmonization with colleagues (Kerzner, 2013). Many activities in cultural sector are implemented via projects. This method is used preparing performances, exhibitions, festival programmes in the big musical, theater, dance, art events as well as in small local communities' festive events organization, as well as journal's visual design (Budrytė, 2004). According Mažeika (2007, p. 42) such „cultural activities ensure cultural self-expression with complete attributes: artists' creativity, originality, artistic activity”.

Main workload of cultural workers is composed of cultural events which have all project attributes (See Table 1).

Table 1

Project and event activities attribute

<i>Project</i>	<i>Event</i>
One time activity	One time activity
Has start and finish	Restricted in time and space
Directed to unique goal achievement (e.g., product, service or result creation)	Dedicated for particular topic and expressed by particular means and methods.
Has finite resources	Has finite resources
Has temporary organizational structure which terminates on finish	Has specially assembled working group

In the cultural activity it is important to identify attributes dedicated to cultural project, because artistic production is a life process in which ideas are transformed into artistic results. These results are hard to measure therefore in is proposed for planning cultural activity to gather information on available resources (e.g. plan for artistic and technical staff occupation) and production progress in time (sketches of decorations, decorations and sketches production in workshops, rehearsals planning according to artistic and technical needs).

Culture management theoretic note that planning of cultural project is really important because of the fixed finish term. According to Kuiziniene (2004, p. 8), „frequently date of the project deadline is fixed and evaluation of project results is directly connected to on time implementation <...>, because premiere, exhibition, concert or similar dates are irrevocable”. Matulis (2007, p. 220) „notes importance of planning „nevertheless activity planning is not a single warrant for success or final result quality, it assures creative process harmony and clear perspectives”.

Changes in the life in the country stimulate search for new activity methods helping to solve rising problems. Applying project method strategy opportunities to transform cultural activity to more qualitative, client satisfactory activity opens (Gray & Larson, 2002). Project method can integrate not only musical but also wider artistic activities (dance, theater, design). It is important to base prepared projects on these principles: *artistic expression* (employees creative activity, experience, abilities, empathy, various expression means and tools are based on this principle); *cultural activity meaningfulness* (stimulated artistic nature findings, interests, ideas, revelation art understanding); *reflection* (stimulated experience and results assessment, individual features expression in cultural activities, motivation analysis) (Malcienė, 2010).

As noted by Girnius (1974), nation culture is made not from sum of separate cultural achievements but nation members' cleverness, width of cultural interests and depth of the cultural sense. In this context project method importance is clear, because ideals implemented by this method become sensible and understandable.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Qualitative research method was chosen for the research implementation with the goal of evaluation of social; policy, human activity programmes, products and participants quality, possibilities for improvement (Bitinas, 2006). This problem was analyzed applying experience of experts in long term project activities, because according to Bitinas (2006) expert is a person which due his or her professional and life experience has highest competence and most reliable and comprehensive information on the researched problem. Persons working in cultural sector have been chosen for expert interview. During the interview researcher set goal to gather maximum and detailed information on the researched object. Target group selection was performed according these criteria: status of creative employee; high education; managerial or event organization experience and project activity experience.

Research was performed in the year 2016, general population of the research was divided into 2 layers: cultural institutions, non-governmental organizations. Cultural institutions' Managers participated in the research – in total 30 experts selected. During qualitative researches respondents number fluctuates from a few (depending on target group number and characteristics) to 20, 30, 40, but no more. Gathered qualitative data was used for analysis, it means was coded, summarized, interpreted (Bitinas, 2006; Wilkinson, 2011). All research participants communicated willingly, openly and honestly. Respondents expressed problems or notes related to project method application, this method suitability in cultural sphere.

Research results revealed that experts experience in event organization includes from 10 to 30 years, project activities – from 5 to 12. Even if respondents working experience had no direct influence to their answers, it is worth mentioning that directorial education employees had heard less on this method than managers. During the interview in was aimed to make clear if project methods are known to culture workers and/or applied in real activities. Research results reveal that objectives tree is known by all respondents (100%), Gantt Graph – 35 percent experts, Pert and Critical Path Analysis Method –just for 16 percent of respondents. It was important to clarify why culture sector's representatives do not use their knowledge in practice (see Table 2).

Table 2

Causes for not usage of project planning methods

<i>Methods</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Sub-Category</i>	<i>Statement Frequency n=30</i>	<i>Confirming statements</i>
Gantt graph	Need	Causes for not usage	22	„No need, other methods used” „Not use because have more common forms” „Do not know this method”
			6	„I think this method is suitable, but nobody used it due to lack of time”
PERT (Network Chart)			25	„Method suitable for big scope project tasks planning, our events are much simpler” „Would take to much time and efforts for small activities planning”
			12	„I think it would be too much of confusion” „Looks like complicated, uncomfortable method” „It would be confusing because of many changes during project implementation” „If there are unforeseen interference, event changes, corrections take too much time”
			12	„Not all employees are aquatinted with this method”
			6	„Lack of employees competence”
			3	„Not suitable for cultural events organization”
			8	„Complicated. For large scale projects”
Critical Path Method			13	„Frequently spontaneous and not planned obstacles arise; decisions have to be taken target and not planned way. This method requires detailed planning and is not flexible” „Takes too much time to implement”
			11	„Not all employees know this method. Would be problematic to implement”
	9	„Not suitable for cultural events organization”		

Even if these project planning methods are quite different, experts named very similar causes for not usage of these methods. Most frequently mentioned absence of impact (more simpler and common methods used; complexity of plans (inconvenient, a lot of confusion, not all employees are familiar with methods and would not understand); complexity of plans' preparation (planning would take too much time); possibility of frequent plan corrections (because of constant interferences, changes, spontaneous decisions). Named causes are relative. It is hard to tell how work would be implemented applying modern project planning guidelines for event organization, because nobody from respondents have ever tried these methods in their work (except Gantt's Chart).

For experts' assessments' processing *object grouping* with defined attributes in space method was chosen (Bitinas, 2006, p. 272). This method was chosen because of the aim to know essential experts' view to particular discussed object attribute (positive or negative view).

Grouping is based on researchers' subjectively chosen criteria. In this research experts presented with such project activity planning methods evaluation criteria: understandability (easy/hardly understandable); integrity (clear/unclear team, resources, tasks, time); preparation complexity (preparation takes short/long time); rearrangement possibilities (easy/difficult rearrangement on circumstances change); profitability (helps/complicates work).

Respondents were asked to present their opinion on project methods application purposefulness in organized cultural events (if usage and development of these methods is purposeful or this activity would add complexity to the work et cetera). Summarized data presented in the Table 3.

Table 3

Purposefulness of planning methods application in cultural events

<i>Category</i>	<i>Sub-Category</i>	<i>Statement Frequency n=30</i>	<i>Confirming statements</i>
Opinion	Need	16	“Methods are needed” “Structural plan is used organizing even small events, but it is a need and must to improve it” “Planning needs more and more attention, because almost all events are project based”
		10	“All planning methods are purposeful, but more complex methods require competence”
		3	“PERT (Network Chart) and Critical Path Method would be hardly imaginable in cultural events organization” “Named methods purposeful only for large scale projects” “I do not think that such complex methods as PERT would ever be used organizing events”
	Expectations	27	“Expected result does not correlate with work scope” “High expectations, but much of time and competence needed!”

Representatives of culture sector understand project planning methods benefit and necessity but think that planning processes take too much time and efforts. Experts acknowledge that “Objectives Tree” method needs improvement. Evaluators carefully and even pessimistically look at the application of modern and complex methods.

As an exclusion only Gantt chart mentioned more or less known by event organizers. Some of them tried to apply this method. Positive assessments of this method allow conclude those application possibilities may interest experts and it might be applied in cultural events organization.

During the survey respondents presented particular proposals how to apply project activity planning methods in whole cultural sector (see Table 4).

More complex project activity planning methods are suggested by experts only for large scale projects' organization with the need of exceptional preparation. These statements let to conclude that respondents do not reject possibilities for more complex planning instruments usage. In addition they suggest trying graphs efficiency in new events or project or trying to apply graphs for several events in parallel harmonizing staff actions.

Table 4

Project method application possibilities

<i>Category</i>	<i>Sub-Category</i>	<i>Statement Frequency-n=30</i>	<i>Confirming statements</i>	
Proposals	Quality	16	“Because we often prepare several events at once, maybe new planning methods would help to harmonize every employee agenda” “Project planning method must be known and applied by every cultural institution staff member, because it will let achieve quality results” “Employees would improve organizational work, this is why they need to be familiar with these methods and apply them”	
	Application	8	“I would suggest usage of more complex planning methods just for large scale projects with exceptional preparation” “Should try graph preparation for new event where tasks structure and responsibilities are not clear and common for all staff members”	
	Attention	4	“I would suggest paying more attention to cultural events organization, project planning methods application would help”	
	Purposefulness	9	“Before planning particular work processes discussions in the team are needed, team leader needs to use effective project activity planning methods”	
	Project activity planning methods		5	“I think it would be good not only using Objective tree but also Gantt Chart with some adjustments” “Objectives tree” and Gantt Chart should be directionally used in cultural events”
			13	“Gantt Chart should not include financial sums, these could be presented only to staff members related to project financing” “Gantt Chart should be applied in all cultural institutions and NGO’s by teaching all team members”

Results of the research confirmed that due to creators’ tendencies to work spontaneously problem of working methods application exists determining understanding/knowledge of managerial principles et cetera. For new, large scale, exceptional projects (especially funded by EU structural funds) organization more complex planning instruments are to be applied such as PERT or „Critical Path” methods.

CONCLUSIONS

Summarizing research results we can state:

1. Rokiškis Region cultural workers have sufficient managerial competence, theoretical knowledge on project activity principles and practical project activity experience. But existing event financing order determining that all annual events must be planned and projected makes cultural workers to think strategically and plan their activities.

In all events’ organizational stages planning is taking place, but there’s no strictly regulated planning order, employees choose planning forms freely basing them on general institutional planning principles. Even if this principle of work is validated for a long time and common for all, employees find negative aspects of such activity: spontaneous activity, unclear common goal, lack of responsibility.

2. Organizers of cultural events know modern project activity methods but apply them in their work lazily. Mostly mentioned causes for not usage of project planning methods are lack of the need, complexity of plans, preparation and corrections complexity. Research results revealed that most frequently applied in events organization method is „Objectives’ tree”. Positive experts’ attitude to Gantt’s Chart noticed, but pessimistically assessed more complex methods application (PERT and „Critical Path”), which on the experts’ opinion are not suitable for cultural product production.

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Summary

Projekto metodo valdymas organizuojant kultūrinius renginius

Globalizacijos procesai ir jo padariniai visuomenei daro įtaką įvairiausioms sritims, neišskiriant ir kultūros. Šiuolaikinių kultūros darbuotojų veikla yra projekto kūrimas ir praktinis jo įgyvendinimas. Sparčiai kintančiame ir globalizacijos apimtame kultūros pasaulyje projektas užima dominuojančias pozicijas, nes tai sėkmingo verslo organizavimo schema, padedanti siekti strateginių organizacijos tikslų, idėjos generavimo ir problemų sprendimo. Susidomėjimas projekto metodu ir jo valdymu šiuo metu didėja, nes šis metodas įtraukia bendruomenę į aktyvesnį problemų pažinimą, apibrėžia tikslų realizavimą: tikslo skaidymą į tam tikrus etapus; darbų (užduočių) sąrašo formulavimą; darbų sąsajų nustatymą; darbų trukmės ir apimties įvertinimą; išteklių paskirstymą; kainų įvertinimą ir sprendimą (Laučius, Vasilecas, 2007).

Projekto metodas įvardijamas kaip veiklos tyrimas (Carr, 2006; Whitehead, McNiff, 2006; Lessel, 2007). Tokie tyrimai Vakaruose yra intensyviai nagrinėjami ir propaguojami nuo XX a. paskutinio dešimtmečio (Elliot, 1991; Ellis, Kiely, 2000). Šis metodas suprantamas kaip parengto veiklos modelio praktinis verifikavimas (tikrinimas), paremtas efektyvių kriterijų taikymu, idėjų atskleidimu (Mertens, 2010). Projektui teorinio įprasminimo reikalavimas nekliamas, todėl projekto vykdytoji leidžiama pačiam spręsti, kuo pagrįsti tikrinamą idėją – mokslinėmis publikacijomis, patirtimi, technologijų ypatumais ar kitais būdais. Gana liberaliai traktuojamas ir tikrinamas idėjos naujumas: nuo santykinai paprastų, tarkim, nedidelio renginio organizavimo, iki išties sudėtingų, pavyzdžiui, naujos muziejaus koncepcijos sukūrimo ir įgyvendinimo. Akivaizdu, kad šio metodo principų suvokimas bei efektyvus jo valdymas turėtų tapti svarbia kiekvienos kultūros įstaigos strategijos dalimi, įtakančia ne tik kultūrinę veiklą, bet ir palankią aplinką.

Straipsnio **tyrimo objektas** – projekto metodas.

Tyrimo **tikslas** – ištirti projekto metodo valdymą organizuojant kultūrinius renginius.

Tyrimo **uždaviniai**: išanalizuoti projekto svarbą kultūros įstaigos veikloje; atskleisti projekto valdymą kultūros sektoriuje.

Straipsnio tyrimo **metodai**: teorinės išvalgos ir jų apibendrinimas; ekspertų apklausa; kokybinio tyrimo content analizė.

Tyrimui atlikti buvo pasirinktas kokybinio tyrimo metodas, kur tyrimo tikslu laikomas socialinės politikos, žmonių veiklos programų, jos produktų ir pačių veikėjų kokybės įvertinimas, tobulėjimo galimybės (Bitinas, 2006). Į šią problemą stengiamasi pažvelgti ekspertų, turinčių ilgametę projektinės veiklos patirtį įvertinimu, nes „ekspertas – asmuo, kuris dėl savo profesinės ir gyvenimo patirties turi didžiausią kompetenciją ir patikimiausią bei pakankamai išsamią informaciją apie tiriamą problemą“ (Bitinas, 2006, p.99).

Ekspertiniam interviu pasirinkti kultūros srityje dirbantys asmenys. Vykdamas interviu su ekspertu tyrėjas užsibrėžė tikslą gauti maksimalią ir detalesnę informaciją apie tiriamą objektą. Tikslinės grupės atranka vykdyta atsižvelgiant į šiuos kriterijus: kūrybinio darbuotojo statusą; aukštąjį išsilavinimą; vadybinę arba renginių organizavimo bei projektinės veiklos patirtį.

Tyrimo etika. Respondentams buvo paaiškinta, jog dalyvavimas yra savanoriškas, garantuojantis anonimiškumą, privatumą bei palikta laisva apsisprendimo galimybė dalyvauti tyrime ir laisvai išreikšti mintis.

Apibendrinus tyrimo rezultatus, galima konstatuoti, kad:

1. Rokiškio rajono kultūros darbuotojams pakanka vadybinės kompetencijos, teorinių žinių apie projektinės veiklos principus ir praktinės projektinės veiklos patirties. Dabartinė renginių finansavimo tvarka, kai visi kitų metų renginiai privalo būti numatyti ir suprojektuoti, kultūros darbuotojus verčia mąstyti strategiškai ir aktyviai planuoti savo veiklą.

Visuose renginių organizavimo etapuose vyksta planavimas, tačiau griežtai reglamentuotos planavimo tvarkos nėra, darbuotojai laisvai pasirenka skirtingas planavimo formas, remiasi įstaigoje priimtais planavimo principais. Nors toks darbo pobūdis per ilgą laiką patikrintas ir visiems įprastas, darbuotojai išvelgia ir neigiamus tokios veiklos aspektus: spontaniškumą, bendro tikslo neaiškumą, atsakingumo stygių.

Kultūrinių renginių organizatoriai žino apie modernius projektinės veiklos metodus, tačiau vangiai taiko juos savo darbe. Respondentai pateikė projekto metodų nepakankamo naudojimo priežastis: poreikio nebuvimą, planų paruošimo ir koregavimo sudėtingumą. Dažniausiai renginių organizavimo praktikoje yra taikomas „Tikslų medis“. Pozityvus ekspertų požiūris į „Gannt“ grafiko naudingumą, tačiau pesimistiškai žiūri į naujų, sudėtingesnių metodų įsisavinimą (PERT ir „Kritinio kelio“ metodą), kurie jų manymu yra netinkami kultūros produkto gamyboje.