

# Project Management Performance: The Success Factors of Project Management for Events—Case of the Wedding Projects in Marrakech, Morocco

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**Abstract:** Wedding [project] is one of the most important ceremonies in our lives. It is a project of life that encourages the Moroccan families to invest all their savings to accomplish the dream of their children. To satisfy this growing request of marriages, the organizers of events became very numerous in two different areas: formal and informal. This growing competition makes those organizers provide the best services they can offer in order to satisfy the clients by respecting constraints of cost-time-quality. To minimize the failure of wedding projects which constitutes a loss for the family of the bridegrooms as well as for the organizers, this study offers to identify the project management success factors as well as to provide a comparison of key success factors between informal and formal area in Marrakech. To reach these targets, we led a quantitative study by means of questionnaire survey as well as to validate the factors explored during an exploratory qualitative study precedent in the same areas; a survey which focuses on 200 organizers of wedding projects has been conducted. The analysis arithmetic means and rank orders to identify the key success factors and their ranking was used, the ANOVA test to confirm with or not perceptions between different respondents groups on the success factors in the both area. The results of studies shows that the 14 success factors explored previously are validated, it indicates existence of a big importance granted to the factors of successes relating to the traditional management based on worth in the informal area, while in the formal area they point out that the very important success factors are relating to the principles of modern project management.

**Key words:** project management performance; key success factors for events; wedding projects

**JEL codes:** H43, G14, J12, O17

## 1. Introduction

A wedding ceremony is an opportunity that a couple's families and friends gather together to celebrate witness and usher the beginning of their marriage (Cheng W. H., Fang S. Y. & Chen B. Y., 2008). The significant number of young people equal to 28, 7% (Moroccan HCP—The High Commissioner of the Moroccan Plan, 2004) to the Morocco invites the organizers of wedding events to become more and more numerous. The whole wedding ritual

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demonstrates the competitive advantages of a Moroccan contractor venturing into this kind of business (Kochuyt T., 2008). The competition in the Organization of events is growing for the reason that other categories of organizers became very numerous in the informal area. According to our exploratory survey, this last category is composed of “*Nagafa*”<sup>1</sup> women and caterers of minor events. In this research the main question that needs a serious answer is how we can help the organizers operated in formal and informal area to minimize the failing of wedding projects and satisfying the customers. In our knowledge there is no research dealing with the wedding project from a point of view management and especially the key success factors. To filling this gap this research will validate the key factors that contribute to success of wedding project management in Marrakech, Morocco.

Identify the key success factors of wedding project should not only help the organizers in formal area to improve their performance but also to assist the organizers in informal area which are in the majority illiterates. Knowing the success factors of wedding projects can help this category of organizers to improve their managements. In this way this research seeks to identify and classify the key success factors of wedding project from the perspective of the organizers in Morocco. For this purpose, organizers are classified in two groups: those who are operating in formal area (directors of agencies specializing in the organization of events, major events caterers, business managers and managers of event services) and others operating in informal area as “*Nagafa*” women and the minor events caterers).

In this paper we will presents the result and finding from a recent research on the key success factors for wedding project operating in informal and formal area in Marrakech.

The paper begins by examining the concept of project management performance and project management success factors for event. Then, we describe a methodology approach used to identify the success factors of wedding project in Marrakech. The findings of descriptive statistics are then reported. Finally analysis arithmetic means and rank orders to identify the key success factors and their ranking was used, the ANOVA test to confirm with or not perceptions between different respondents groups on the success factors in the two areas formal and informal. The results show that there is difference between key success factors of wedding project operating in formal area and those operating in informal area in Marrakech.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Project Management Performance**

Project management performance research is classified in two main directions, the analysis of success factors and the analysis of success criteria (Turner R. & Muller R., 2007). In this sense, several studies and research have been developed (Abdullah A. et al., 2010). They mention the analysis of successful projects from different perspectives: in the short and medium term as the micro and macro level (Jing-min N. et al., 2010), in a traditional and non-traditional measure (Abdullah A. et al., 2010). Success criteria of project management differ from project to project and those that are acceptable in one project will be considered failure criteria in the other (Turner R. & Muller R., 2007), Traditionally, the success of project management is measured by the cost-time-quality (Atkinson R., 1999), which represents objective measures within the meaning of de Bakker K. et al. (2010). The majority of researchers agreed that three criteria are very limited to measure complexity of the projects (Jing-min N. et al., 2010). However, these three dimensions of measurement are considered today, central to measure the success of

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<sup>1</sup> *Nagafa* woman: she's a Pearson who provides the bride accessories. In Morocco, the brides carry several holding of holidays and she is a *Nagafa* woman with it responsible. In Morocco the *Nagafa* woman often organize wedding event.

project management (Karen E. et al., 2009). Among the limitations addressed in this measurement model, his difficulty to achieve the three levels of success at the same time, and it does not consider the stakeholders in the evaluation (Jing-min N. et al., 2010). Stakeholders are an integral part of the project. Therefore, it is vital that the project adds value to stakeholders.

## **2.2 Project Management Success Factors**

Success factors are elements of the project that the project manager and the project team can influence to increase the chance of successful projects (Turner R. et al., 2009). Explore or identify success factors is the subject of several recent studies, among them we quote: The research conducted by Lu W. and Yuan H. (2010) carried out in construction projects in China, the research conducted by Al-Tmeemy S. M. H. M. et al. (2010) for construction projects buildings in Malaysia, and Yu J.H. and Kwon H.R. (2010) conducted research on urban regeneration projects. Other studies have focused on the analysis of success factors at different levels of analysis. For example: M. Carlos R. and Khang D. (2009) analyzed the success factors according to the phases of the project life cycle (the development phase, the construction phase and the operational phase). Other authors, such as Zhao Z. Y. et al. (2009) analyzed the success factors by type of industry (thermal industry and power industry) in their definition of success factors, they considered a categorization of factors as stakeholders and stages of the project (project feasibility, project environment, Project Company, project contractors, sellers of projects). Other authors have defined success factors depending on whether it is the direct and indirect factors as is the case of C. C. Nwachukwu A. (2009) or the internal and external factors (NG S. T. et al., 2008). Chow T. and Cao D. B. (2007) have classified the factors into five standard categories: organizational factors, human factors, process factors, technical factors and factors of the project.

## **2.3 Project Management Success Factors of Events**

Based on a review of recent literature on success factors of event, we note that there is not enough research that addresses the success factors of the events from the point of view of project management. Since the 90s, the field of special events has experienced a multitude of scientific research and the majority focuses on major sporting events. The EMBOK (Event Management Body of Knowledge) created by O'Toole W. and his colleagues in 1999 in Australia has the good practices that are considered success factors. Authors have studied the relationship that may exist between these practices and the success of cultural events (Abdullah Q. D. L. et al., 2010). Other authors have analyzed the success factors of events according to the categories (Dancsecz G., 2008), this study shows the existence of three categories of factors: the orientation of the task (project objectives and strategy), the rational (leadership, organizational culture, communication, partnership relationship) and impact. Other authors analyzed the success factors of event projects according to project phases (Rofner A., 2009), these factors are six: clear goals, clear concept, the feasibility of events, the evaluation of events and good communication and task management. The majority of research on the success factors of events takes into account the perceptions of stakeholders (Paul Dunphy A., 2006) in the analysis.

## **3. Research Methodology**

This research is quantitative in nature, whose main objective is to validate the key success factors of project management for events and especially wedding projects. To achieve this goal, we have conduct a questionnaire survey composed of two essential parts whose origin is an exploratory qualitative study and review of literature.

The exploratory qualitative study was conducted with 57 wedding projects organizers. The aim of this study

is to explore the success factors of wedding project in both formal and informal area in Marrakech, while, the quantitative study's role is to validate the success factors and rank them according to their degree of importance.

In summarizing, to carry out this research on key success factors, we conducted a quantitative study by means of questionnaires distributed to 200 organizers of the wedding projects in Marrakech, with the aim of comparing between the key successes factors of wedding project management identified in formal area with the key success factors identified in informal area.

#### **4. The Questionnaire**

The questionnaire survey was designed from the review of literature on project management success factors and the result of the exploratory qualitative study which indicated the existence of 15 success factors of wedding project management shared between the two area: formal and informal. The suggestions of the respondents have allowed us to improve the questionnaire through a minor change; we have grouped some factors that are similar to obtain finally 14 factors (Table 1).

**Table 1 Success Factors Obtained from Review of Literature and Exploratory Study**

Success factors
(1) Innovation and creativity
(2) Good experience in the field of event
(3) The quality of benefits
(4) Trust
(5) Competences and professionalism
(6) Good equipment and local
(7) Control of relational
(8) Good communication
(9) Definitely work upstream
(10) Identification of needs
(11) Discipline and seriousness
(12) Good organization
(13) The continued presence of the managers
(14) Patience

The questionnaire consists of two essential parts: the first is designed to collect information of respondents: the profession, business, company, number of years of experience and types of organized event projects, the second section is to explore the relative importance of each success factors of wedding projects.

The questionnaire is led with 200 wedding project organizers in two areas: the informal and the formal.

In formal area, these organizers are generally composed of 31.25% directors of agencies specializing in the organization of events, 8.75% of major events caterers, 3.75% of business managers and 56.25% of managers of event services. As informal area, there are 63.75% *Nagafa* women and 36.25% of the minor events caterers.

The majority of respondents have a big experience in the events Organization.

Among 200 questionnaires completed by face to face all long survey, 160 questionnaires are valid; it is a rate of 80%, against 20% refusal or rejection. These respondents are all located in the city of Marrakech.

To measure the importance of project management success factors of wedding events, we used a 5 point likert scale will: 5—very important, 4—important, 3—less important, 2—is not important, 1—negligible.

#### **5. Data Processing**

To assess the degree of importance attached to 14 success factors of events project management. A t-test

analysis was used.

An Index value of each factor was calculated using the following quantitative model.

$$T = (M-m)/s \text{ with}$$

M: average of the sample;

m: average of the variable;

S: variance of the sample;

Calculates the score Mean and the standard deviation we will be used to prioritize the success factors according to their degree of importance (Rank orders).

The ANOVA tests we will serve to analyze the degree of consensus among respondents on success factors in both formal and informal area. The data are analyzed on SPSS 10.

## 6. Analysis, Findings and Discussion

Results will be analyzed in two parts: (1) analysis arithmetic means and rank orders to identify the key success factors and their ranking, (2) the ANOVA test to confirm with or not perceptions between different respondents groups on the success factors were the same in the two areas formal and informal.

### 6.1 Ranking and Means of Success Factors and Comparison between Formal and Informal Areas

This part is to validate the success factors of wedding project management and to prioritize to extract key success factors of wedding project management.

The arithmetic means and rank orders are used to prioritize the success factors according to their degree of importance. The 14 success factors must have a mean that is different from 0.

A t-test was conducted at 5% level of significance. With a test value of zero in order to evaluate the significant level of each of the 14 success factors statistically.

The following Table 2 shows the average arithmetic and rank of 14 success factors. If the factors have the same score, we compare the standard deviation. Only the level of significance on sample t-test is less than 5% (Table 3) indicates that all the statistics are significant.

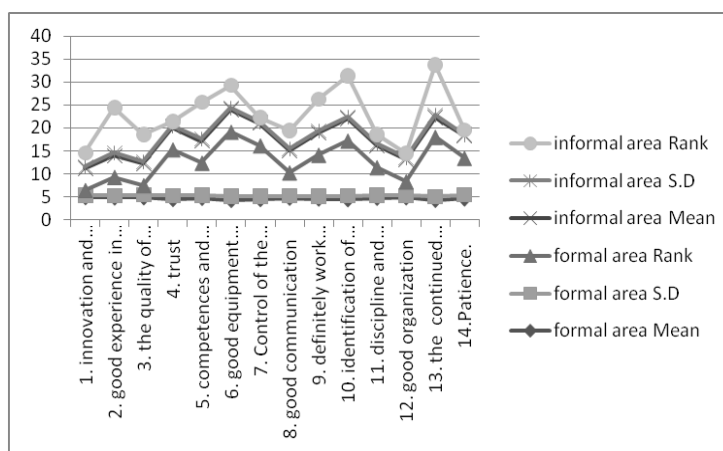
**Table 2 Comparison of Means and Rank of Success Factors of Wedding Project Management  
between Formal and Informal Area**

Success factors	Formal aera				Informal aera			
	sig.(2-tailed)	Rank	Mean	Std.D	sig. (2-tailed)	Rank	Mean	Std. D
(1) Innovation and creativity	0	1	4.8625	0.44	0	3	4.9375	0.290
(2) Good experience in the field of events	0	4	4.7875	0.41	0	10	4.8	0.5
(3) The quality of benefits	0	2	4.8375	0.54	0	6	4.8875	0.355
(4) Trust	0	10	4.475	0.75	0	1	4.9625	0.248
(5) Competences and professionalism	0	7	4.725	0.59	0	8	4.875	0.401
(6) Good equipment and local	0	14	4.275	0.83	0	5	4.9125	0.325
(7) Control of the relational	0	11	4.4625	0.64	0	1	4.9625	0.248
(8) Good communication	0	5	4.7375	0.44	0	4	4.925	0.309
(9) Definitely work upstream	0	9	4.5625	0.5	0	7	4.875	0.368
(10) Identification of needs	0	12	4.425	0.74	0	9	4.8625	0.413
(11) Discipline and seriousness	0	6	4.7375	0.59	0	2	4.95	0.270
(12) Good organization	0	3	4.8125	0.39	0	1	4.9625	0.248
(13) The continued presence of the managers	0	13	4.3125	0.69	0	11	4.3	0.513
(14) Patience	0	8	4.575	0.79	0	1	4.9625	0.248

Note: sig. = significance obtained from one sample t-test.

Factors with means exceeding or equal to 4 are recognized as the key success factors.

According to Table 2 we can see that all the 14 success factors receive a mean score superior to 4 in both formal and informal area. This means that all of these factors are validated.



**Figure 1 Comparison of Means and Rank of Success Factors of Wedding Project Management between Formal and Informal Area**

In Figure 1, we can observe in the formal area, the top five success factors are: innovation and creativity, the quality of benefits, good organization, good experience in the field of events, good communication.

The same in the informal area the top five success factors are: trust, Patience, Control of the relational, discipline and seriousness, innovation and creativity.

In the informal area, the majority of the 5 most important success factors are in direct relationship with the values required by the organizers of the wedding events.

Unlike in the formal area, the tops five success factors are related to the principles of modern project management.

## 6.2 The ANOVA Test

The analysis by ANOVA Test at a 5% significance level allows us to test the degree of consensus between the different respondents to evaluate the degree of importance accorded to 14 success factors of wedding projects. The questionnaire survey respondents are: directors of agencies specializing in the organization of events, major events caterers, business managers and managers of event services, *Nagafa* woman and minor events caterers in both formal and informal area.

According to the Table 3 the comparison between the two area on the degree of consensus indicates that the variable 13 witch is “the continued presents of the managers” has a threshold of signification equal to 0.004 less than 5% in the informal area unlike the formal area which the rates is equal to 0.129 its mean that the factor number 13 does not benefit from the agreement of the majority of the respondents as a success factor of wedding project management in informal area.

About all others factors in both formal and informal area, The ANOVA test is greater than 5% means that there is a very high degree of consensus between different respondents about all the success factors of wedding project. This result validates all the success factors explored in our exploratory study in Marrakech as success factors of wedding projects without considering the factor number 13 in informal area.

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**Table 3 Comparison of Means of Success Factors for Wedding Project Management  
between the Different Organizers in Formal and Informal Area**

Success factors for wedding projects	Formal area										Informal area										Total			
	Directors of Events agencies		Managers of event services		Business managers		Caterer of major events		Total		Nagafa woman		Caterer of minor events											
	Ran k	Mean	Rank	Mean	Ran k	Mea n	Rank	Mean			Sig.	Rank	Mean	S.D	Sig <sup>2</sup>	Rank	Mean	Ra nk	Mean	Sig.	Rank	Mean	S.D	Sig <sup>2</sup>
Innovation and creativity	1	4.96	2	4.8	1	5	2	4.86	0	1	4.86	0.44	0.501	2	4.92	2	4.96	0	3	4.94	0.29	0.519		
Good experience in the field of events	3	4.84	5	4.73	1	5	2	4.86	0	4	4.78	0.41	0.543	6	4.73	3	4.93	0	10	4.8	0.5	0.055		
The quality of benefits	2	4.92	4	4.75	1	5	1	5	0	2	4.83	0.54	0.475	3	4.86	3	4.93	0	6	4.89	0.35	0.412		
Trust	6	4.6	11	4.31	2	4.66	1	5	0	10	4.47	0.75	0.085	1	4.94	1	5	0	1	4.96	0.24	0.312		
Competences and professionalis m	4	4.8	7	4.66	1	5	3	4.71	0	7	4.72	0.59	0.696	4	4.84	3	4.93	0	8	4.88	0.40	0.35		
Good equipment and local	9	4.36	12	4.17	3	4.33	4	4.57	0	14	4.27	0.83	0.622	3	4.86	1	5	0	5	4.91	0.32	0.07		
Control of the relational	8	4.52	9	4.44	0	4	4	4.57	0	11	4.46	0.64	0.573	1	4.94	1	5	0	1	4.96	0.24	0.312		
Good Communication	7	4.64	3	4.77	2	4.66	2	4.86	0	5	4.73	0.44	0.545	1	4.94	4	4.89	0	4	4.93	0.30	0.538		
Definitely work upstream	8	4.52	8	4.53	2	4.66	2	4.86	0	9	4.56	0.5	0.413	3	4.86	4	4.89	0	7	4.88	0.36	0.696		
Identification of needs	10	4.28	10	4.42	3	4.33	1	5	0	12	4.42	0.74	0.157	5	4.82	3	4.93	0	9	4.86	0.41	0.266		
Discipline and seriousness	5	4.76	6	4.68	2	4.66	1	5	0	6	4.73	0.59	0.629	1	4.94	2	4.96	0	2	4.95	0.27	0.702		
Good organization	4	4.8	1	4.82	2	4.66	2	4.86	0	3	4.81	0.39	0.91	1	4.94	1	5	0	1	4.96	0.24	0.312		
The continued presence of the managers	8	4.52	13	4.15	3	4.33	4	4.57	0	13	4.31	0.69	0.129	8	4.18	5	4.51	0	11	4.3	0.51	0.004		
Patience.	4	4.8	10	4.42	4	4	1	5	0	8	4.57	0.79	0.06	1	4.94	1	5	0	1	4.96	0.24	0.312		

Notes: Sig. = significance obtained from one sample t-test at 5% of significance; sig.<sup>2</sup> = significance obtained from one way ANOVA test.

## 7. Discussion

In this paragraph we will explain the key success factors of wedding project management explored in both informal and formal area in Marrakech.

The top 5 key success factors founded in the formal area

Success factor 1: innovation and creativity

The factor “innovation and creativity” in the field of events and especially wedding project has benefited from a very high degree of consensus with respondents.

And this is due to the increased importance should play innovation and creativity in achieving successful wedding events. Indeed, it should be noted that in Morocco, the competition between the organizers of wedding events is very high and high quality wedding is expensive for families to honeymooners. So, to succeed these wedding projects and meet other potential clients, organizers must innovate and add a touch of originality to this organization. Therefore, innovation and creativity should be considered a first key success factor of wedding events in formal area.

Innovation and creativity in the wedding events concern the continuous renewal of the local, equipment, services and how to manage and lead all the body responsible for the realization of the event. In short, “it must have the sense of creation and imagination to succeed” as it is stated by a commercial Director of an event agency located in Marrakech.

Success factor 2: good experience in the field of the event

Organize the Moroccan wedding requires an exceptional know how and this is explained by the need to appeal to several sharp expertise in the organization of the event. An organizer can be height and manage a wedding event unless he acquires the necessary set of expertise through experience.

The experience in the Organization of events allows him to control the risk and manipulate the various stakeholders. The analysis of the results suggests a good score given to this factor by respondents to our survey and therefore it is considered a key success factor.

Most of those surveyed in the formal area were more than 10 years of experience in the field of the organization of events and especially the wedding project.

Success factor 4: good communication

Receive and transmit a clear message is a key success factor of the organization of wedding event, because communication is the means of exchange of ideas, roles and expected expectations to each member of the project team, and if this communication is failing, the project team will be plunge into the bath without knowing swim.

The respondents consider good communication with the project stakeholders is a key success factor for event project management. It means: a clear message concerning the objectives of the project, the expectations of internal and external stakeholders, well defined tasks, etc.

Success Factor 5: good organization

The questionnaire survey of respondent has considered the good organization as key success factors of event management. It is quite clear, as a project for his good conduct requires a strict and successful organization: at the level of distribution of tasks and roles, the fit between means and skills, whether manage the timing, control the execution, etc.

The top 5 key success factors founded in the informal area

Success factor 1: trust

In the informal area, the types of success factors of wedding project are different from the formal area. We note that respondents to our survey working in the informal area are all agree on trust as a first key success factor of the wedding project management.

As manager of wedding projects, the project leader must inspire confidence to all internal and external project stakeholders. The lack of confidence will generate opportunistic shots and therefore relationships imbalanced between the project leader and his team.

In the informal area, the organizers organize the following events of psychological contract and not in writing. This explains the increasing importance of confidence in achieving success

Success factor 2: patience

Patience is one of the qualities that should be exists in the person who leads the event project. Indeed, an event is one project like no other, because it is characterized by complexity and a very high degree of risk, which at any time can discourage and demotivate the Member of the team and therefore block the advancement and the achievement of the objective.

Success factor 3: Control of the relational

The Control of the relational is considered by respondents a key success factor of the wedding projects. Indeed, to achieve success in the Organization of wedding events in the informal area should be controlling the social component of the management, and develop the sense of the relationship that is necessary to constitute an important social capital.



Success factor 4: discipline and seriousness

A good manager is a well educated man, if this precious value missing on the project team and his managers, the project will admit to failure. The respondents consider discipline and seriousness a key success factors for wedding event. As to the Morocco and especially in Marrakech the good values must be a necessary condition in the person of project leaders and their teams to acquire the maximum of possible compliance to insure the maximum of possible success.

Success factor 5: innovation and creativity.

Like in the formal area the innovation and creativity is a key success factors of wedding project. This will be explained by the importance acquired to appearance and quality. In Moroccan wedding the family of bridegrooms makes all their attention to create a unique festivity and a successful event. In this way the organizers offers the good services to satisfy the costumers, then the organizers provide a multiple services which are characterized by a good creation and innovation.

## **8. Conclusions**

This research has identified 14 success factors of wedding project in Marrakech which are: (1) innovation and creativity, (2) good experience in the field of events, (3) the quality of benefits, (4) trust, (5) skills and professionalism, (6) good equipment and local, (7) Control of the relational, (8) good communication, (9) definitely work upstream, (10) identification of needs, (11) discipline and seriousness(12) good organization, (13) the continued presence of the managers, (14) patience. Through a series of analytical processes, this research identified and classifies 5 key success factors for wedding project management in two areas formal and informal in Marrakech, Morocco. The questionnaire survey analysis recognize that all the 14 success factors are validate and there is a difference between the types of factors that are considered as key success factors of wedding project management in formal and informal areas. Actually, in the formal area: the top 5 key success factors are related to the management and process of event project. These factors are: innovation and creativity, good experience in the field of the event, the quality of benefits, good communication, and good organization.

In the informal area: the results of the empirical study indicate that the top 5 key success factors of wedding project management, in the majority are much related to the values that must have the organizers and project wedding teams. One thus speaks of trust, patience, Control of the relational, the discipline and seriousness, innovation and creativity, which is different from the formal area including the majority of the key success factors are related to the principles of management and process.

This difference between the formal and informal area is explained by the level of education of the organizers and the nature of the market in which they organize the events.

I should be remembered that the key success factors identified in this study were identified within the context of Marrakech wedding. The key success factors cannot then be applied to other part of morocco without considering the context variable.

This study affirms two strong managerial implications: the first concerns the decision making in project management: know the success factors of project management for events facilitate decision making for project managers. Consequently, this can minimize the failure rate of projects that constitute an unbearable cost for projects leaders. The second managerial involvement is in the exploration of new categories of events organizers (*nagafa* women and caterers of minor events) largely ignored by scientific research. In the informal area, such as

retail investors need to succeed in their projects. So, knowing the success factors will help to better manage their wedding project.

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