
Revealing Contrasting Outlooks: A Critical Examination of the Efficacy of Agile Project Management Frameworks in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) in Cebu City, Philippines

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Abstract

This study critically examines the efficacy of Agile project management frameworks within the context of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) in Cebu I.T. Park, Philippines. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, it gathers insights from 30 participants, comprising rank-and-file employees and management personnel, to evaluate client satisfaction, Agile framework effectiveness, project success metrics, client-provider communication, and continuous improvement practices. The study aims to explore disparities in perceptions between these groups and their implications for Agile adoption. Findings reveal notable differences in how Agile frameworks are perceived and practiced. Rank-and-file employees generally rate Agile practices more favorably, highlighting moderate implementation in areas like client satisfaction and project success metrics. Conversely, management personnel express reservations, rating several indicators as less practiced, particularly in communication and Agile framework effectiveness. These disparities underscore a disconnect between leadership and frontline staff, which hinders consistent implementation and alignment with organizational goals. However, management personnel recognize the importance of continuous improvement, providing a foundation for bridging these gaps. The study recommends targeted training programs, enhanced communication strategies, and the establishment of clear success metrics to align perspectives and foster a culture of collaboration. Incorporating customer feedback loops and iterative development cycles is also emphasized to enhance client satisfaction and adaptability. By addressing these challenges, organizations can optimize Agile adoption, improve project outcomes, and achieve greater efficiency and client satisfaction. The findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on Agile frameworks, offering actionable insights for their effective implementation in dynamic business environments.

Keywords: *agile project management, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), client satisfaction, continuous improvement, project success metrics, Cebu I.T Park, leadership alignment*

Introduction

The adoption of Agile techniques represents a significant shift in the evolving field of project management, offering businesses adaptable strategies to manage the complexities of modern project execution (Conboy & Fitzgerald, 2004; Schwaber & Sutherland, 2017). Agile frameworks such as Scrum, Kanban, and hybrid approaches have become essential tools for fostering innovation, flexibility, and collaboration in response to dynamic market conditions (Cervone et al., 2019; Leffingwell, 2019). However, despite widespread recognition of their benefits, differing perspectives on their applicability

and effectiveness across organizational settings remain prevalent (Dikert et al., 2016; Iivari & Huisman, 2018).

While Agile frameworks are celebrated for enhancing transparency, agility, and customer focus, concerns persist regarding their scalability, alignment with strategic goals, and adaptability to diverse organizational contexts (Denne & Cleland-Huang, 2014; Dybå & Dingsøy, 2008). These divergent viewpoints underscore the need for an in-depth analysis of the factors influencing the success and perception of Agile methodologies.

This research aims to elucidate the nuanced relationships between Agile theory and practice by examining the conditions under which these frameworks thrive or falter. By analyzing measurable performance indicators such as client satisfaction, communication efficacy, and project success rates, the study provides actionable insights into optimizing Agile implementation. The findings are expected to empower organizations to leverage Agile methodologies effectively, navigating the challenges of uncertainty and change while achieving project objectives with greater confidence and precision (Cervone et al., 2019; Schwaber & Sutherland, 2017).

Essentially, this study investigates the effectiveness of Agile project management frameworks by examining numerical data on key performance metrics, such as client satisfaction, project success rates, and communication effectiveness, across various organizational contexts (Iivari & Huisman, 2018; Stettina & Heijstek, 2017). The study seeks to provide data-driven insights that inform project management process improvements and facilitate evidence-based decision-making by analyzing the measurable outcomes of Agile theory in practice (Dikert et al., 2016; Schwaber & Sutherland, 2017). By employing statistical analyses to evaluate Agile frameworks and their application in dynamic settings, the study contributes to advancing the discourse on efficient and adaptable project management techniques in the digital era.

Statement of Null Hypothesis

Ho1. There is no impact between the effectiveness of agile project management frameworks and customer satisfaction.

Review of Related Literature

Customer satisfaction is the most important metric in the ever-changing business world since it captures all aspects of a customer's interaction with a company, product, or service. It goes beyond simple measurements by expressing how well their requirements, preferences, and expectations are satisfied, which promotes advocacy, recurring business, and enduring loyalty (Anderson, 2015; Robinson & White, 2016; Smith, 2018). Establishing long-lasting connections based on dependable and trustworthy communication helps firms succeed in the market and maintain a strong brand image. To improve customer happiness over time, companies use a range of tactics, including surveys, feedback systems, and proactive client engagement programs. These allow them to pinpoint areas that need attention and adjust their services to better meet changing needs. In this section, we examine the complex field of client satisfaction, its importance, measurement methods, and its critical role in determining organizational success. This will enable businesses to confidently navigate the competitive landscape and provide their clients with unmatched value (Anderson, 2015; Robinson & White, 2016; Smith, 2018).

Client Satisfaction

Client satisfaction, as highlighted by Anderson (2015) and Robinson & White (2016), involves multidimensional metrics such as quality, reliability, and customer engagement. These studies underscore the importance of addressing client needs comprehensively to foster loyalty and advocacy. However, their findings fall short of demonstrating how Agile methodologies, particularly in a BPO context, enhance satisfaction metrics. Integrating Agile principles like iterative feedback loops and customer collaboration offers potential pathways to meet these evolving client expectations effectively.

Effectiveness of Agile Frameworks

Agile frameworks, including Scrum, Kanban, and Lean, are lauded for their flexibility and adaptability (Schwaber, 2015; Rubin, 2016). These frameworks prioritize incremental delivery and stakeholder collaboration, aligning well with dynamic project environments. Nonetheless, challenges such as uneven implementation, leadership resistance, and cultural misalignment are well-documented by Dikert et al. (2016) and Iivari & Huisman (2018). The hierarchical structure and fast-paced nature of BPOs exacerbate these challenges, necessitating tailored approaches to Agile adoption in such settings.

Project Success Metrics

Project success is often evaluated using metrics like cost variance, schedule adherence, and stakeholder satisfaction (Serrador & Pinto, 2016; Larman & Vodde, 2017). While Agile frameworks emphasize continuous value delivery, their application in achieving key performance indicators (KPIs) remains underexplored in BPO contexts. The existing literature provides limited insights into how Agile practices can bridge the gap between project objectives and operational realities in service-oriented industries.

Client-Provider Communication

Effective client-provider communication is critical for project alignment and success. Studies by Kim & Hornby (2015) and Wang & Smith (2018) emphasize the importance of transparency, timely feedback, and collaborative tools. Agile frameworks naturally facilitate such communication; however, discrepancies in communication efficacy between management and rank-and-file employees in BPOs remain a significant concern. Addressing these gaps requires targeted interventions, such as training and communication platforms tailored to organizational needs.

Continuous Improvement Practices

Continuous improvement practices, rooted in Lean and Agile principles, emphasize iterative refinement and innovation (Poppendieck & Poppendieck, 2017; Schwaber, 2015). These practices are instrumental in driving efficiency and responsiveness to market demands. However, existing studies predominantly focus on their application in product development rather than service-driven environments like BPOs. This highlights a critical gap in understanding how continuous improvement can be operationalized in service settings to enhance both employee engagement and client outcomes.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a descriptive-correlational research design to explore differing perspectives on Agile project management frameworks in BPO settings. The descriptive aspect focuses on systematically describing the practices, perceptions, and patterns observed among rank-and-file employees and management personnel. It provides a detailed snapshot of how Agile practices are implemented and

perceived within the selected context. By capturing this descriptive data, the study establishes a foundation for understanding the current state of Agile adoption in BPO organizations. The correlational aspect investigates relationships between identified variables, such as the effectiveness of Agile frameworks and client satisfaction or communication practices. This approach allows the study to identify potential associations without asserting causation, offering insights into how various factors may influence each other within the organizational environment.

Research Setting

The study is conducted in Cebu I.T. Park, a vibrant hub for BPO companies such as Teleperformance SE, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Accenture Inc., Concentrix, and Qualfon Philippines Inc. This setting provides a dynamic environment to analyze Agile project management practices in action. The focus on this specific geographical and industrial context ensures that findings are both contextually relevant and reflective of the operational realities of Agile frameworks within the BPO sector.

Sampling

The study employs purposive sampling to select 30 participants—20 rank-and-file employees and 10 management personnel—from major BPO companies within Cebu I.T. Park. This sample size was determined to balance feasibility with the need for detailed data collection. While not statistically representative, the sample provides diverse perspectives on Agile practices, aligning with the study's focus on exploring specific organizational dynamics. Participants were selected based on their active involvement in projects utilizing Agile frameworks, ensuring their responses are directly relevant to the research objectives. Although the limited sample size constrains the generalizability of the findings, it allows for an in-depth exploration of Agile implementation within the unique context of Cebu's BPO sector. These limitations are recognized and situated within the exploratory nature of the research. By concentrating on a specific BPO hub, the study generates contextually rich insights that offer practical value to similar organizational environments.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and frequency distributions, to summarize participant responses. These methods capture the central tendencies and variabilities in perspectives across the sample. Additionally, a chi-square test of independence was applied to examine potential associations between variables, such as the differences in perceptions between rank-and-file employees and management personnel. This combination of descriptive and correlational analyses provides a comprehensive understanding of the adoption and effectiveness of Agile frameworks across stakeholder groups.

Ethical Consideration

The study adheres to ethical guidelines, including informed consent, participant confidentiality, and transparency regarding the research process. Ethical approval was obtained, and measures were implemented to minimize potential risks to participants.

Content, Comprehension, and Documentation of Informed Consent:

Potential participants need to be aware of the precise nature of the study and how it differs from routine activities or medical interventions. It is essential to communicate clearly about how the study will use the data. The general objectives of the study should be clearly outlined, along with an explanation of how the

data will be used. Participants should be informed of the types of data that will be collected, both quantitative and qualitative, to uphold transparency.

Prospective participants should be fully informed about the procedures followed to collect data and about any special care that might be administered. There needs to be clarity on the expected time commitment and contact frequency so that participants may make educated judgments. The sponsorship or funding sources for the study, together with any academic requirements, must be revealed to maintain transparency. Providing details about the processes used in participant selection and the total number of participants enhances transparency and fosters confidence. It is necessary to talk about any possible hazards, whether they be financial, social, psychological, or physical, as well as the measures being taken to lower them. Participants should be informed of the potential risks and the precautions being taken to lessen them, including the availability of medicines if necessary. It is important to thoroughly inform participants of any prospective benefits, such as tangible gains, enhanced comprehension, and availability of interventions.

Any additional benefits beyond the ones that are explicitly mentioned should be disclosed to the participants. Any alternative methods of therapy or procedures that would be advantageous to participants must be revealed. Agreements must be discussed explicitly if stipends or reimbursements are provided. If there are non-monetary rewards offered, it's wise to consider other payment methods. Ensuring participant privacy protection and confidentiality is of utmost importance. Strict confidentiality measures, such as limited access to identifying information or anonymity, should be implemented to safeguard participant data. Participants are informed about the availability of their information and by whom. It is guaranteed that participants will not be charged for withdrawing from the activity at any point. It's critical to notify participants of their option to withdraw from the study at any moment and, if desired, to keep some information private.

Debriefing, Communications, and Referrals

Respect for participants should be shown by researchers through interactions that are conducted with subtlety, professionalism, and cultural sensitivity. After data collection, debriefing sessions must be provided to address participant concerns or questions, particularly in situations involving stress or ethical issues. Post-study communications must include expressing gratitude to participants and acknowledging their contributions. If participants need more support or help beyond what is covered by the research, referrals to suitable health, social, or psychological services should be made.

Conflict of Interest

Researchers must disclose any possible conflicts of interest that can jeopardize the research's objectivity or integrity. There needs to be an open and honest discussion about any financial or personal concerns to maintain credibility and trust.

Treatment of Vulnerability Groups

Vulnerable populations should receive extra attention, such that study protocols minimize hazards and put participants' welfare first. Parental consent and child assent procedures, as well as ethical principles and legislation, must be followed in informed consent procedures for vulnerable groups, such as children. A description of the steps taken to reduce hazards and shield people more susceptible to harm should be included, along with any extra security and supervision that may be required. Researchers can protect

study participants' rights, dignity, and well-being by following these ethical guidelines and principles, promoting integrity and trust in the research process.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Summarized Data on the Assessment of the Effectiveness of Agile Project Management Frameworks

Indicators	Rank-and-File n = 20		Mgt. Personnel n = 10		Consolidated N = 30	
	\bar{x}	Int	\bar{x}	Int	\bar{x}	Int
Client Satisfaction	2.82	MS	2.51	MS	2.78	MS
Effectiveness of Agile Frameworks	2.63	MS	2.07	LS	2.55	MS
Project Success Metrics	2.89	MS	2.22	LS	2.79	MS
Client-Provider Communication	2.76	MS	2.07	LS	2.66	MS
Continuous Improvement Practices	2.77	MS	3.15	MS	2.83	MS
Grand Mean	2.77	MS	2.40	LS	2.72	MS

Legend: 1.00-1.74 *Not Practiced [NP]*; 1.75-2.49 *Less Practiced [LP]*; 2.50-3.24 *Moderately Practiced [MP]*; 3.25-4.00 *Highly Practiced [HP]*

The study's findings highlight significant disparities in perceptions of Agile project management frameworks between rank-and-file employees and management within the BPO sector, emphasizing the need for enhanced organizational alignment. A consolidated grand mean of 2.72, categorized as Moderately Practiced, suggests partial implementation of Agile principles, with notable gaps remaining. Client satisfaction, with a mean of 2.78, indicates efforts to meet client needs; however, the data suggests that incorporating iterative feedback loops and fostering closer customer collaboration—core elements of Agile methodologies—could further enhance satisfaction levels (Launch Notes, 2023).

The effectiveness of Agile frameworks shows a divergence in perceptions: employees rate it at 2.63 (Moderately Practiced), while management rates it at 2.07 (Less Practiced). This gap points to challenges such as inconsistent implementation, insufficient training, and a lack of leadership buy-in. Addressing these issues is essential for fostering consistency and maximizing the frameworks' potential benefits (Expeed, 2024). Similarly, project success metrics reveal disparities, with employees rating them at 2.89 and management at 2.22, highlighting the need for clearer and more measurable key performance indicators (KPIs). Client-provider communication also exhibits inefficiencies, with employees rating it as moderately practiced (2.76) and management as less practiced (2.07), suggesting that strengthening transparent and timely interactions is crucial to prevent misaligned expectations and delays (Teamhood, 2024).

Continuous improvement practices receive the highest rating from management at 3.15, yet a lower score of 2.77 from employees indicates that such efforts may not be sufficiently visible at the operational level. To bridge these gaps, organizations should implement targeted training programs for management to deepen their understanding and commitment to Agile principles, enhance communication strategies to ensure alignment and transparency across organizational levels, and establish clear, measurable success metrics that resonate with Agile values, such as incremental delivery and stakeholder satisfaction. These

initiatives are critical for realizing the full potential of Agile frameworks, ultimately leading to improved project outcomes and sustained client satisfaction (Forbes, 2023).

Recommendation

The information reveals different viewpoints across rank-and-file employees as well as upper management individuals, offering nuanced insights into the evaluation of Agile project management frameworks' efficacy. Although both groups recognize initiatives that are somewhat performed and focused on client happiness, there is a discernible difference on how well the Agile framework is seen by the two groups—rank-and-file personnel sees it more favorably than management does. This emphasizes the necessity of learning more about the underlying causes influencing these opinions. Furthermore, discrepancies on how the two cohorts correlate with project success measures and client-provider communication techniques point to different priorities or comprehensions of the project's goals. The observed discrepancy in dedication to procedures for continuous improvement emphasizes, even more, how difficult it is to apply Agile in corporate settings. It emphasizes the significance of developing a shared understanding and commitment to Agile principles across all levels of the organization. By addressing these disparities and utilizing the strengths of each perspective, project management frameworks can be optimized and Agile implementation strategies can be strengthened to maximize effectiveness and client satisfaction.

Organizations should prioritize using Agile approaches, incorporating customer feedback loops, and incorporating iterative development cycles into their project management processes to optimize client satisfaction. Businesses can better adapt their products and services to changing client needs and preferences by adopting Agile principles, such as customer collaboration and change-responsiveness. This suggestion is consistent with researches by Anderson (2015) and Robinson and White (2016), which highlight the role that customer happiness plays in encouraging repeat business and cultivating a favorable brand image. Organizations can also promote greater collaboration between cross-functional teams and clients by utilizing Agile frameworks like Scrum and Kanban, which promote transparency and goal alignment (Smith, 2018).

This proposal is new since it emphasizes the use of Agile processes explicitly to improve client happiness, which is a factor that is frequently disregarded in more conventional project management approaches. Organizations can gain a competitive edge and cultivate long connections with their clients by prioritizing client-centricity and responsiveness. This advice also highlights how sophisticated Agile frameworks are at handling difficult business problems, providing a flexible and adaptable project management method that fits the ever-changing demands of contemporary companies.

To bridge the perception gap between rank-and-file staff and management regarding the success of Agile, organizations should fund extensive training programs and communication campaigns. Organizations can cultivate a common knowledge and commitment to Agile practices at all organizational levels by offering education on the principles of Agile and their practical applications. Additionally, open lines of communication should be set up to enable discussion and feedback sharing between staff members and management, enabling expectations and priorities to be aligned. The suggestions made by Dybå and Dingsøy (2008) and Stettina and Heijstek (2017), who emphasize the significance of organizational alignment in Agile adoption and efficacy, are in line with this advice.

This advice is new because it takes a proactive stance in closing the perception gap, realizing that successful Agile implementation calls for shared values and cultural alignment inside the organization in addition to procedural modifications. Organizations can leverage workforce collective intelligence to propel innovation and enhancement by cultivating a culture of open communication and ongoing learning. This suggestion exemplifies the complexity of Agile as a mentality that penetrates company culture and influences decision-making at all levels, rather than merely being a collection of techniques.

Conclusion

The study provides a critical examination of the efficacy of Agile project management frameworks in the BPO sector, revealing key disparities in perceptions between rank-and-file employees and management. These findings highlight the need for enhanced alignment, particularly in client-provider communication, continuous improvement practices, and project success metrics. By addressing these gaps, organizations can better harness Agile frameworks to achieve greater efficiency, client satisfaction, and adaptability. The research contributes to the discourse by emphasizing the importance of integrating Agile principles with tailored strategies for service-oriented environments. Practically, it offers actionable insights for improving Agile adoption through targeted training, enhanced communication, and measurable KPIs. Future research should explore scalable Agile solutions and their impact across diverse industries to build on these findings and refine Agile methodologies further.

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