A CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR FRAMEWORK FOR CORPORATE EVENT PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN THE UK.

by

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Where opportunity creates success

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ABSTRACT

The event industry is UK's 16th largest employer with over 700,000 employees, worth £70 billion from event attendees and organisers of UK meetings, conferences, festivals, and any other event-related functions. From this understanding, corporate event sector shows the most significant growth within the event industry within the UK. This research aims "*to investigate critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be used to improve the delivery of event projects within corporate event management organisations in the United Kingdom*". However, very few research has been conducted in this research area especially from a project management perspective. Also, corporate event organisers face the challenge of how critical success factors are identified, measured and when to consider an event a success.

This research is based on a pragmatist dimension as it gave this research the opportunity for data to be gathered from several angles whilst revealing the nature of this research. A multi-method qualitative approach was adopted for this research. This research consists of four objectives with specific method tailored to data type. However, in order to commence structuring objectives for this research or gather data it was imperative to set out the research philosophy.

A systematic-type literature review was adopted to Review critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be applied to events within event management organisations in the UK. Then, a qualitative semi-structured interview and qualitative questionnaire was carried out to Determine factors influencing the implementation and management of successful event projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK.

A Purposive sampling technique was deployed to select participants for the primary stage of this research. Thematic analysis was then employed to identify common themes from interview transcript and questionnaire data.

Several critical success factors were identified for the smooth running of corporate event projects in the UK. However, were all categorised under six main success factor areas namely: *Strategic Factors, Leadership Impact Factors, Management Factors, Clarity of Project Definition Factors, Planning Factors,* and *Practice Factors*. These findings were underpinned with project management perspective and applied for the sole purpose of connecting with the research gaps, research questions, interview questions and questionnaire. Hence, the outcome of this thesis was hinged on critical success factors identified from project management, event management and corporate event management.

The framework covers key phases in entirety of corporate event. It linked all critical success factors with prior, during and post-event even with examples like communication, health and safety policy, strategy, incorporation of project management to event projects and event essentials. Hence, the developed framework contributed to knowledge on two main levels: on-going event-related research within academia and organisations running event and project-related work. It was also recommended that corporate event organisers need to clearly state out their event strategy for prior, during and post-event for successful delivery of event projects within corporate event management organisation.

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

APMBOK – ASSOCIATION FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE

CE – CORPORATE EVENT

CEI – CORPORATE EVENT INDUSTRY

CEM – CORPORATE EVENT MANAGEMENT

CEMO – CORPORATE EVENT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

CEP – CORPORATE EVENT PROJECT

CEPM – CORPORATE EVENT PROJECT MANAGEMENT

CO – CORPORATE ORGANISATION

CSF – CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR

EM – EVENT MANAGEMENT

EMO – EVENT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

IS – INTERVIEW STUDY

KPI – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

LR – LITERATURE REVIEW

PM – PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PMBOK – PROJECT MANAGEMENT BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE

PMO – PROJECT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 General Information about the Research

1.1 Background to Study

Events fulfil certain functions within the society from sharing rituals, celebrations, bringing people from diverse backgrounds to identify and reflect on a nation's culture thereby contributing to economic development (Raj *et al.*, 2017). According to Nigam and Ocasio (2010, p. 824) "*events have duration and history and are best understood not as instantaneous occurrences or happenstances, but as a sequence of overlapping activities and processes that occur over time*". Meanwhile, Getz and Goldblatt in Berridge (2007), emphasises that it is important to clarify event as being unique, one-off, special and beyond everyday experience therefore without delay event differs from other more routine activities such as work.

It is now recorded that the event industry is the UK's 16th largest employer providing 700,000 jobs across the length and breadth of Britain which is more than double that of UK telecoms industry (Fletcher, 2015). In fact, a report from the Business Visits and Events Partnership (BVEP) published by Event Base, recorded an annual spend of £70 billion and accounts for over 50% from event attendees and organisers of UK meetings, conferences, festivals, concerts, exhibitions, sporting spectacles, incentive travel, and reward programmes (Sullivan, 2019).

The event industry forum (EIF) presented further evidence showcasing value, growth, worth and annual income of the event industry. It also suggests sub-sets of corporate event appears to have most significant growth within the event industry as shown in Table 1 (EIF, 2011).

Table 1: Growth within the Event Sector in the last decade

Event Sector	Estimated Value in 2010 (£ billions)	Estimated Value in 2015 (£ billions)	Estimated Value in 2020 (£ billions)
Conferences and meetings	18.8	21.8	25.2
Exhibitions and trade shows	9.3	10.8	12.4
Incentive travel	1.2	1.4	1.6
Corporate hospitality	1.0	1.2	1.3
Outdoor events	1.0	1.2	1.3
Festivals and cultural events	1.1	1.3	1.4
Music events	1.4	1.7	2.0
Sports events	2.3	2.8	3.2
Total for discretionary events	**36.1**	**42.2**	**48.4**

(Source: Opportunities for Growth in the UK Events Industry Roles & responsibilities A report to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Events) – Presented jointly by the event industry forum 2011*).*

The corporate event sector shows the most significant growth within the event industry around the globe and is regarded as the most lucrative and a fast-growing area (Stacey, 2016). A corporate event is a private gathering, or a social function held by a company for the growth of the company aimed at bringing people together to network. Corporate event is used to solicit new business venture, create a corporate or brand image, retain and build loyalty with suppliers and customers (Hard, 2020; Silvers *et al*., 2005). Different types of corporate event are, meetings; seminars, conferences, teambuilding; product launch and shareholders meetings (Hard, 2020).

1.2 Statement of Problem

Over the years, some researchers have made attempts to explore critical success factors influencing the delivery of any project-related work in their field of expertise or organisations. However, there are a few aspects in their research that have not been fully addressed thereby presenting gaps from their studies. For example, according to Steinfort and Walker (2007), there is no simple, effective, or universal framework for studying projects and there is no structure for the application of project management (PM) methods and framework in any environment that aids project-related work. There are also no causal relationships established between success factors, project success and organisational success, no clear understanding to the strategic future of project success (Müller & Jugdev, 2012).

Meanwhile, in the year 2000 William O'Toole (a guru and expert in the field of event management) reveal that there is a lack of a recognisable structural approach to planning and controlling event and the process involved with the inclusion of event management in project management remains complex (O'Toole, 2000). There is also a lack of in-depth analysis that covers other event-related publication in academic journals such as: corporate/business; leisure; sports or broad range of event management trends that provides practitioners an overview of the evolving nature of events (Park & Park, 2017).

For already existing corporate event management organisations which this research focuses mainly on, critical success factors for event sub-types in Meetings Incentives Conventions and Exhibition (MICE) events have been identified. However, there is a lack of understanding of how those CSFs emerge and how they can be implemented to help event managers improve, make, and organise their event more efficient (Ismail *et al*, 2015).

Furthermore, Stringfellow (2019) stated that the biggest challenge facing corporate event organisers is the planning phase and seeking measures to overcome it have not been fully and clearly addressed. In fact, for decades the event industry has relied on spreadsheets for planning, organising, and tracking the outcomes of events. However, there has been an undeniable problem with adopting spreadsheets and planning techniques especially for the corporate event organisations which has presented challenges and pitfalls such as: efficiency of event materials; workflow; and business insights that enable them to manage

3

all their event projects (Eventuosity, 2018). This means that an intensive planning process or technique is needed for the corporate event industry. Other challenges that affect the delivery of a successful corporate event is presented in Table 2:

Table 2: Other Challenges faced by corporate event organisers.

Menegus (2018)	Rennie (2018) and McCorkell (2019)
Low budget yet high expectations 62%.	Budgets 59%.
Creative ideas for event design 55%.	Working with stakeholders outside of events 33%.
Time management 51%.	Measuring success and return of investments of events 33%.
Advance career, increase salary, Gain recognition 51%.	Business relationships 26%.
Event marketing 26%.	Regulatory or legal challenges 22%.
Attracting the right audience for events 25%.	Health and wellbeing 19%.
Event value 21%.	Talent retention and recruitment 15%.
Execution not strategy 20%.	Training and education 15%
New technology 18%.	Brexit 11%.
Event suitable for the environment 18%.	

(Source: Survey conducted in July 2018 and 2019) – presented by *corporate event news UK readers on top ranking challenges faced by corporate event professionals on their job.*

With all these problems or challenges identified by corporate event planners the biggest challenge remains *how success can be measured*? And *when do event organisers consider an event successful*? (Rofner, 2009). In addition, gaps presented from other relating research are summed up into understanding the evolving nature of event management, characteristics of project success, effective framework for project success and process to planning events. In addition, researchers have not conducted any research in this area and critical success factors for corporate events have not been fully addressed or identified (Müller & Jugdev, 2012; O'Toole, 2000; Park & Park, 2017; Ismail *et al*, 2015).

1.3 Research Aim, Objectives, and Questions

Aim: This research aims to investigate critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be used to improve the delivery of event projects within corporate event management organisations in the United Kingdom.

To achieve this aim, the researcher had some questions that had to be addressed prior to any research. These questions then influenced the research objectives as explained below:

To achieve this aim, the following research questions and objectives were developed as explained below:

Research Questions:

RQ1 – Can success factors from project management be implemented in the delivery of any event-related project?

RQ2 – What are the criteria for developing a critical success factor framework for corporate event project management in the UK?

Research Objectives:

1. Review critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be applied to events within event management organisations in the UK.

2. Determine factors influencing the implementation and management of successful event projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK.

3. Develop a critical-success-factor framework for corporate event project management in the UK.

1.4 Justification for Study

There is a lack of clarity for the review of corporate event management success factors. Moreover, Harris and Huyskens (2000) provided evidence regarding the scarcity of acceptable methods within the event industry on how various events are effectively managed and judged to be successful by different shareholders, especially through PM methodologies that provides managers best practice information on how to implement PM in their daily functions (Harris and Huyskens, 2000). Hence, PM perspective is explored to bring about some of clarity. PM perspective is pivotal to this research as it is different from any other industry as it has a final deliverable and finite time span, whereas all other management sectors are an ongoing process (O'Toole, 2000). In addition to that, PM helps to align projects with strategic objectives to bring about value to an organisation for short,

medium, and long-term developments to be generated by implementing successful projects (PMI, 2013).

Although, it is apparent that the event industry is borrowing some of its methods, tools and technique from the PM industry and practice, for example, the overall five phases of event (initiation, planning, implementation, the event, and shutdown) consist of the life cycle of a project and describe event management process from a project management perspective (O'Toole *et* al., 2011). Yet it is not crystal clear or there is no known way or structured approach that event practitioners utilise PM methods. Moreover, in 1994, Getz & Wicks concluded their research in events management by saying that "*there are clear technical skills for event management, but less convincingly can there be said to exist theories of event management*" (1994, p. 108). Hence, PM perspective is appreciated in this research perhaps it can establish some clear concepts, principles or methods/methodologies in ways event organisers can better improve the delivery of a successful event.

In terms of critical success factors, according to Allen (2009) there is a constant competition to create something original that will enable corporations generate public awareness for the industry. As such, these companies require a system, framework, tool, or technique that will help them understand where they are in terms of success, when compares to other competitors in their business domain. Hence, understanding their critical success factors (CSFs here after) and *Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)* are the way to creating something original that will be beneficial for the organisation. KPIs provides a focus for strategic and operational improvement, create an analytical basis for decision making and help focus attention on what matters most. As Peter Drucker famously said, "What gets measured gets done" (KPI, 2020). In view of project management, success factors are elements of the project that the project manager and project team use to influence and increase the chance of successful projects (Turner *et al.*, 2009).

Furthermore, there are key element lacking in providing CSFs for corporate event management organisations especially with strategic factors considered when creating events across the *prior*, *during* and *post* event phases which this research addresses. To this regard, evidence has revealed that developing a *Critical Success Factor* (CSF)

framework for the event sector gives a strong foundation for event practitioners to be able to create and implement successful events, hence this research gains grounds for further study (Ismail, 2014).

CSFs are an integral part of the planning process which mean that organisers can recognise, define, identify, and measure the progress of each of their planning process. Thus, managers should be able to understand the aspect of CSFs at a micro-level perspective. By understanding CSFs, organisers will be able to select the most critical ones that could influence the success of their event (Kokolakis, 2018). It has also been established that no event plan is complete if there are no ways to measure it though there is an outstanding idea of an event that will gather crowds, there still needs to be a set of goals. The best way to express these *goals* is to find *key performance indicators* that can be used to monitor event management, especially with defining and meeting such goals (Targosz, 2018).

1.5 Scope of Study

The United Kingdom has a variety of events ranging from corporate, social (i.e., tourism, festivals, sporting), business and private (i.e., weddings, parties) events. Initially, the scope of study was intended to cover England. However, it was found that there was a limited body of knowledge on Corporate Event Project Management (CEPM) practice specifically for England. However, it was found that the CEPM practice was also equally relevant in Scotland, Wales, and the Northern Ireland. Therefore, the scope of the research has been revised to cover the entirety of the UK (i.e., England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland), by focusing mainly on *corporate event projects* and sub-sets of corporate event types in the UK. The UK is a preferred host for international meetings, conferences, and events because of its economic, academic and industry sector strengths. That applies equally to the major gateway cities and the many regional cities spread across every corner of the UK, each with extensive clusters of expertise in advanced and creative industries (Kermins, 2018).

Furthermore, Kelly (2017) points out that corporate event is endowed with a broad definition as well as its target audience, however limited to employees, board members,

stakeholders, customers, and potential clients. Hence, the aim of this research was addressed by identifying the key research audience as event consultants, event/project managers, university, local authorities, and event associations and developers.

1.6 Thesis Chapter Structure

This thesis will be divided into seven chapters as described below:

Chapter 1: Introduction/General Information about the research.

Lays the foundation on which this research is understood. It provides an introduction and general information about the research. it is further broken down into the following:

- Background to study – This is only possible by first providing an overview of events and event management, then evidence to the growth of the event sector and its subsidiary is presented. Slowly, corporate event management is introduced as the only event subsidiary that has seen the most growth in the last decade. The most important aspect of this background to study is presenting research area that has been explored over time revealing similar research aim, methodology and conclusion drawn from each publication. This is done to provide some clarity to the sort of research that has been done in time past, and to guide this research in the path to take for achieving the aim of study, and how to embark on event-related research as this one.

- Statement of the Problem – provides a narrative of some of the challenges or issues faced by event organisers and managers. A result for rating some of these issues have also been presented by event practitioners from all event-type projects.

- Aim, Objectives, and Research Question – the aim of the research is stated. Research objectives are also highlighted, and questions emerged for each objective; these have been identified as well.

- Justification for the Study – first there is an open statement about the lack of clarity for the review of corporate event management critical success factors is presented. Then, there is a gradual introduction on the importance of using project management methodologies or principles for undertaken any project regardless of

scope and type. Then a rationale for exploring critical success factors is provided as well as a clear definition of critical success factor.

- Scope of Study – this research explores knowledge from the whole of the UK which is the key thing that has been presented in this section.

- Structure of the Thesis – lays out the plan of action in writing the thesis and finishing up.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In order to have an enriched review of literature, this chapter will be split into 4 main focal areas:

1. Critical Success Factors – which will have an introductory paragraph will be provided, then provide some definition for critical success factors and the procedures for identifying and developing critical success factors for any organisation. Some examples of critical success factors that have been identified in organisations were thoroughly examined.

2. A review on Critical success factors of project management organisations that can be applicable to other organisations in the UK. An introduction to this section will be presented. Project management and concept will be defined; provision of existing critical success factors of project management organisation; and finally, impact of project management methodologies for the development of critical success factors for project managers.

3. A review on Factors driving successful event projects within the UK's event management organisations. With a view on Event management as a body of knowledge; Types of event projects within event management practice; Methodologies and standards in event management practice; And any Existing factors used to determine the success of event projects.

4. An in-depth exploration of Corporate Event studies in the UK. With clarity in the true definition of corporate event, types of corporate events, existence of critical success factor model for corporate event management organisations, and standards and methodologies governing the delivery of corporate event projects in the UK.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

There will be an introduction for this section that sets out the key main things that will be covered. Then, an in-depth narrative on the research design and a clearly established understanding of the research paradigms and philosophical dimension on which this research takes its stance. Choice of methodology for carrying out data was included. Sampling technique to approach participants for this research and data collection instrument were adequately described.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Data

A clearly stated introduction to what will be covered in this section will be provided. Then data will be presented according to data phases (secondary and primary data). Finally, there will be a combination of data from literature review and interviews.

Data from interviews will be presented in this chapter where a full transcript of data will be presented as evidence revealing factors influencing the implementation and management of successful projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK, thereby achieving objective 3.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

Discussion of findings will be done in stages. Findings from objectives 1, 2, and 3 will be discussed and presented. Then, there will be a summary of discussion of findings presented in the developed critical success factor framework for corporate event management organisations for the UK.

Chapter 6: Research Outcome and Development of CSF Framework for CEMOs in the UK

This chapter contains summary of research outcome towards the achievement of the research aim. It also provides a development of CSFs throughout data phases and the framework respectively.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Conclusion of this thesis will be accomplished by concluding secondary and primary data. There will be recommendations for academia especially for on-going event-related research and recommendations for event and project organisations. Limitation of study encountered during this research will be presented followed by areas of further research. The contribution for study will be presented for academia and industry.

Figure 1: Thesis Chapter Breakdown

Chapter 1 → Introduction/General Information about the research.	Background to study.
	Statement of Problem.
	Aim, Objectives, and Research questions.
	Justification for study.
	Scope of Study.
	Structure of thesis.

Chapter 2 → Literature Review	Critical Success Factors described and explained.
	Critical Success Factors from Project Management Organisation applicable to event projects. ← Objective 1
	In-depth exploration of corporate event studies in the UK.

Chapter 3 → Research Methodology	Research Design (philosophical standpoint, approach, and strategy)
	Choice of Methodology.
	Sampling Technique
	Data Collection Instrument.

Chapter 4 → Qualitative Data Analysis
- Interviews
- Questionnaire.

→ Factors influencing Implementation and management of successful corporate event projects in the UK. ← Objective 2

Chapter 5 → Discussion of Findings

- PMOs
- EMOs
- CEMOs

Chapter 6 → CSF Framework for CEMOs ← Objective 3

Chapter 7 → Conclusion

12

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Literature Review.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explored both past and present research around critical success factors for corporate events management organisations in the UK. But most importantly highlights viewpoints from project and event practitioners when it comes to criteria or requirements of critical success factors. However, this would not be possible without first setting the scene by defining and identifying procedures to develop critical success factors for any organisation.

Hence, this chapter is divided into three focal areas: Project Management; Event Management; and Corporate Event success factors. It reviewed critical success factors from project management that can be applied to event management organisation. Also, the event body of knowledge was assessed with respect to examples of successful events and criteria or requirements for each success. Finally, already existing frameworks or models were explored for the delivery of successful events within contemporary corporate event organisations.

2.2 Critical Success Factors (CSFs).

Critical success factors have been an ancient subject matter which continues to expand as researchers explore its use and has been used to ensure organisation's successful competitive performance. For example, the concept of critical success factors was first introduced in 1961 (Daniel, 1961). This concept became popular when it was later used to assist in defining the CEO's information needs that are most critical to the success of the business (Rockart, 1979). Since then, the use of CSF has become widespread in many areas and being aware of CSF is of great importance, since it helps managers to focus on the most relevant factors (Zwikael and Globerson, 2006). Hence, Dickinson et.al defined CSFs in 1984 as, "*events, circumstance, conditions, or activities that require special attention because of their significance. They can be internal or external and can bring about success eidather positively or negatively*" (Dickinson, *et al.*, 1984).

Based on another research CSFs are divided CSFs models into three levels (Shenhar, *et al.,* 2002). The first-level models focus on product success (Maidique and Zirger, 1984; Cooper & Kleinschmidt, 1987). The second level is a more strategic models that focuses on business unit (Dvir et. al., 1993). The third level, which is the project management level, has received vast attention (Zwikael and Globerson, 2006).

CSFs are commonly used for the seamless execution of various strategies and programs by business establishments. It refers to 'the limited number of objectives areas that will ensure the organisation's successful competitive performance if they are satisfactory' (Naveed, *et al.,*2020)' and demands the continuous attention of managers in the selected areas. CSFs encompass the crucial factors that are critical in the areas where performance is very important to establish the success of organisations (Naveed and Ahmad, 2019). As such, there should be a strong focus on these factors to achieve success (Alfoqahaa, 2018).

According to Morrison (2016), there are four basic types of C*ritical Success Factors* CSF's: 1) Industry Critical Success Factors (CSF's) resulting from specific industry characteristics; 2) Strategy Critical Success Factors (CSF's) resulting from the chosen competitive strategy of the business;

3) Environmental Critical Success Factors (CSF's) resulting from economic or technological changes; and

4) Temporal Critical Success Factors (CSF's) resulting from internal organisational needs and changes.

The identification of CSFs involves in-depth analysis and discussion. Issues to consider when striving to identify CSFs include: variables or factors that are likely to impact desired outcome; perform statistical analysis based on past data; changes in behaviour that must occur to create the desired outcomes; conditions that must exist or change to enable the desired outcomes; skills to be added or acquired to achieve success; and tools to add or master to achieve goals? (Rahi, 2019). From this understanding, some organisations assert that, the first step to identifying CSF is by identifying the relevant stakeholders. Secondly, is to generate CSFs. Thirdly, organisation will need to give meaning to their generated CSFs (Tuan, 2020). Tuan went on to provide an overview or summary of examples which organisations can use when identifying their CSFs: skilful team, resources/financial

support, top management support, recognition of project team, absence of red tape, sharing high-quality information, customer support and establishment of clear measurement of success (Tuan, 2020). Hence, organisations structure their success factors into categories according to the type of value or intended goal. A clustered overview of CSFs is provided in Figure 2 (Aerts et al., 2014).

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS			
Economic	**Financial**	**Legal**	**Political**
• Stable economic situation. • Near monopoly situation of the service. • Forecast of failure (long-team) demand.	• Available financial market. • Acceptable tariff levels. • Reasonable debt equity ratio.	• Favourable legislation regulation. • Standardization engineering contract. • Concrete and precise concession agreement.	• Stable political situation. • Special guarantees and support by the government. • Select suitable project agencies.
Procedural	**Social**	**Structural**	**Technical**
• Knowledge transfer. • High level of respect. • Open communication. • Proper stakeholder management. • Understanding of objectives	• Community support. • Demonstrated and accepted need for project. • Sound environment impact and public safety.	• Appropriate risk allocation and assessment. • Strong private consortium. • Clear definition of responsibilities.	• Technical innovation. • Creativity of the private partner. • Project technical feasibility.

Figure 2: Typical Example of Cluster Overview of Critical Success Factors

Source: *(Gholam and Mohammad, 2016).*

Furthermore, identifying critical success factor is a practice which can be implemented by top management personnel in their organisation. These organisations can be project management organisations, event management organisations or corporate organisations, with elements of project-related work and events as well.

2.3 Project Management

Project-based work is widespread as projects have increasingly become a preferred means by which organizations, both public and private, seek to deliver value, through products and services. Projects offer a methodology for realising strategic goals, and improving economic, social, and environmental conditions for billions of people across the planet (Lundin *et al.*, 2015; Shenhar & Dvir, 2007).

Project management is the application of processes, methods, skills, knowledge and experience to achieve specific project objectives according to the project acceptance criteria within agreed parameters. Project management has final deliverables that are constrained to a finite timescale and budget (APM, 2022).

In 1999, Atkinson opined that, a project is an activity or undertaken that has definite start and end dates. It is unique in nature and brings change. Project execution is associated with some degree of uncertainty which introduces some risk (Alkin and King, 2016).

A project is usually deemed to be a success if it achieves the objectives according to their acceptance criteria, within an agreed timescale and budget. Time, cost, and quality are the building blocks of every project. *Time*: scheduling is a collection of techniques used to develop and present schedules that show when work will be performed. *Cost*: how are necessary funds acquired and finances managed? *Quality*: how will fitness for purpose of the deliverables and management processes be assured? (APM, 2022).

Project Management is concerned with delivering undertakings on time within budget to scope or specifications (Geraldi & Morris, 2011) by application of tools and techniques such as critical path method Atkinson,1999). Seymour & Hussein (2014b), argues that at its core project management is concerned with creating a conducive atmosphere for people to work as a team and achieve a common objective and deliver projects successful projects on time and within budget. Project management is about managing projects from conception to completion.

Hence, critical success factors (CSFs) are inputs to project management practice which can lead directly or indirectly to project success. It encompasses many elements, which must be synchronised to ensure the project delivery on time (Alias *et al.,*2014). Various studies focused on the determination of project management critical success factors in the

literature (Walker and Vines, 2000). The term 'Project Success' is defined as a construct that included budget, time, and quality (Bryde, 2008; Fortune, *et al.*, 2011; Turner, 2009). The criteria for measuring project success vary due to its size, uniqueness, and complexity (El-Saboni, 2009; Müller and Jugdev, 2012; Müller and Turner, 2007; San Cristóbal, *et al.*, 2018).

2.3.1 Critical Success Factors from PM applicable to events.

The all-important notion of project success has received an enormous attention over the last four decades in project management theory and practice. However, the evaluation of project success is a surprisingly open question with few authors using consistent definitions and measures (e.g., Zwikael & Meredith, 2021). As a result, the following have been identified by other authors and project managers as success factors that can be applicable to any organisation:

Project Definition: project management is a special management technique designed to manage projects of all sorts (Burke, 2014). Defining project management underpins the whole purpose of using its approach in business activities. For example, APMBoK 6th ed defines project management as *the process by which projects are defined, planned, monitored, controlled, and delivered such that agreed benefits are realised.* Whereas PMBOK 7thed, on the other hand, defines project management as *the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities in order to meet project requirements.*

Project life cycle: A project life cycle is a "series of phases that a project passes through from its start to its completion." A project phase is "a collection of logically related project activities that culminates in the completion of one or more deliverables." A life cycle provides a basic framework for managing a project, and the phases of the chosen life cycle do not change based on the specific project work required (Holmes Co-Op, 2020). Hence, Project Management Institute (PMI) has defined these five process groups, or phases, which come together to form the project life cycle (PMI, 2018; Aston, 2022):

- <u>Project Initiation</u>: Defining the main project charters (vision, objective, and goals of the project); identify the high-level scope, deliverables and product or service that

needs to be provided; conduct a feasibility study; estimate the cost and create a business case; and identify key stakeholders for the project and their overall needs.

- <u>Project Planning</u>: Planning is where you define all the work to be done and create the roadmap that you follow for the remainder of the project. The roadmap should be able to identify the phases, activities, constraints, and schedule, and create a project timeline with a work breakdown structure and Gantt chart. Putting forward a financial plan is important at this phase as it creates a project budget and plan to meet maximum cost, complete with allocations across resources and departments. It is also important to create a resource plan that includes a recruiting a great team and schedule the resources and materials needed to deliver the project; create a quality plan for project targets and measures of delivery; create a risk plan that identifies possible risks, assumptions, issues, dependencies, assign an owner and develop a mitigation plan for how to avoid/overcome them; create an acceptance plan for what should be 'done' and 'delivered'; create a communication plan by making a list of stakeholders and plan the communication cadence; and create a procurement plan for any 3rd party suppliers required and agree on terms.

- <u>Project Execution</u>: this is the part of the life-cycle phase where all plans are transformed into actions. To execute plans into actions, project manager always takes the following steps: establish a team leader; clearly define what needs to be done to the project team and the criteria for the task. Project managers perform a task briefing session where they ensure the team are clear about what they need to do and by when it is needed to be accomplished; having a client management system to work with clients to ensure deliverables are acceptable, and communications to ensure that information and any updates are communicated to the right people at the right time through the right channel.

- Project Monitoring & Controlling: ensures project stays on track. Key areas that needs to stay on track are: Cost and Time Management (review timesheets and expenses to record, control, and track against the project's budget, timeline, and tasks); Quality Management (review deliverables and ensure they meet the defined acceptance criteria); risk management (monitor, control, manage, and mitigate potential risks and issues); Acceptance Management (Conduct user acceptance testing and create a reviewing system, ensuring that all deliverables meet the needs of the client) and Change Management (for when the project doesn't go to plan, managing the process of acceptable changes with the client to ensure they are satisfied with necessary changes).

- Project Closure: project is essentially over, and the project managers' job comes to a close. But the project's not over yet, hence, there are key Project Management Steps taken for Project closure: perform a project performance analysis (assess how well the project was managed, and whether the initial estimates of costs and benefits were accurate, unforeseen risks and how well were they dealt with; and any changes in project). Team analysis (did everyone do what they were assigned to do? Were they passionate and motivated enough? Did they stay thorough and accountable? Was the communication within the project team healthy and constructive?). Project closure document that includes (closing supplier agreements, signing off contracts, and handing in all the necessary project documentation). Post-implementation review (formal analysis of successes and failure, lessons learned, and future suggestions).

Model for project delivery: Effective project management is important for the successful accomplishment of many projects (Chan, 2004). Focusing on the critical success factors enhances project management competencies (Isik, *et al*., 2009; ma.). For example, in the 1980s, Peters and Waterman (Waterman and Peters, 1982) explored management's art and science with the critical success factor model (known as the *McKinsey 7S Framework*). Critical success factors are the crucial attributes and variables which influence the project's successful completion and implementation of project and management activities

(Milosevic and Patanakul, 2005). Alias, *et al*., (2014), categorised these factors into project management actions, project procedures, human-related and project-related factors, and external environment variables.

Essentials for Project success: Goatham (2013) classified different definitions of project success into five tiers:

(i) Tier 1: Scope – A project is a success if it delivers all or most of what it set out to (the scope), regardless of schedule or budget.

(ii) Tier 2: Schedule – A project is a success if it delivers what it set out to on schedule and/or within the agreed budget.

(iii) Tier 3: A project is a success if it delivers what it set out to on schedule, within the agreed budget, and to the expected quality standards.

(iv) Tier 4: A project is a success if it delivers on all agreed project objectives, be it scope, schedule, budget, quality or outcome-based (that is, goals to be achieved or strategic positions to be attained).

(v) Tier 5: A project is a success if the project creates significant net value for the organisation after the project is completed.

Machado & Martens (2015), on the other hand, affirms that it is possible to find and use many different approaches for project management success. The iron triangle approach is one of the most traditional ones that affirms three main aspects of projects (Scope, Cost and Time) must be managed together.

Influence on the project: from other project-related research six main areas have been defined as the most critical project success factors. They were not examining the meaningful difference between the factors, but listed the most impacting factors in the following order: formally establishing a project manager 93%; Project managers competencies 88%; High authority of project managers 85%; clear and measurable project goals 90%; establishing project team 86%; and top management support for the project

84% (Spalek, 2005; Bens, *et al*., 2021). Whereas Houston (2015), opines that the following are m: Communication; project management practices and performance; relationship management; quality of project team resources; collaboration; and change management.

Sustainability: the need to establish an understanding of corporate organisation presents itself by revealing that in todays' contemporary corporate or business world, there is a globalised and increased interest on sustainability factors for companies to consider their strategy (Kotter, 2012). This means that for businesses to survive in this competitive world, they would have to constantly reposition their products and/or services, bring down costs and increase their sales (Thuijsman, 2015). Thus, the need to consider key factors that help corporate organisations survive during challenging times arise. In this view leadership and management perspectives are critically looked at for key factors needed for the survival of an organisation during challenging times.

Leadership Influence: A leader delegates and influences others to carry out specified objectives (Mullins, 2004). Leaders plays a huge role in meeting organisations' goals (Omolayo, 2007), and understand the complexities of the rapidly changing global environment (Nanjunde & Swamy, 2014). More so, leadership style can affect organisations' innovativeness in a competitive business environment (Jung *et al*., 2004). In 1996, Schein asserted that the most important function of a leader creating, changing, and manipulating of organisational culture.

Management Style: in the 1960s, Douglas McGregor identified the X and Y theory that suggests that humans naturally dislike the concept of working and would need to be controlled and directed in order to achieve objectives. Also, that people gain a sense of satisfaction when they make work a natural part of their lives (Aithal and Kumar, 2016). Then, in 2009 Mintzberg introduced the art-craft-science triangle as his own means of identifying managerial styles; Art – grounded in intuition focusing on visions and ideas; Craft – is based upon experience; and Science – the ability to deliberate and be analytical in decisions (Mintzberg, 2009).

Project Management Methods (PMM): In order to study the effects that PMMs have on project success, the building blocks (elements) of a methodology need to be defined. For example, Joslin and Muller (2015) asserts that a comprehensive and detailed Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is a method used by project managers for project success. Joslin and Muller (2015) proceeded to identify five elements for a methodology namely, processes, tools, techniques, capability profiles and knowledge areas. The definition of each element is shown in the Table 3 below:

Table 3: Definition of Project Management Methods

No.	Element	Definition
1	Process	A systematic series of activities aimed at causing an end result such that one or more inputs can lead to one or more outputs. A process can employ various numbers of tools and techniques.
2	Tools	A tangible templates or software programs used to perform an activity to produce a product or result. Examples include scheduling tools, project management information systems, surveys, project estimating tools, time reporting systems.
3	Techniques	An applied endeavour requiring skill and experience so as to effect a desired result. Examples include communication techniques, expert judgment, three-point estimates, conflict management and quantitative risk analysis
4	Capability Profiles	A description of attributes including personal, technical, and business required to complete a set of tasks and/or to perform a project role.
5	Knowledge areas	An identified area of project management such as time management, cost management, procurement management, stakeholder management and others.

Implementing project management: The current times of dynamic changes are called turbulent times and based on the deviations' regulation, the classic approach of managing the corporate processes is no longer sufficient (Bargues, *et al*., 2020). A possible way to deal with it is related to the use of modern project management practices. Project management plays an essential role in many countries worldwide as a useful and efficient tool in planning and organising processes, crisis management, and time management. Project management does not deal with routine, repetitive activities. The project's characteristic is its uniqueness, associated with a significant degree of uncertainty and risk.

It is project management that has the prerequisites for managing such risks (Vrchota, 2021).

In addition, project management is inevitable in today's world – a place of continuous improvement through different types of various projects. Project management is not only a necessity for improvement but also one field that seeks for improvement itself, through influence on different PM success factors (Radujkovic and Sjekavica, 2017). Hence, PM is an umbrella field that cuts across all sorts of organisation or industry, for example corporate organisation and event industry can be classed as a project organisation. The main purpose of using a project management framework is to increase organisational value (Dalcher, 2012), and the organisation can benefit from using project management framework by increasing the effectiveness of human effort in the organisation while increasing the efficiency of these efforts (Badewi, 2015).

Furthermore, regardless of any organisation type, projects managers must address the following critical factors when implementing successful projects: Support of top management, effective communication channels, the correct financial budget of the project (Fortune and White, 2006); Project managers with the right qualifications (Chan, *et al.*, 2001); Elimination of project problems (Belout and Gauvreau, 2004); The team's motivation and stimulation in the project, the joint efforts of all team members, the effort to successfully implement the project, adequate project control(regular monitoring, quick feedback, and changes in the project according to the current situation (Chan, *et al.*, 2001). Furthermore, in conjunction to this, the following project performance indicators can be used to express project success (Enshassi, *et al.*, 2009; Takim and Akintoye, 2002; Cho, *et al.*, 2009; Villazón, *et al.*, 2020): Quality; Costs; Time; and customer satisfaction with services and products.

EM is another broad sub-set of PMOs with different typologies ranging from; birthday party organisers; celebrity/artiste management; conference/seminar organisers; corporate event organisers and many more.

2.4 Event Management.

It is pertinent to begin by acknowledging that the study of events has made notable progress with regard to the number of academic publications, and also in its theoretical scope. As a response to the rapidly growing events industry in need of managerial knowhow and professionalization, the field of event management has been a fertile ground for providing important insights, business acumen, and valuable research (Perneck and Rakić, 2019).

The event industry remains one of the oldest industries that ever existed bringing people together, sharing a building relationship. There is a wealth of historical findings relevant for todays' researchers and event practitioners, however, one question that arise from literature is 'What is an event?' and 'What is event management?'. For example, in 1979 Giddens a historical sociologist suggested understanding events as prisms through which structuration processes the interplay between action and structure can be observed (Griffin 1992). Nigam and Ocasio (2010, p. 824) accordingly argued that "events have duration and history and are best understood not as instantaneous occurrences or happenstances, but as a sequence of overlapping activities and processes that occur over time". From this perspective, each event flows and unfolds in different ways (Griffin 1992, p. 414), which can complicate classification. As a possible solution, Aminzade (1992) proposed categorising events by their temporal characteristics such as duration or pace.

Brown and James (2004) acknowledge that the emergent profession of events was more likely to focus on management and planning. This is in part due to the institutions in which events management education first emerged, from academic faculties of business and management.

Large events have huge economic, tourism and infrastructural impacts to the hosting region. Major events aim to make these impacts long lasting and changing them to legacies so that the effects would live far beyond the event itself (Thorne 2015). Major events have been used to achieving economic, infrastructural and tourism objectives but only in the recent years have events been used to help public sector objectives such as encouragement of sporting and physical activities as they did in the London 2012 Olympic Game legacy plan (DCMS 2012, 10-18; UK Sport 2011, 3-4).

According to King (n.d), there are three main areas events can be categorised:

- Private (*Wedding, Wedding receptions, Birthday parties and Festival gatherings*).
- Corporate (*Ensuring team building exercises, Business dinners, Conferences, Networking events, Seminars, Product launches and Meetings*).
- Charity (*Society balls, Sports events, Charitable auctions, and any other Outdoor events*).

However, this research focuses on corporate event as the corporate events industry is not a diverse event due to events being aimed at business' Bowdin, Allen, Harris, McDonnell and O'Toole (2012) suggests that corporate and business events supports business objectives including management functions, corporate communications and to improve company morals and business procedures to increase profitability and income this is due to individuals and companies promoting a product or business by expanding their brand meaning other organisations will not use this type of event for these reasons.

To this regard, several factors have risen as drivers for successful events within event management organisation regardless of type, scope or scale:

Clear Definition: Berridge (2007), emphasises that it is important to clarify what we call an event? And identifies that Donald Getz and Goldblatt made the two of the earliest academic attempts to define events in the early1990s, that define an event such as being unique, one-off, special and beyond everyday experience therefore without delay event differs from other more routine activities such as work. Bladen *et. al* (2012), on the other hand, opines that Events are temporary and purposive gathering of people.

Event experience: In defining event success characteristics, experience is the most important success factors within event planning (Gerritsen & Olderen, 2011). Sharples *et al* (2014), confirms that experience is the most critical aspect of events success. They explain that highlighting event success can be achieved by ensuring event design is of high quality which provides event attendees the best experience.

Model for event delivery: Salem *et al*., (2004); Yeoman *et al*., (2003) p.14, presented a framework for the systematic identification and deconstruction of four major stages of event development". Within this model the four stages include the decision stage, the detailed planning stage, the implementation stage and the evaluation stage. Salem *et al*'s model of event planning can be as a tool for event managers to be able to plan successful events and can be adapted to fit the format of any event ranging from life-stage events such as weddings and graduations to life-cycle events such as funerals and birthdays. Other authors have also devised a similar model mirroring the divide of Salem *et al*'s model to create a four-sectioned model (Tum *et al.,* 2006; Smith, 2017).

Overall Planning: A good idea of an event is not enough to deliver it successfully, the idea must be transformed into well-designed planning (Rosca 2011, 608). The event planning starts with an initiation phase (Aicher *et al*., 2016, 128). The event needs to be defined, the objectives should be set, and the feasibility of the event needs to be determined. A well-made plan with enough data collection will make the event successful. A good approach to the event planning process is to start from the end. The event organiser needs to know what they want the event to do after the audience has gone and all cost have been covered. Event organiser should set a single primary objective which the event will achieve at the minimum and which will determine the event as success even if everything else fails (Supovitz 2005, 17). The event planning process should start with deciding the objectives as these determine the strategies of the event so that the objectives can be achieved. The process must have chosen mechanisms to meet the set objectives to allow continuous alignment with the short-, medium-, and long-term plans which involves strategies that encourages objectives to be achieved and use of new facilities or regeneration projects for organisations long-term future (Masterman 2009, 58-61). According to Aicher *et al*., (2016, 128), the traditional event planning process can be divided into 5 main stages: Initiation, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation, and Closure.

Managing Event as Projects: In social sciences, events are researched typically as unplanned occurrences rather than as the outcome or target of deliberate management

activities. Even though a number of streams of management research have examined how events influence organisations and organisational fields, the notion of event management is often equated with project management and mainly debated in professional publications (Müller & Schüßler, 2013)

In addition, creating a unique experience for a targeted audience with limited resources is the central task of event management. A successful event requires a complex alignment of creative and commercial goals. The field of project management provides some useful tools in tackling some of the complexities of event success, moreover events share some characteristics with projects (Williams, 2016; Ferdinand & Kitchin, 2017). Hence, project management is a benchmark for events in this research.

2.4.1 Examples of successful events.

The definition of event success is diverse. It can be a measure of achieving the aims of events (Dvir, *et al*.,2004) or meeting stakeholders' expectations (Cserháti, 2014). For example, Thanavutd and Teepakorn, (2022), reported in their study "*A Systematic Review of the Key Success Factors of Sports Event Management: A Resource-based View Approach*" that success within sports events management is measured based on two main resource areas: Tangible Resources (human resources, financial resources, and physical resources) and Intangible Resources (organisational resources and reputational resources).

In May 2016, at the 90th Anniversary of Gleneagles, (an event aimed at delivering lasting memories for guests, demonstrate Gleneagles' impeccable service and to celebrate the Gleneagles brand values), success was based on amazing feedback from guests, excellent PR around the event, and all 90th anniversary activity (Drinkwater, 2016).

An event blog released in July 2017 recorded the reasons for the success behind the well-known Glastonbury festival event. This is based on the right venue, an exciting line-up that suits attendees' musical needs and a worthy promotional strategy.

The 2019 Tatler Annual Ball (an event that set out to build and enhance St. Regis brand name amongst top society socialites) recorded that success was based on extensive media coverage of the event, great social media buzz and cultivated the St Regis name and address to luminaries (Li, 2023).

However, the size or type of event this research focuses on corporate event projects in the UK. Moreover, there is no doubt that events are now seen as a powerful communication medium that can change perceptions, attitudes and behaviours and create genuine brand experiences. In common with the rest of the business-to-business (B2B) sector, corporate events are increasingly being required to prove their worth with client companies under pressure to demonstrate return on investment (Hirst, 2010).

2.5 Contemporary corporate event organisations.

Reviews on event-related research has been widely and globally researched over time. For example, In July 2000 in Sydney Australia, at conference called Events Beyond 2000: Setting the Agenda, Getz (2000:9) said: "*The events industry, if we can call it that, is well established in many forms such as expositions, sport marketing, or concert productions, but as an academic field of study and a research topic it is quite new and immature*". Then, in 2013, research covered the fact that events gained momentum during the latter half of the twentieth century, there was a concurrent increase in academic interest in events; and consequently, an increase in research being undertaken, focusing on an array of issues pertaining to events and the event industry (Mair and Whitford, 2013). Significant research efforts have been directed at understanding and exploring events in the intervening time.

Hence, the term "corporate events" is used to refer to a wide range of different organisational events (Mirić, and Petrović, 2013). According to Bombarger (2010), a corporate event is defined as a proprietary marketing event at which external customers (other businesses, partners, or consumers) or members of the media are the target audience. The International Dictionary of Event Management (2001), on the other hand, defines corporate events as events that the company or organisation sponsors to achieve a specific goal.

Indeed Editorial Team (2021) confirms that corporate event is one that is sponsored by a company and focuses on either its employees or clients. There are many reasons for organising a corporate event, with some of the most popular, being:

- To educate staff or members of the public regarding various concepts promoted by the organisation.

- To motivate employees by rewarding them for their work.

- To celebrate various company milestones along with clients, employees, or both.

- To mark a significant organisational change within the company.

- To encourage collaboration and networking among different entities.

There are a range of different typologies with regards to corporate events, and it is vital that these types of events are accurately distinguished (Hind, 2017). According to Allen (2008), distinguishing the types of corporate allows organisation to establish company objectives and allows the opportunity to deliver a clear message to the attendees, which will result in effectively meeting the events objectives. Companies use corporate events to bring people together to develop interpersonal relationships that couldn't exist inside the structured environment of the office (Hard, 2020). According to Hard 2020, different types of corporate events are Seminars and Conferences; Trade Shows; Executive Retreats and Incentive programmes; Golf events; Appreciation events; Company or Organisation milestones; Teambuilding; Product Launch events; Board Meetings and Shareholders Meetings, as seen in figure 4 below:

Corporate events			
Types	**Legal/institutional**	**Commercial**	**Social**
Objectives	Electing or voting	Increase sales	Strengthen network and relationship between company's representatives and key clients
Event examples	Business strategy meetings, human resources meetings (ex: electing director)	New product presentations, sales training program	Team-building events, corporate hospitality days

Figure 3: Types of Corporate Events Source: (Beech, *et al.,* 2014) in (Bui and Tran, 2017).

2.5.1 Existing Critical success factors considered by corporate event organisers and managers.

Intensive Planning Process: Lindsey (2011) emphasises on the need for an intensive planning process when organising a party, conference, awards, ceremony, team building events as it is the only way to guarantee event success. In addition, corporate event planners make it imperative to have a comprehensive corporate planning checklist that they refer to when building events of any size and form. A typical checklist will include the following: Have a strategic event venue; Ensure that clients goals align with event activities; Have a reliable event management software; Build connections with people working on the event; and Promote the event (Hanchar, 2018).

An event management blog documented the largest piece of event planning research concluded in January 2018 and records key aspects corporate event planners' priorities for their project as; budget is the major concern for corporate event planners; corporate event planner strive for innovation and; networking is the top priority for corporate event planners as they are aware that networking is the one thing event attendees look forward to the most from an event (EventMB, 2020).

Corporate strategy: is another key factor needed for survival of corporations during challenging times. Pettinger (2004), on the other hand, opined that a well-designed strategic management scheme is most effective for making strategic decisions for the overall performance of the organisation. Pettinger, believed that decision-making is both a progression and a process based on; *defining problems and issues; determining processes to be used in resolution; timescales for achievement and completion; gathering information that clarifies issues raised; identifying critical success factors; defining and evaluating alternative course of action, and choosing preferred alternatives*.

In understanding strategy within a corporate environment, SWOT analysis is used as a tool for strategic planning and aids in decision making process by positioning an organisation's resources and environment in four main areas: *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats* (Ying, 2010; Phadermrod, *et.al*.,2019). Also, in considering external factors for organisations operation, tools such as: PESTLE, five forces analysis, and 3C (Company–Customer–Competitor) analysis can be used for strategic analysis and meeting organisations goals involves (Akiyoshi & Komoda, 2005; FME, 2013). According to CIPD,

(2017), corporate organisation will need to consider their: *political factors; economic factors; social; technological factors; legal and environmental factors.*

Corporate Governance: corporate organisations can also achieve project success by having a corporate governance in place that provides a level of direction and control in a corporate environment (Veldman, *et al*., 2016; ICAEW, 2019).

2.6 Summary

Critical success factors from this literature review were by first identifying key issues to be studied or surveyed. The key issues to be studied or surveyed during review were PMOs critical success factors that can be applicable in any other organisation and factors driving success within EMOs. Secondly, a cross-disciplinary search strategy was employed to set the scene for the literature review to commence and to explore other research that have been published over time and to better analyse data from literature review. In addition, it provides a guide or pathway for achieving the aim of study, and how to embark on event-related research as this one. These publications reveal that researchers have come up with conclusions about the importance of identifying critical success factors for any project or event-related work.

From the cross-disciplinary search strategy and selection criteria, fourteen publications from this literature review were selected to highlight CSFs that has been identified from other studies, mostly drawing from research conclusions. The researcher identified several factors from those publications that are responsible for the successful running of any project and event-related work regardless of organisation. From PM perspective, project managers consider the following to be factors responsible for the success of projects: project definition; model to project success; essentials for project success; influences on the project; sustainability; leadership influence; management style; project management methodologies (PMM); and implementing project management. According to event organisers, clear definition, event experience, model for event delivery, overall planning and managing projects all lead to successful events within their organisation. For already

existing critical success factors for corporate event planners, intensive planning, corporate strategy, and corporate governance is needed to determine critical success factors for their organisation.

Hence, the cross-disciplinary search presents a conclusion from other research and remark by the researcher for critical success factors obtained from each of the other publications or research used in this literature review. It also gives a clear understanding to critical success factors from project management perspective that can be applicable to other organisations in the UK, and factors that drive successful event projects within event industry as shown in table 4 below:

Table 4: Cross-disciplinary search for CSF from other studies for this research

S/N	Author	Conclusion	CSFs	Remark
1	Kokolakis (2018)	For a successful sporting event organisation, a structured management framework is needed that can explicitly identify the CSFs of the Critical Success Factors areas, precisely determining the critical success factors for each life stage of the sporting event. Implementing the CSFs method for the sporting event organisation can support the event organisers to act more effectively and efficiently, taking into account all necessary parameters for a successful sporting event.	Structured management framework.

CSFs at each life cycle stage. | Identifying CSFs is important at every stage of a sporting event. This in turn made it easy for the development of the framework for sporting event according to this study. And successful events are only a success when all parameters are appreciated. |
| 2 | Abouhafs and Bellihi (2013). | 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 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 organisation. | Innovation and creativity.

Good experience.

Quality.

Communication.

Organisational skills. | It is clear that having a successful wedding event it has to be divided into formal and informal areas. It is also clear that the place of project management is respected when developing successful weddings in Morocco. In Morocco, projects have been attached to events which means that they see events as projects or that the process in organising a wedding event follows project principles. |
| 3 | Müller and Rofner (2009). | Through hosting an event (the range varies here from medium sized up to major events) the companies and event | Perfect platform to work. | There is some sort of understanding that hosting or delivering a successful event is dependent on the size of the |

		agencies build a perfect platform for themselves as well as for their customers to head up for long-term objectives and goals.	Clear objectives and goals.	event whether it be small, medium, or large. The size of event determines goals, objectives, or process to apply when planning. Customers' needs play a huge role in deciding the perfect platform for events in Austria and Sweden.
4	Chan *et al.*, (2004).	A new conceptual framework that includes and regroups the identified variables affecting project success is developed. Hypotheses on implementing a project successfully have been developed. It can be used as a base for further detailed investigation on general construction projects, as well as a specific project, such as hospital or hotel. It can help in selecting project team members, identifying the development needs of the project team members, and most important for forecasting the performance level of a construction project before it commences.	Project team members. Development needs. Forecasting performance level.	Success factors deduced from project management can be used as a baseline for other project-related work. Project management has been proven to be the most effective ways of identifying factors that aid to successful project works.
5	Alias *et al.*, (2014)	This study also elaborates a conceptual framework for determining critical success factors in project management practices based on five (5) variables for project success, which should be taken into consideration during the project management phases from inception until project completion in order to enhance project success.	Project management actions. Project procedures. Human-related factors. Project-related factors. External environment.	Results from this study are expected to help project management practitioners to achieve specific construction performance level. Thus, the context of the critical success factors (CSFs) to be considered when examining project management practices and project outcomes should be hinged by the five variables from this study.
6	Oh and Choi, (2020)	This study aimed to identify team member's competencies required for project management in various industries and to investigate the influence of these competencies of team members on project success factors. In conclusion, this white paper aims to explore new approaches to project team competency by defining the	Personality Knowledge. Skills of team members. Emotions. Managerial Intellectual team members.	The strength and weaknesses of a project team can greatly impact the overall production of any project. This means that project managers have to first consider the skills available within team members prior to allocation of tasks. This in turn allows project team to perform their tasks effectively and efficiently as they are comfortable with the tasks allocated to them.

		project team's competency as the team members' competency. Based on project leadership theory, team members have defined the features necessary for successful project management implementation.		
7	Goatham, (2013)	Project success is classified into 5 main tiers.	Scope. Schedule. Budget. Quality standards. Project objectives. Create significant net value.	In order to achieve project success, it is important to clearly defined different areas to success.
8	Badewi, (2015)	This school of research believes that the major driver of success is "use". The "use" is the underpinning concept of these theories; the more the use, the more benefits will be realized, therefore achieving the "success.	Perception. Attitude. Behaviour. Motivation. Intention.	From this study, it is clear that success relies mostly on human impact rather than project activities.
9	Fortune and White, 2006	This paper has shown that through a review of sets of critical success factors from 63 publications it has revealed that there is a lot of overlap between sets, but the factors selected for inclusion in individual lists vary to a considerable extent.	Support from senior management. Clear realistic objectives. Strong and up to date detailed plan. Good communication and feedback. Client involvement. Skilled and qualified staff/team. Competent project manager.	Success for any project-related works depends on a number of factors. Some of these factors may be internal or external factors. But they all lead to success within project management.

			Sufficient and well allocated resources. Good leadership. Proven and familiar technology. Realistic schedule. Risks assessed and managed. Effective monitoring and control. Adequate budget. Environmental influences. Project size (large, medium, or small).	
10	Chan, *et al*., (2001)	Six project success factors were extracted by factor analysis on 31 variables developed through a synthesis of empirical studies and project participants' opinions. These factors formed the basis for design and build project evaluation. Three of the factors were found to be critical in explaining the overall design and build project performance from the multiple regression results. More research should be conducted to further explore the relationship between the procurement method and project success factors.	The project team commitment. Client's competencies. Contractor's competencies. Time and cost performance. Quality of design. Workmanship.	In order to come to a conclusion of identified critical success factors, it is important to break key terms into manageable variables and sub-categories to appreciate the full value and output of a particular project task.
11	Belout and Gauvreau, (2004)	Today, many researchers agree that the human resource function is one of the most crucial elements in an organisation's success. HRM is clearly being renewed in organisations and gradually affirming its strategic role. In its official definition of the Project	Human resource management (HRM). Define and communicate the project's mission clearly.	It is without a doubt that humans are indeed an asset especially when it comes to delivering successful projects. The ability to be able to manage human beings during an ongoing project is another level to project success. Moreover, human resource management is embedded in

			Clients' needs.	project management. Hence the need for people management is crucial to project success.
		Management Body of Knowledge, the Project Management Institute included HRM as one of the six fundamental functions of project management.

It is recommended that future studies should also measure project success from three viewpoints: sponsor's view, project manager's view and sponsor as project manager's view. | Established project limits and priorities (expected quality standards, schedules, risk acceptance, method of project management to be adopted, monitoring conditions and communication methods between the different actors).

Top management support.

Client Acceptance.

Authority of the project manager.

Communication.

Team cooperation.

Troubleshooting | |
| 12 | Gerritsen & Olderen, (2011) | This book is divided into three main areas. The first part concerns the *plan phase* from the EVENTS model, the second part covers the *do phase*, and the third part relates to the *check phase*. | Plan.

Do.

Check. | Events activities are achievable when broken down into phases. |
| 13 | Sharples *et al* (2014) | It is important for event creators to be constantly aware of the need to engage and listen to stakeholders throughout the event process. This is relevant to the event creators delivering events in all contexts as they seek to coproduce events with their | Stakeholder's engagement. | Carrying event stakeholders whilst an on-going event project is crucial to the success of events. For example, when there is a change or milestone to either or any of the event phases, this should be communicated back to stakeholders as they have the right to be keep updated as to the progress of the event project. |

		stakeholders to affect positive and enduring relationships. In order to create events that properly address stakeholder's aspirations and concerns, it is imperative to place the locality of the event at the centre of engagement.		
14	Yusoff et al, (2015).	From the identified 40 success factors in organising events extracted through literature review work, only 25 factors were considered by 3 experts of MICE event managers in the pilot study to be suitable for this study. The first-round survey involved 15 MICE event managers which found 6 CSFs. In the second round which involved the same respondents of the first round confirmed the ranking of the success factors' ranking obtained as in the first round of the Delphi survey.	Clear Objectives. Location of Venue. Financial Resources. Code of Conduct. Marketing & Promotion. Sponsorship of Event.	MICE events are sub-types of corporate events. 6 main CSFs are responsible for the success of MICE events.

Finally, the publications that were selected for review were done with an intention to critically examine its authenticity and relevance to this research area (Bowen, 2009). Hence, the following were considered for the selection of literature review: Planning checklist; Types of Corporate Events; External Factors for project success; Definition for project management; Internal factors for project success; Planning process; Management theories; Process management within project management organisations; Impact of leadership style in organisations; Strategic factors for the delivery of projects; Tools and techniques to aid project delivery; Project success criteria; Definition of event management; Importance of event experience; Managing events as projects and; Overall Practice.

From Table 4 presented above, organisations convert arising business and technological opportunities into projects in order to grow and achieve their strategic goals. Project success is the ultimate objective of all organisations and stakeholders and hence, achieving project success is an obsession of every organisation (Hasan and Al-Hashimi, 2019). From

this understanding, organisations have and run elements of projects in their organisation which means project management principles can also be applied to any organisation (i.e., event management and corporate event organisations). Hence, critical success factors from *PMOs, EMOs and* CEMOs have been summed up in figure 4 below:

PMOs

1. Project Definition.
2. Model for Project Success.
3. Essentials for Project.
4. Influences on Project.
5. Sustainability.
6. Leadership Influence.
7. Management Style.
8. Project Management Methodologies.
9. Implementing Project Management.

EMOs

1. Clear Definition.
2. Event Experience.
3. Model for Event Delivery.
4. Overall Planning.
5. Managing Events as Projects.

CEMOs

1. Intensive Planning.
2. Corporate Strategy.
3. Corporate Governance.

Figure 4: Overview of CSF from Literature Review

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Research Methodology.

3.1 Introduction

This research is built on a pragmatist philosophical standpoint which moves on to include elements of an inductive research understanding underpinned with interpretivism. Narrative inquiry strategy was employed to provide a full story of analysis of data and discussion of findings from secondary and primary data. Also, in developing this chapter, a research onion pattern was followed.

Hence, this chapter lays out the design on which this research is built and research philosophical dimension on which this research takes its stance by exploring other researchers' ideologies to how researchers should understand the nature to the research. It also identifies and explains methods and strategy for methodology adopted for the achievement of research aim and objectives set out for this research. This chapter also elaborates on this research choice of methodology, sampling technique adopted, and data collection instrument used for collecting the primary data needed to fill the knowledge gap. Furthermore, this chapter, demonstrates how the literature review was conducted, provides analysis for semi-structured interview and how the CSF framework was developed.

3.2 Research Design

Saunders, *et al*. (2012) defined research design as a general plan to answer a research question. As a systematic approach to conducting a scientific inquiry, it brings together several components, strategies, and methods to collect data and analyse it. A research design, also called a research strategy, is a plan to answer a set of questions It is a framework that includes the methods and procedures to collect, analyse, and interpret data. In other words, the research design describes how the researcher investigated the central problem of the research and is, thus part of the research proposal (McCombes, 2019).

Hence, the entirety of this research is designed on the principles of the research onion as seen in the figure 5 below:
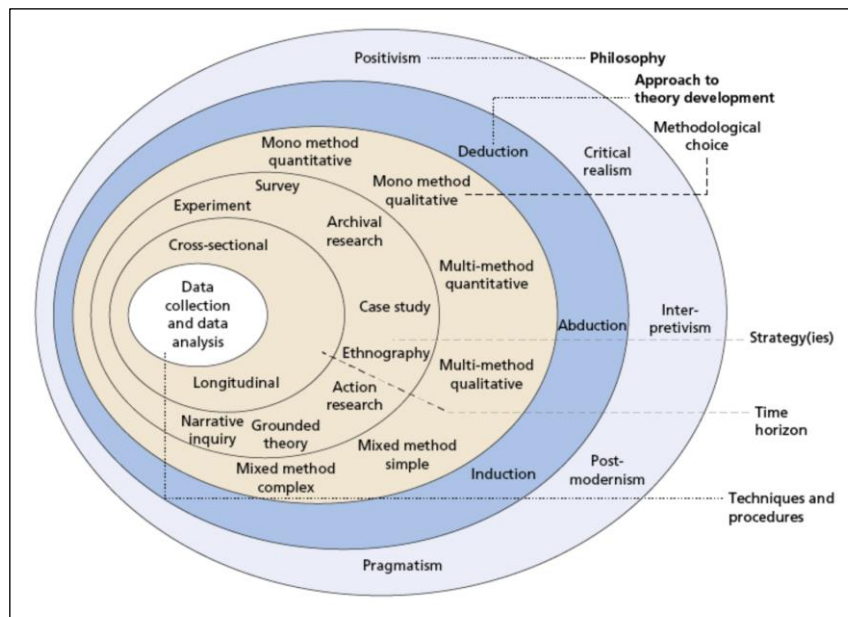
Figure 5: Research Onion

Source: Saunders *et al*., 2018. *Research Methods for Business Students*. England: Pearson Education Limited.

From Figure 6, the researcher chose to follow a research onion pattern as it formed a foundation for planning, developing, and executing data needs pertaining to "a critical success factor framework for corporate event management organisations in the UK" as explained below:

- The first layer consists of philosophy (positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism). Using the research onion, the researcher was able to understand their standpoint on critical success factors for corporate events in the UK. It also revealed the true nature of how data for this research was conducted.

- The second layer consists of research approach in terms of it being a deductive, inductive, or abductive research. The research approach presented this research a guide on how data can be best gathered.

- Third layer includes methodological choice highlighted a variety of method to adopt for this research. It consisted of mono method quantitative research or mono

qualitative research or multi method quantitative research or multi method qualitative research or mixed method research or mixed method sample or mixed method complex research. The research became aware of the variety of research methodologies to take when embarking on research whilst facilitating the process for choosing best fit method for the research.

- The fourth layer refers to strategies used in the research. The researcher had to decide if this research should be experimental, go through survey, archival research, case study, ethnography, action research, grounded theory, or narrative inquiry.

- The fifth layer focuses on the time lapse for each data phase whether it be cross-sectional or longitudinal.

- Finally, the last layer concentrates on techniques and procedures used for collecting and analysing data.

Furthermore, embedded in the research design, this research appreciates Imed's four main characteristics that a study should be designed (Imed, 2020) as explained below:

- Neutral: ensures that results obtained are as neutral and as objectives as possible. Also, that the researcher is able to analyse and interpret the data, free from bias.

- Valid: in revealing the research tools and techniques in order to measure results. Identifying the research tools from a sound research design, can help the researcher in measuring the result.

- Reliable: in generating similar results every time it is performed. This means that a good research design creates an opportunity to form standards to collect and analyse results.

- Generalised: that the research design can be applied not just to one part of a study, population, or setting but should also cover any part with the same measure of accuracy.

3.3. Philosophical Standpoint of this research.

Research philosophy deals with the source, nature, and development of knowledge (Bajpai, 2011). In a nutshell, a research philosophy is the belief of how data should be collected, analysed, and used. Addressing research philosophy enables researchers to become aware of their beliefs and assumptions (Dudovskiy, 2016). It was also natural for researcher to bring in their beliefs and philosophical standpoint when carrying undergoing research (Carnaghan,2013).

There are several research philosophies that influence the nature of a research (positivism, post-positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism) (Lincoln, 2000; Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). To fully grasp the philosophical dimension for this research, the researcher embraced a more pragmatist way of conducting a study.

Embracing a pragmatist approached built a strong basis with which the research should go. The pragmatism approach focuses more on research outcomes which deals with "what works in addressing research problem" thereby giving researchers freedom of choice of methods to as many approaches as possible to collect and analyse data. In practice, researchers use a variety of method aimed at answering research questions (Creswell, 2012).

The researcher decided to go with a pragmatist approach as it allowed flexibility to choose various combinations of methods and to inquire about a subject matter from a variety of perspectives. Moreover, pragmatist research is a useful way to understand people and their world through observation, experience, and experiment (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). By acknowledging a pragmatic paradigm throughout this research, it revealed the exploratory nature of this research as there was a freedom to choose and explore a range of methods, techniques and procedures that best meet the overall needs of this research (Žukauskas *et al.*, 2018). It is exploratory research because, its design does not aim to provide the final and conclusive answers to the research questions, but merely explores the research topic with varying levels of depth (Singh, 2007). With no concrete way to go about event-related research nor to discover key elements for the delivery of successful event projects, exploratory research aims at tackling new problems on which little or no previous research has been done (Brown, 2006). This meant that findings from objective 1-3 were based on a pragmatist's philosophy (Lancaster, 2005) which gave the freedom to

explore PM Body of Knowledge, EM body of knowledge and CEM body of knowledge to arrive at CSFs used to improve the delivery of event projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK. Furthermore, research philosophy, facilitated decisions made throughout data stages of the different phases of this research which includes choice of methodology and methods (Lincoln, 2000; Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

3.4 Research Approach

In the field of science many researchers have assigned different meanings for the tear research approach. In some publications research approach may mean methods of data collection and data analysis in general and differences between qualitative and quantitative methods, in particular. For this research, research approach provided a plan and procedure for conducting the study (Bryman and Bell., 2015; Saunders, *et al*., 2012). From this understanding, approach for this research is divided into three categories:

Deductive Approach: is concerned with "developing a hypothesis (or hypotheses) based on existing theory, and then designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis (Wilson, 2010).

Abductive Approach: Abductive reasoning, also referred to as abductive approach is set to address weaknesses associated with deductive and inductive approaches. Specifically, deductive reasoning is criticised for the lack of clarity in terms of how to select theory to be tested via formulating hypotheses. Inductive reasoning, on the other hand, criticized because "no amount of empirical data will necessarily enable theory-building (Saunders, *et al*.,2014).

Inductive Approach: which this research is based on, starts with the observations and theories are proposed towards the end of the research process as a result of observations (Goddard and Melville, 2004). In adopting inductive research, the researcher searched for pattern from observation and developed an of explanations of theories prior to the collection of data relevant to critical success factor framework for corporate event management organisations in the UK (Bernard, 2011).

3.4.1 Choice of Methodology

Research methodology is the study of methods by which knowledge is gained and aimed at giving a structure plan of action most importantly, the procedures in which researchers go about their work through describing, explaining, and predicting phenomena are called research methodology (Rajasekar *et.al,* 2013). There are various forms of methods research can be conducted, namely quantitative methodology, qualitative methodology and mixed methodology. However, this research was approached through a multi-method qualitative research methodology. Qualitative methodology is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions, and behaviour. Research in such a situation is a function of researcher's insights and impressions. Such an approach to research generates results either in non-quantitative form or in the form which are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis. Generally, the techniques of focus group interviews, projective techniques and depth interviews are used (Kothari, 2004). This research involved a range of qualitative data collection and analysis techniques (qualitative literature review, qualitative interview, and qualitative analysis) (Dudwick *et al*., 2006; Gopaldas, 2016).

The multi-method qualitative methodology was most suited for this research, as it involves an inductive approach which provides an easy use of systematic set of procedures for analysing qualitative data that can produce reliable and valid findings. Moreover, according to Corbin and Strauss, (2008) and Levitt *et al*., (2017), qualitative methodology approach is inductive in nature that explores meanings and insights about a particular topic area. Hence, objective 1-3 followed a systematic set of procedures for analysing data that produced reliable and valid findings and that there was an inductive exploration to review critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be applied to events within event management organisations in the UK, determine factors influencing the implementation and management of successful event projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK and, develop a critical-success-factor framework for corporate event management organisation in UK. The key multi-method qualitative areas for this research are broken down into key areas, focus and methods used as shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Multi-method Qualitative Methodology broken down.

Key Area	Focus	Method/s Used
Objective 1	Review critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be applied to events within event management organisations in the UK.	**Literature Review:** was adopted to review key knowledge areas of: • Project Management Organisations and, • Event Management Body of Knowledge.
Objective 2	Determine factors influencing the implementation and management of successful event projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK.	**Two stages of primary data conducted:** • Semi-structured interview sessions and, • Questionnaire (based on the same questions as interview).
Objective 3	Develop a critical-success-factor framework for corporate event project management in UK.	**Theory of Project:** • Transformation • Flow • Value generation
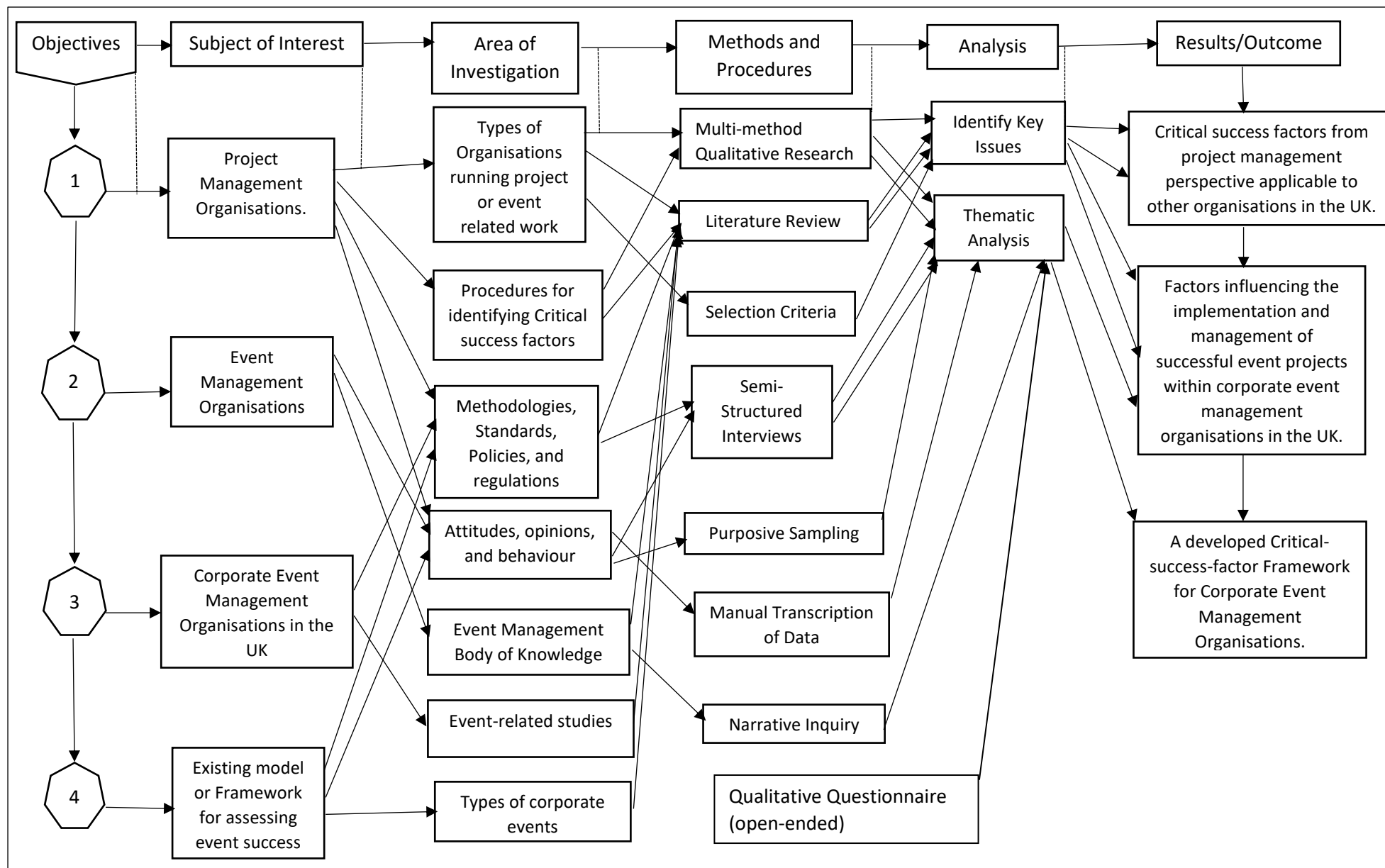
Figure 6: Research Methodology Flowchart

3.4.2 Research Strategy

Saunders *et al* (2009, pp 600) defined research strategy as "the general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research questions". On a similar note, Bryman (2008) identified research strategy as "a general orientation to the conduct of research" (pp698). From this understanding, the research title was developed after knowledge gap was identified. The researcher, decided to take an approach similar to the funnel approach to guide in the development of the objectives where project management organisations was investigated first, then event management and corporate event specifics followed (Lawless, 2018).

The overall strategy of this research merged data from Project management perspective, Event management body of knowledge and corporate event management organisations for the sole purpose of providing a clear understanding of how the aim of this research was achieved (Denzin, 2012; Merriam and Tisdell, 2015; Thurmond, 2001; Davies, 2001; Natow, 2019).

It embraced all success factors responsible for the success of each organisations project and event orgaisations but most importantly, highlighting key elements that goes into prior, during and post event as the life cycle approach. Hence, Figure 8 below provides a clear illustration to how this research creates its synergy:
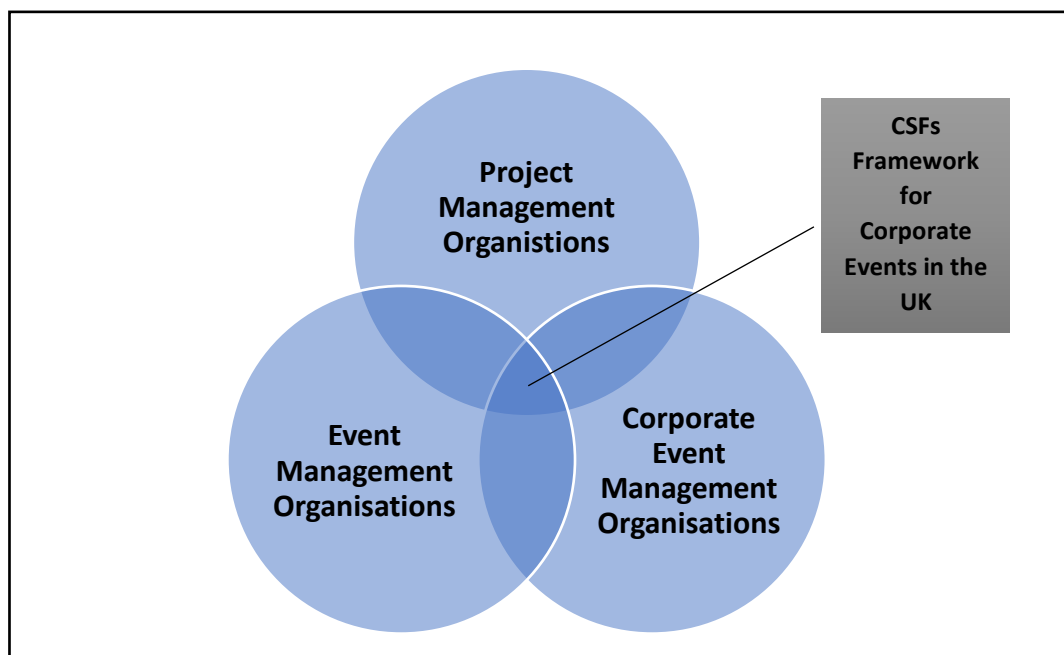
Figure 8: Overall Research Strategy

Moreover, there was no way for the researcher to delve into specifics of this research (CEMOs) without exploring and reviewing factors of PMOs which can be applicable to other organisations and factors driving success within EMOs. Also, whilst developing the research objectives for this research, relevant questions pertaining to objectives emerged. Additionally, according to Remenyi *et al* (2003), research strategy provides the overall direction of the research including the process by which the research is conducted. Some of the common research strategies used in business and management are experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography, archival research, cross sectional studies, longitudinal studies, and participative enquiry (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Collis and Hussey, 2009; Saunders *et al.,* 2009) as explained below.

Based on the research onion, this research adopted a *Narrative Inquiry* research strategy for answering research questions and addressing research gaps for this study. This approach is focused on the use of stories as data. The idea of narrative inquiry is that stories are collected as a means of understanding experience as lived and told, through both research and literature (Baden and Niekerk, 2007). In using narrative inquiry for this research, the researcher was able to grasp phenomena in a holistic way; to understand phenomena within context; or to emphasise immersion in and comprehension of human meaning (Baden and Niekerk, 2007).

This research uses a narrative inquiry research strategy in presenting or reporting data gathered from each both literature review and interviews. This method was also applied mostly to the discussion of findings from this research and conclusion of research. Hence, narrative inquiry provided a logical summary of discussion of findings, data from literature review, interview and statement of problem are interwoven together to address gaps in study and research question. A clear illustration to this is presented in Figure 11:
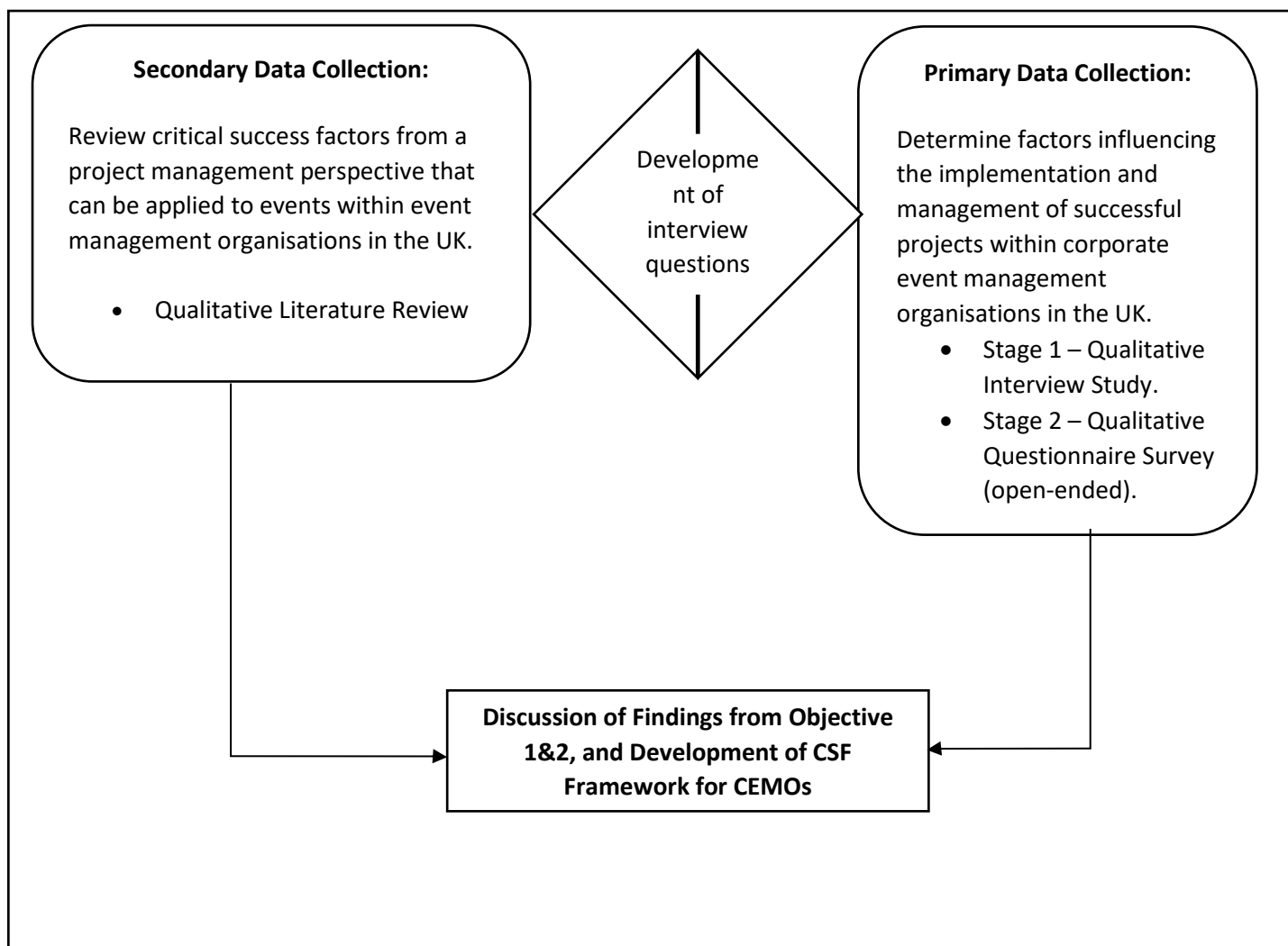
Figure 9: Guide for presentation of discussion to findings

Furthermore, there was a need to establish the techniques and procedure to conducting the research itself. Hence, research techniques and procedures are explained in the next section.

3.4.4 Research Techniques and Procedures for Data Collection.

These are the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and collect data about critical success factors for corporate events and to the development of a CSF framework for CEMOs in the UK. In a research study, the methodology section allows the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability (Wits, 2022). For multi-method qualitative research as this one, secondary and primary source of data were explored through literature review, interviews and triangulation of data as explained below:

Literature Review: In order to "Review critical success factors from project management perspective that can be applicable to other organisations in the UK" and "Assess factors that drive successful event projects within the UK's event management organisations", literature review was used as secondary source of data to perform an overview of past and current works on a subject, issue, or theory focused on all types of project management organisations (Whitfield, 2015). Also, literature review in this research gave rise for the researcher to 1) identify the key facts, theories and concepts; 2) provide a rational for including or excluding some literature; 3) providing clarity to the purpose of the review; 4) provide emphasis on recent research developments and emerging concepts; 5) organise work logically; 6) including important details; and 7) providing adequate criticism (ICL, 2017).

However, a systematic type of literature review was better suited for the review of project management that can be applicable to other organisation and assessment of event management success factors. Systematic literature review was applied in the following steps:

- Cross-disciplinary search strategy: for each of the reviews (PMOs and EMOs), it entailed going through a lengthy process that involved a cross-disciplinary search strategy with clearly stated criteria for inclusion and exclusion of the literature (Berkeljon & Baldwin, 2009).
- Analysis: the analysis of literature review, collated findings from several studies on the same subject and analyses using a standardised procedure. It also detected patterns and relationships from data gathered thereby drawing up logical conclusion to critical success factors for corporate event management organisations (Dudovskiy, 2018).
- Synthesis: the synthesis of literature review from this study on the other hand, was based on an inductive approach (Dudovskiy, 2018).

Furthermore, the researcher applied a step-by-step process to structure the writing stage (Cronin *et* al, 2008; Pautasso, 2013):

1. Selected a topic to review: this was an initial strategy which was employed by the researcher to determine how much literature is available, to generate a considerable amount of data and an opportunity to refine and manage information gathered from the review itself.

2. Searched and re-searched the literature: the researcher checked and downloaded relevant papers used during the review for literature. Whilst reviewing data from other publication, the researcher adhered to a strict guidance to checking relevant documents used in this research:

   - Kept track of searched items (for accessibility); used a paper management (e.g., Mendeley, Papers, Qiqqa, Sente).
   - Defined process to selection criteria for relevant and irrelevant papers (these criteria helped to define scope of review).
   - Performed broad research not just on this research area but sought out previous reviews; discussed approach to literature review, limitations and provided conclusions of past reviews.
   - Discovered a new angle that has not been previously covered in previous reviews.
   - Incorporated new materials that have inevitably accumulated since their appearance.
   - Ensured that the search itself was thorough, used different key words and database sources (e.g., DBLP, Google Scholar, ISI Proceedings, JSTOR Search, Medline, Scopus, Web of Science) and looked at who has cited past relevant papers and book chapters.

3. Gathered, took notes whilst reading the literature, and analysed the literature: selected literature for critical success factors for corporate events in the UK went through a process of rewriting, restructuring, and rethinking to obtain a text with a coherent argument.

4. Chose the type of review to write on: After having taken notes while reading the literature, the researcher had a rough idea of the amount of material available for the review. This presented an opportunity to decide whether to go for a mini- or a full review. The researcher decided to go for a full review as it presented this research an advantage and more freedom to cover in detail the complexities of a particular scientific development.

5. Kept the review focused but maintained a broad interest: it was important to use specific material for the review process as it led to a focused and well detailed review rather than trying to do too many things at once. While it was important to keep the review focused, the researcher had a need to keep the entire process balanced with a keen interest on making the review relevant to a broad audience.

6. Review was critical and consistent: the researcher ensured that the literature review in this research was discussed critically and identified methodological problems and points out research gaps. After having read the review of literature, the researcher had a rough idea of: major achievements in the reviewed field; main areas of debate and outstanding research questions.

7. Found a logical structure to commence the literature: the review process had to be timely, systematic, well-written, focused, and critical. Hence, the researcher followed the usual structure for writing a research paper through the following subdivision: a general introduction of the context; methods; results and discussion toward the end whilst having a recapitulation of the main points covered.

8. Made use of feedback: the researcher incorporated feedback which had been previously peer-reviewed as this helped the quality of literature review in this research. The review was reread ensuring that last minute corrections (. i.e., typos, leaps, and muddled sentences) were done. Feedback from supervisors, colleague and diverse views were appreciated at this stage in the literature review process.

9. Analysed and synthesised the literature: the researcher performed a first read of the articles that have been collected to get a sense of what they are about. Then, critically looked at summary or abstract at the beginning of a paper which assisted the process and decision as to whether it is worthy of further reading or inclusion.

10. Writing the Literature: when it came to writing the literature review, the researcher followed a framing pattern:

   - Divided the literature into themes or categories that were distinct from the themes identified in literature which were then discussed.
   - Presented the literature review chronologically. It means that the literature review from this study was divided into time periods.
   - Explored the theoretical and methodological literature.

Interview: to "Determine factors influencing the implementation and management of successful projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK", Semi-structured interview sessions were used to collect data at this stage. Interviews provided this research an excellent

opportunity to gain full and proper insight into CSFs of CEPs (Yin, 2009). Interview sessions was done in a flexible manner and sometimes relied on supplementary questioning through probing and comments from the interviewer. During the interview process, participants thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about the topic area were considered especially for the analysis process (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Moreover, the intent for conducting a semi-structured interview was to gain full and proper insight into CSFs of corporate event management organisation, and to give flexibility to how data is gathered by not following any strict nor formalised list of questions but to allow discussion rather than a straightforward question and answer format (Doyle, 2020). The interview questions were developed from the gaps identified from literature review.

During the interview process, three organisations from the following research population granted audience for research:

1. Corporate Event Consultants – these people work independently to support event planners throughout their whole event process providing advice for event-related matters. Google search was employed as the chief database for the search of corporate event consultants in the UK that covers any region in the UK depending on research audience.

2. Event Managers/Organisers/Planners – they're responsible for running a range of events, ensuring. An event database from gov.uk was explored as there is a data base set with a listing of event management organisations in the UK. However, only corporate data was gathered from those samples.

3. Private or Public Event Practitioners – these are individuals who privately run their own event business either start-ups, SMEs, large scale or even run with a public affiliation (Networking, board meetings, seminars). LinkedIn platform was used as method of approach for credible and experience people

4. Corporate Event Project Managers – these are people who specialise purely on corporate event projects, and they understand the whole emergence, purpose, value, and management of corporate event. They are only limited to this event type. There is a global business-to-business (B2B) website that has all the contacts of meetings and event planners, this would be explored to get contact details of managers who run corporate business affairs in the UK.

5. Universities – there are some universities in the UK who run corporate-type events as part of their publicity strategy.

Participants for the interview stage were approached through a 'purposive sampling' where five CEMOs were targeted. Six participants in total granted research audience. Purposive sampling was selected for the main purpose of accelerating the selection process for the interview study (Dotothy *et al*, 2014, Collins. *et al.,* 2006). Besides the main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable you to answer your research questions (Laerd, 2012). It also meant that there was an opportunity to gain an understanding to the kind of data that was given by the participants. In a nutshell, the selection criteria during the interview stage influenced the strength of data and availability of data. Hence, participants for the interview were selected based on their level of experience, role, academic qualification, number of projects since inception, staff strength, organisation type and sub-event type as seen in table 6 below:

Table 6: Overview of the participants profile – sampling

Participant	Participant's Years of experience	Participants Role	Participants Academic Qualification	Number of Event projects since Inception	Staff Strength	Corporate Event Type	Organisation Type
P₁	4 years	Event Lead, Corporate Coordinator & Health, and Safety Lead	MSc	30+	15	Seminars, Conferences, Graduations, Science Festivals, Building openings and networking.	University.
P₂	20 years	Operations Manager	Was not Mentioned	30+	25	Seminars, Conferences, Trade shows, Product launch, Team building, Theming and Building.	Corporate Event Management Organisation.
P₃	4 years	Account Manager	HND in Events and Management				
P⁴	20 years	Commercial Director	PRINCE2 Project Management	30+	24	Seminars, Conferences, Product Launch, Team Building	Corporate Event Management and Activity Company
P⁵	9	Senior Sales Executive	BA/BSc	30+	24	Seminars, Conferences, Team Building.	Private/Freelance
P⁶	20 years	Account Director	BA/BSc	30+	15	Seminars, Conferences, Product Launch, Team Building	Contracting

3.5 Summary for Research Methodology.

A multi-method qualitative methodology was adopted for the achievement of research aim and objective. It is evident that the pragmatist standpoint which this research took will prove to be the best for this research. From this understanding, this research is based on a multi-method qualitative approach where a range of qualitative methods were taken for an enriched data. The literature review followed a narrative understanding, while primary data involved interview study and questionnaire.

The most common type of corporate event available to this research were seminars, conferences, team building, networking, and product launch.

The methods taken for each data stages (objective 1,2 and 3) led to a variety of critical success factors for corporate events in the UK.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 Qualitative Data Analysis.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of primary data (interview and questionnaire). It highlights the process to that data has been analysed and an in-depth analysis of the data itself. A full summary of data is provided.

4.2 Analysis Process

A manual transcription procedure was first employed to present data collected from interview recordings (see appendix 1 for full transcript). The transcription procedure transformed spoken English words to written text which meant that audio recordings from the interview was the key item transcribed at this stage of the research. (Mayring, 2014).

Thematic analysis (TA) was then employed to make sense of meaningful data from both data sets (interview transcript and questionnaire response). TA identified, analysed, and reported emerging themes or patterns within interview data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic Analysis provided interview data a flexible way in describing how these themes emerged (Vaismoradi *et al*., 2013). But for the sole purpose of addressing research questions and transcribed interview (Cooper *et al*., 2012) which meant that adopting this method of analysis ensured that there was a special care and attention for transparency to present interview findings (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018). Hence, by adopting thematic analysis the researcher was able to: familiarise with the data; describe the content of interview; search for patterns or themes across the different interviews; review themes; define and name themes; and produce the final report based on analysis of interview data (Mortensen, 2020).

4.3 In-depth Qualitative Data Analysis

Data from first stage of data (interview) and second stage of data (questionnaire) was analysed on a question basis revealing responses from participants from interviews. It was important for the researcher to use the same questions from interview phase for the questionnaire. This was done to critically assess whether response given to each question is different due to the nature of data

collection. Most importantly to get enriched response based on the same question from a variety of sources and medium.

Common themes emerged during analysis of data. However, these themes have been categorised into 14 main focal areas which were basis for questions asked at interview and questionnaire, hence addressing objective 2 that determines success factors influencing the implementation and management of corporate event projects in the UK as seen in table – *See appendix 2 for full interview analysis*.

- P1 represents data from participant 1;
- P2 represents data from participant 2;
- P3 represents data from participant 3;
- P4 represents data from participant 4;
- P5 represents data from participant 5;
- P6 represents data from participant 6.

Table 7: Accumulation of Primary Data

Focal Area	Interview Data	P[1]	P[2]	P[3]	Common Themes
Organisational Branding	Meeting and building a strong relationship	√			• Relationship • Aim and Objective • Event Brief • Communication • Clear Information • Engaging clients and audience. • Problem solving. • Creating lasting experience.
	Clients aims and objectives	√	√	√	
	Impact in the society	√			
	Event brief	√	√	√	
	External resources	√			
	Return of profit	√			
	Creating an event mood		√		
	Full event management		√		
	System & Procedures			√	
	Attention to details			√	
	Communication	√	√	√	
	Event logistics			√	
	In depth information	√		√	
	Questionnaire Data	**P[4]**	**P[5]**	**P[6]**	
	Reporting and Governance	√			
	Visionaries, strategists, planners, creators and deliver extraordinary events.		√		
	Engage client and audience, communication, helping customer's, creating fulfilling and purposeful experience.		√		
	Provide bespoke solutions, meeting objectives and engage audience.		√		
	Principles, policies, and goals			√	
	Creative, knowledgeable, passionate, and fun to work with.			√	
Client Requirement	Build relationships, collaborative working, Networking, Reputation	√	√	√	• Collaboration • Smooth Running • Professional Support
	Key Performance Indicators	√			
	Health & Safety Management	√			
	Memorable experience		√	√	
	Managing client's expectations		√		
	Meeting client's goals		√		
	Running event smoothly	√	√	√	
	High quality & Professional support	√		√	
	Project Objectives	√			
	Questionnaire Data	**P[4]**	**P[5]**	**P[6]**	
	Meeting client's vision and desires.		√		
	Providing perfect platform and standard event format.			√	
	Learning and networking.			√	
Success characteristics	Quality management	√	√	√	• Communication • Quality • High standard
	Key indicator	√			
	Number of attendees	√			
	Evaluate if goals have been achieved	√			

		P^4	P^5	P^6	
	Client satisfaction		√		• Customer's satisfaction.
	High standard	√	√		• Problem solving.
	Feedback		√		
	Promote hard work		√		
	communication	√	√	√	
	Event Management			√	
	Good supplies of materials			√	
	Good working relationship with suppliers, teamwork.			√	
	Questionnaire Data	P^4	P^5	P^6	
	Client's decision, industry specific, delegate feedback scores, organiser satisfaction, remaining within budget and product specification.	√			
	Team, customer's trust and years of experience.		√		
	Great organisation, communication skills, ability to multitask, outside the box thinking and problem solving.			√	
Missing Element from Event	Description of events as project	√			• Better communication.
	Better time management		√		
	Better planning process		√		
	Better structure		√		
	Lack of team management		√		
	Better communication process		√	√	
	Questionnaire Data	P^4	P^5	P^6	
	Sustainability improvements			√	
Considerations for prior, during and post-event	*Prior Event* – client needs, event strategy, budget/costing, sorting out venue, external resources/people, visitors experience, health & safety, policy, staffing, event delivery and presentation.	√	√	√	*Prior Event:* • Client needs. • Strategy. • Resources. • Planning pre-event requirements.
	During Event – pre-event checks, time management, monitor visitors experience, quality checks, event runs smoothly and clarity of duties.	√	√	√	*During Event:* • Visitors Experience. • Event Checks. • Clear roles. • Execution of plan.
	Post Event – evaluation process feedback and debriefing.	√	√	√	
	Questionnaire Data	P^4	P^5	P^6	
	Prior Event – designing suitable solutions that meets budget and objectives, logistics, health and safety, environmental factors, number of guests, access, set up and run up (invite communications).	√	√	√	*Post Event:* • Evaluation. • Feedback. • Customer's satisfaction. • Event checklist.
	During Event – safe and correct delivery, following function plan, availability of supply's and live event (presentation and video),	√	√	√	
	Post Event – Assess feedback on objectives, customer	√	√	√	

60

		P4	P5	P6	
	satisfaction, areas of improvement and understand event purpose and takeaway relevant actions.				
Delivery Process	Drawn up an event document plan	√			• Managing • <mark>Evaluating</mark> • Client meet.
	Clear information about event	√			
	Having key contact for people	√			
	Health & safety requirement	√			
	Pre-planning (concept); Planning (what to do); build or set up project; the event; managing and evaluating.	√	√	√	
	Providing clients with list of ideas; booking an ordering event necessity; signing off contracts; commencement of project and getting feedback		√		
	Sorting out budget, sort out venue & equipment, logistics and having constant flow of communication			√	
	Drawn up an event document plan	√			
	Questionnaire Data	**P⁴**	**P⁵**	**P⁶**	
	Depends on event type.	√			
	Client brief, catch-up calls and production of design.			√	
	Content and video services and project management			√	
Adoption of Technique	Project schedule	√		√	• Risk management. • Resource allocation. • <mark style="background-color:#E8702A">Communication.</mark> • Safety plans. • Incident/Emergent Management Plan. • Project Management. • Critical paths.
	Managing step-by-step process	√			
	Risk management (Risk assessment)	√	√	√	
	Safety management plan; Critical incident plan and emergency incident management.	√		√	
	Gantt chart		√		
	Time management and Method statement		√		
	Resource allocation & assigning of role and responsibilities and; Public relation		√		
	Questionnaire Data	**P⁴**	**P⁵**	**P⁶**	
	Resource allocation, Risk assessment and Critical paths.	√			
	Assign internal team and resource allocation			√	
	Call sheets, critical path, agenda, running order, CAD plans and health and safety (insurance / risk assessment / method statement).			√	
Tools & Techniques Tailored to Organisation	The Purple Guide	√			
	Mood Board.		√		
	Loading List.		√		
	Allocate resources.		√		

		P[4]	P[5]	P[6]	
	Risk Assessment.		√		
	Project Management practice.	√	√	√	
	Attention to detail.			√	
	Clear communication.	√	√	√	
	Questionnaire Data	**P[4]**	**P[5]**	**P[6]**	
	Corporate communications, understanding key business and objectives.			√	
Standards for daily functions	Health and Safety Standards/ ISO4000 Safety Standard.	√	√		• Health & Safety. • Professional support. • Code of conduct. • Respect. • Project Management. • Event essentials.
	Purple Guide.	√			
	Emergency Planning Crowd.	√			
	Use of Professionals/High level standards and performance.	√	√		
	Meeting expectations for event attendees.	√			
	Staff Code of Conduct.	√	√	√	
	Client Log in System.		√		
	Warehouse Checks.		√		
	Rules and Regulations.			√	
	Sign Agreements.			√	
	Respect to others.	√	√	√	
	Questionnaire Data	**P[4]**	**P[5]**	**P[6]**	
	Risk Assessments, quotes, cost calculator, stock lists, staff rotas, task list, supplier's details, briefing sheets.	√			
	Specific documentation, project management and framework for content development.			√	
CSF at Strategic Level	Meeting Event needs.	√			• Impact. • Representing company. • Project management. • Scheduling.
	Strategically Impactful/ Representing Company.	√		√	
	Staying on Budget.	√			
	Good track record of event.	√			
	Fair and Easy communication.		√		
	Level of Understanding.		√		
	Knowledge of System.		√		
	Knowledge of Organisation Standard and Practice.		√		
	Enjoying Event.		√		
	Smooth Running of Event.			√	
	Right team.			√	
	Right Skills.			√	
	Questionnaire Data	**P[4]**	**P[5]**	**P[6]**	
	Project management spreadsheet, appointment scheduling, event function plans.		√		
	People relation, great attention to details and resourcing project.			√	
CSF at Managerial Level	Event Manager.	√			• Venue. • Presentation to client. • Documentation.
	Event Delivered successfully.	√			
	Right People in right position.	√			
	Event impact.	√			
	Organising Events.	√			

	Resources and Time.	√			• Adherence to rules, regulations, and code of conduct.
	Setting up Venue.		√	√	
	Event Presentation to client.		√	√	
	Contract and Invoices are documented.		√	√	
	Team adheres to regulations and code of conduct in place.		√	√	• Communication.
	Event Checks.			√	
	Clear Communication.	√	√	√	
Delegation of Task	Workload Management System.	√	√		• Workload System.
	Resource Allocation.	√			• Team experience.
	Team Experience.	√	√	√	• Team skills.
	Availability of Skills/Team suitability/Team Strengths & Weaknesses.	√	√	√	• Strengths & Weaknesses.
	Keep records of hours.	√			• Team management.
	Meeting financial regulations.	√			
	Health and Safety	√			
	Warehouse Manager.		√		
	Allocate Duties.		√		
	Project Manager.			√	
	Questionnaire Data	P^4	P^5	P^6	
	Suitability for delivery	√			
	Team management			√	
Model for Assessing Corporate Event Success	Event Toolkit.	√	√	√	• Event Toolkit.
	Event brief.	√			• Checklist.
	Event plan Template.	√			• Client Satisfaction.
	Checklist Template.	√	√		• Feedback.
	Risk assessment Template.	√			•
	Timeline Document.	√			
	Shared Folder.	√			
	Loading List.		√		
	Client Satisfaction/Happy.	√	√	√	
	Document Sign-off Sheet.		√		
	Client Feedback.	√	√	√	
	Pictures.			√	
	Voice Recordings.			√	
	Videos.			√	
	Quality Control.			√	
	Questionnaire Data	P^4	P^5	P^6	
	Feedback and score rates			√	
Goal-Oriented CSF respectively	SMART Objectives.	√			• Feedback..
	Feedback Forms.	√	√		• Evaluation.
	Reflection/Evaluation.	√	√	√	• Smooth Event.
	Course with Budget.	√			
	Stories on News highly impactful.	√			
	Delegate Experience	√			
	Clear Communication.	√			
	No complains.		√		
	Happy Team/Client.			√	
	Smooth running of event.	√	√	√	
	Questionnaire Data	P^4	P^5	P^6	
	Client feedback	√		√	
	Customer feedback		√		
	Seamless event			√	

The most common theme found within both sets of data (interview and questionnaire) were *communication, feedback, evaluate, availability of skills within a team and satisfaction of client/customer's needs*. These were colour-coded for clarity and to single out each theme.

- Orange represents communication.

- Green represents feedback.

- Yellow represents evaluate.

- Blue represents client needs/satisfaction.

- Gold represents availability of team skills.

4.4 Summary of Data Analysis.

From the data analysis, it is clear that the following factors address the research question "*What are the criteria for developing a critical success factor framework for corporate events management organisations in the UK?*" namely: Strong Relationships; Aim and Objective; Event Brief; Communication; Clear Information; Collaboration; Smooth Running; Professional Support; Quality control; High standard; Client needs; Strategy; Resources; Visitors Experience; Event Checks; Clear roles; Evaluation; Feedback; Managing; Risk management; Resource allocation; Health and Safety Management plan; Incident/Emergent Management Plan; Project Management; Code of conduct; Respect; Social Impact; Representing company; Setting up venue; Presentation to client; Documentation; Adherence to rules, regulations, and code of conduct; Workload System; Team experience (Team skills and Team Strengths & Weaknesses); Event Toolkit; Checklist; Client/customer's Satisfaction, evaluation, event feedback and Smooth Event.

The main issues faced by corporate event practitioners from data analysis is mostly elements missing from events, description of events as project, better time management, better planning process, better structure, lack of team management, better communication process and sustainability improvements. These issues also align with some of the issue based on the statement of problem from chapter 1. It is apparent that these issues remain regardless of how corporate event practitioners have tried to deliver successful projects. From this understanding elements of project management comes through strong in most of the responses from participants. For example, this can be seen within tools and techniques used for delivery of event activities (risk assessment/management, critical paths, Gantt charts, resource allocation, scheduling, etc), typical event step-by-step process,

In most cases, the practice of project management within corporate event organisation is more on the soft side of daily operations or functions. Event practitioners may not intentionally adopt project management principles, but it comes through within overall practice and delivery of successful event project and is embedded in event process from start to finish. It can be argued that event practitioners are cherry-picking from project management without consciously knowing it.

Model used for assessing event success was also another issue raised by event practitioners. It was identified that there is little or no available tools or structures for assessing event success. However, event organisers have to rely heavily on client feedback when client call back for a second time and when event runs smoothly or seamlessly. This is how they know that event was a success.

Allocating the right individual to an event activity sometimes prove challenging for corporate event planners. This sometimes raises aspects of workload management based on the availability of skills and experience with teams. This is partly linked to the fact that managers within senior level are also performing the task on mid-level management duties making it overwhelming for senior managers to concentrate on their own jobs.

Hence, it is evident that having information from two sets of collection provided an enriched data on which research question pertaining to this research objective was properly. The series of interview carried out determined responses to questions asked at an initial stage. Then the researcher decided to adopt the same question for a second stage via qualitative questionnaire (open ended). Data from these determined factors influencing the implementation and management of successful projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK. The process towards interview analysis enabled the researcher to be able to identify themes and value for using interviews as data collecting instrument for this stage of the research.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Discussion of Findings.

5.1 Introduction

Within this chapter, a full summary to key findings from the first phase of this research is established thereby putting forth key areas that have been accomplished for this research. Findings from literature review and interviews of information from data (objective 1-2) are summed up in strategy, overall practice, planning approach, project definition, tools and techniques, and management style. These findings are applied for the sole purpose of deducing research gaps, research questions and interview questions where necessary and to come up with some conclusion and solutions to problems raised.

5.2 Critical Success Factors of PMOs applicable to event projects within event management organisation:

From literature review, several factors have been considered as CSFs of PMOs. However, the researcher categorised these CSFs into six main factor areas namely: Strategic Approach; Leadership Impact on project; Management Style; The need for project definition clarity; Planning Approach and Overall Organisation's Practice. Moreover, the researcher focused on making a connection between project management and corporate event management for the achievement of the research aim that seeks to "*investigate critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be used to improve the delivery of event projects within corporate event management organisations in the United Kingdom*". The six areas proved to be the bedrock of running a successful project or event related work, and that it is indeed possible that critical success factors from project management can be implemented in delivering any event-related project within corporate event organisation. From this understanding, a detailed discussion to these findings have been broken down below, thereby elaborating on the six critical success factors namely:

Strategic Approach:

PMOs have made it a tradition to consider their external and internal resources before they can be able to fully create any project-related work. They have continued to do so by first understanding their organisations' external resources through PESTLE Analysis, 5 Forces (competition in the industry, potential of new entrants into the industry, power of suppliers, power of customers and, threat of substitute products), 3C Analysis (company, customer, competitor) (Akiyoshi & Komoda, 2005; FME, 2013). Organisations also consider their internal abilities SWOT Analysis, followed by a strategic planning process which involves taking an inventory of key organisations' resources (Ying, 2010; Phadermrod, *et.al*.,2019).

There is also a strong reliance on effective corporate strategy that helps them achieve project goals and organisational values with total reliance on managerial abilities that is grounded in intuition, vision, and goals, which is based on experience to be able to deliberate and be analytical on organisational matters. Additionally, project managers have a management scheme embedded into their organisations strategy for the delivery of successful projects that helps them: 1) define problems/issues; 2) determine process for resolution; 3) provide timescale for achievement & completion of an assignment; 4) gather information that clarifies issues raised; 5) identify critical success factors; 6) define & evaluate alternative course of action; and 7) provide choice of preferred alternative.

Furthermore, much emphasis has been placed on organisations to consider sustainable measures that enable them to gain a competitive advantage and how they can survive in challenging times (Kother, 2008). This can be done by adopting the iron triangle success approach that highlights project scope, cost, and time. But most importantly seeking to: define project scope; draw up a project schedule; have a realistic budget/cost; have an expected quality standard and ensure that the project is creating significant net value after completion.

Leadership Impact:

In PMOs, managers ensure that they delegate tasks to their subordinates, able to provide clarity to the description of duties within the workplace, ensures objectives and goals are met and understand complexities of a rapidly changing environment. It is important to note that a good and proper project essential lead to productivity and effectiveness of project which is dependent on innovation, leadership style and overall organisations' culture. Project leaders believe in

strengthening their functions and skills, as this enables them to be able to create, change and influence the organisation's culture.

Management Style:

There is a wide availability of methods and supportive tools for project managers to be able to design operational business processes and provision of analysis that strengthens organisations values. This involves mostly the adherence and compliance of management theory in the organisation that controls and directs humans to achieve objectives of a project which leads to a sense of satisfaction when humans make work naturally without supervision.

Implementation of efficient management model that increases revenue, enables organisation redesign internal & external resources, improves organisations' effectiveness & efficiency, and meets customers' needs & requirements.

Adhering to project management principles as an overall management technique for the management project of all sorts, encourages the abilities of top management to be able to do their job effectively which is grounded in intuition, vision and goal based on their experience to deliberate on key decisions and ability to analyse their jobs.

Clarity to Define Project:

Project Managers believe that meeting project goals involves the application of knowledge, skills, tools & techniques, define project, plan, monitor, control & deliver projects. And that adopting project management as a benchmark to clearly define any project increases organisational value and human effectiveness for projects (PMI, 2017; APMBOK, 2019).

To define project means that the project life cycle to initiate (defines main project character) and plan (define work to be done by creating road map for the entirety of the project) the project must be clear (PMI, 2018; Aston, 2022). More importantly, project management methods (PMM) are used to clearly defined project as it defines process, tools, techniques, capability profile and knowledge areas with effect leading to project success (Joslin and Muller, 2015).

Project Planning Approach:

PMOs have made it important to lay out key essentials needed for any project to commence and should include scope, schedule, budget/cost, expected quality standard and creating significant net value for the project.

For any project to commence, project managers ensure to go through the full project life cycle. Life cycle provides a basic framework for managing a project, and the phases of the chosen life cycle do not change based on the specific project work required (Holmes Co-Op, 2020). Hence, project managers ensure that they make plans on how to execute their projects (transforming plans into action), monitor and control projects (ensuring project stays on track especially with cos and time) and how to close the project (project managers job comes to an end) (PMI, 2018; Aston, 2022).

Overall Organisations Practice:

In a typical PMO, corporate governance has been embedded in their organisational practice as this provides direction and control to achieving project goals.

Hence, figure 10 below is developed based on the discussion above and is broken down into their respective sub-CSF categories, and key indicators for categorising success. See Appendix 1 for detailed critical success factors from PM applicable to event projects and other organisations.

	Sub-CSFs	Indicators
Strategic Factors	External Factors (Macro-environment & Business domain)	PESTLE Analysis. 5 Forces: Competition in the industry; Potential of new entrants into the industry; Power of suppliers; Power of customers and Threat of substitute products. 3C Analysis: Company; Customer and Competitor.
	Corporate Strategy	Achieve goals and values.
	Strategic Management Scheme	1. Define problems/issues. 2. Determine process for resolution 3. Timescale for achievement & completion. 4. Gather information that clarifies issues raised. 5. Identify critical success factors. 6. Define & evaluate alternative course of action 7. choose preferred alternative.
	Iron Triangle Success Approach	Scope, Cost & Time
	Internal Factors	SWOT Analysis. Strategic planning process. Organisations' resources.
Leadership Impact	Sustainability	Competitive advantage and challenging times.
	Description of duties	Delegate, ensures objectives and goals are met, Understand complexities of a rapidly changing environment.
	Productivity & effectiveness	Innovation, Leadership approach and Culture.
	Key functions & skills	Create, change, manipulate organisations' culture.
Management Style	Project Management as a management technique.	Manage project of all sorts.
	Methods & supportive tools.	Design operational business processes. Analyse & strengthen organisations' values.
	Management theory.	X-theory (control & direct humans to achieve objectives). Y-theory (sense of satisfaction when humans make work a natural part of life).
	Managerial Abilities.	Art (grounded in intuition, vision & goals), Craft (based on experience) and science (abilities to deliberate and be analytical).
	Business process management.	Achieves organisations' competitive advantage. Quality in products & services.
	Management Model.	Increase revenue. Enables organisation redesign internal & external resources. Improves organisations' effectiveness & efficiency. Meets customers' needs & requirements.
Clarity to Define Project	Meeting project goals.	Application of knowledge, skills, tools & techniques. Define, plan, monitor, control & deliver projects.
	Project management as a benchmark	Increase organisational value. Increase human effectiveness.
	Project Lifecycle (Initiation and Planning)	Define Main project characters (vision, objectives, and goals). Define work to be done (creating project road map).
Planning	Project Management Methods (PMM)	Defines project process, tools, techniques, capability profile and knowledge areas.
	Project essentials	Scope, schedule, budget/cost, expected quality standard and creates significant net value.
Practice	Project Lifecycle (Execution, Monitoring and controlling and closure)	Transforms plans into action. Ensure project stays on track especially sot and time. Project managers job comes to an end.
	Corporate governance	Direction and Control.

Figure 10: CSFs from PMOs

Furthermore, event organisers make it imperative to establish full content of event in terms of uniqueness, one-off, special, experience, timeframe, and purpose of gathering people this enables them to clearly define their event and what they expect to get out of it. Meanwhile, event success characteristics may vary overtime in terms of overall experience, creativity, and commercial goals. The inclusion can also benefit in looking at incorporation of project management which tackles complexities with event success, acts as a useful tool for event success and is adaptable for event. This means that in general, event managers can benefit from project management perspective perhaps will enable them clearly to define their project and eliminate any gaps presented in the process involved with the inclusion of project management in event management as stated in the problem statement.

Understanding events is the most important step to take when considering event trends as events are said to have duration and history, not be an instantaneous occurrence, be happenstances, be sequence of overlapping activities and involve an intensive process. Perhaps this can be applied when considering broad *range of event management trends that provided practitioners an overview of the evolving nature of events* (Park & Park, 2017) as stated from the statement of problem.

Event planners ensure that priority is given to planning and controlling events as much emphasis has been placed on budget, innovation, and networking. Clients' expectation is also needed when planning as it lays out ways towards best experience and quality for the client. Furthermore, Event managers emphasis on having an established operations model on ground for event planners that includes analysis; detailed planning; implementation and delivery; and performance evaluation. However, bearing in mind the concept of events which is for the sole purpose of connecting with people and building relationships.

It has become imperative for event managers to have a comprehensive and detailed planning checklist that contains building up the event, strategic venue, client's goals, event activities, event management software, networking, and promotion of the event.
Event managers have to go through a development framework process which involves decision stage; planning stage; implementation stage and evaluation stage. Perhaps if event planners can have a standardised planning approach for delivering their project, it may not create the *lack* of a recognisable structured approach to planning and controlling event as stated from the problem statement.

From chapter 2 of the literature review, a great deal of time is spent on creating a media buzz, public awareness, or recognition toward the success of any events whilst seeking return of investment and impact of event on the society. This is also evident within data gathered from interviews and questionnaires. For example,

Hence, Figure 11 below is developed based on the discussion above and is broken down into publications used in reviewing these CSFs, their respective sub-CSF categories, and key indicators for categorising success (*see appendix 2 for details on success factors for EMOs*):

Sub-CSFs	Indicators
Event content.	Unique. One-off. Special. Beyond experience. Routine activities. Temporary. Purposive gathering of people.
Event Audience	External customers. Businesses. Partners. Consumers. Media. Target audience.
Event success characteristics	Overall experience. Creativity. Commercial goals.
Incorporation of project management.	Tackles complexities with event success. Useful tool for event success. Adaptability for event.
Understanding events	Have duration and history. Not an instantaneous occurrence. Happenstances. Sequence of overlapping activities. Intensive processes
Priorities.	Budget. Innovation. Networking.
Client expectation.	Best experience. High quality.
Corporate event concept.	Connect people. Build relationships
Operations model.	Analysis. Detailed planning. Implementation & delivery. Performance evaluation.
Planning checklist.	Build events. Strategic venue. Align client goals with event activities. Event management software. Networking. Promote event.
Event development framework.	Decision stage. Planning stage. Implementation stage. Evaluation stage.

Node labels (left column): **Clarity to Define Project**, **Overall Practice**, **Planning Approach**
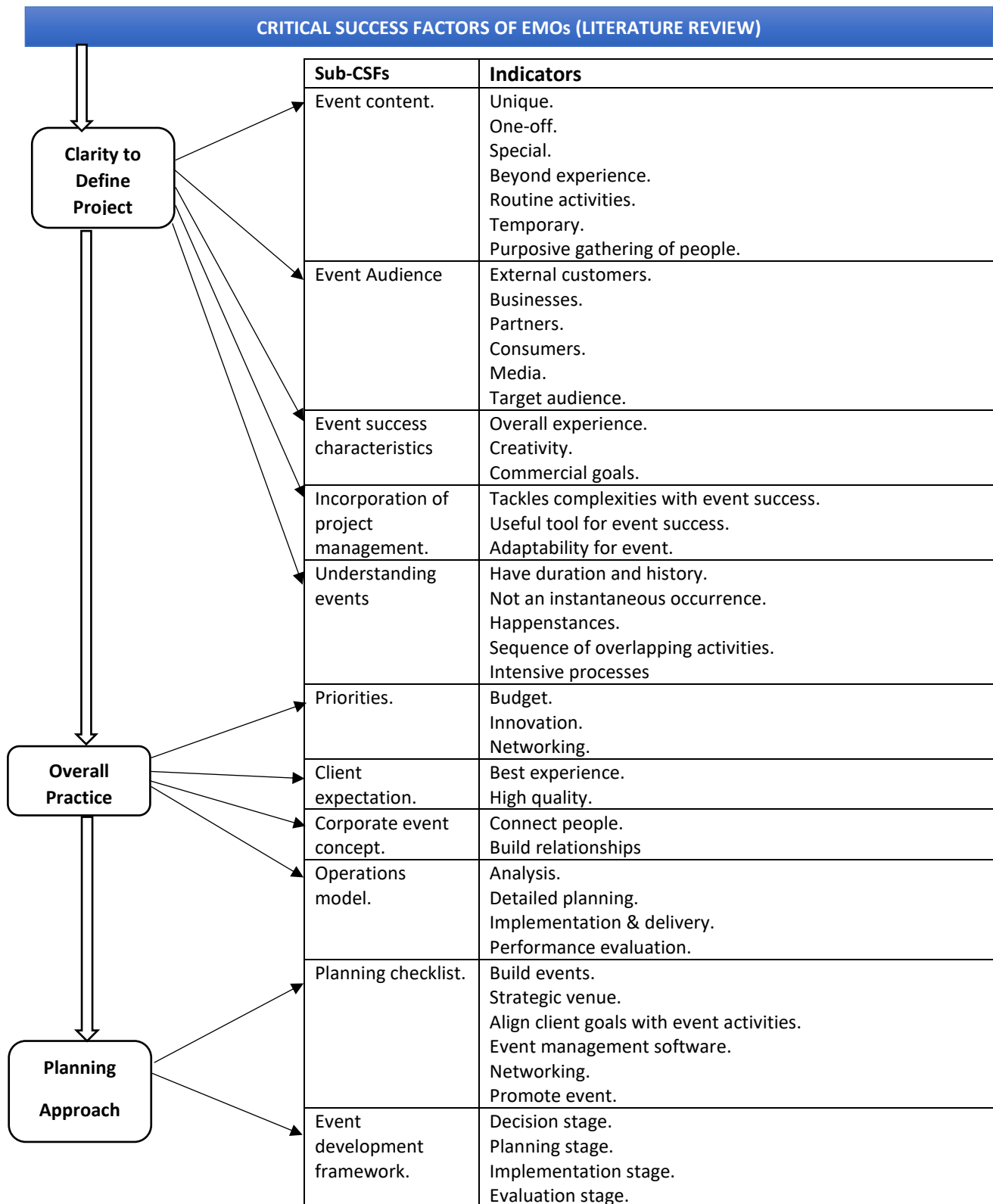
Figure 11: CSF from Event Projects

5.2 Factors influencing the implementation and management of successful event projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK:

Findings from first stage of data collection (interview transcript) and second stage of data collection (qualitative open-ended questionnaire) have been presented according to questions asked during each stage. See Appendix 5 full interview transcript. These questions have now been discussed and represented as a focal area as explained in the following:

i. **Principles that govern Corporate Event practice:**

From Interview Sessions:

Meeting and building a strong relationship with clients are the key practice for organisations where they find out clients aims and objectives, design events in accordance with clients' needs and their possible impact in the society. Organisations offer good advice on ways of running an event and how to write up a thorough event brief covering aspects such as good location, timing, operational factors, information of budget and what needs to be done. There should also requirements for event team (who needs to know what they are to do and when). There is also a culture of bringing in external resources as an enabling factor for an event to be more practical depending on time and making peoples vision of their event into a reality. The most important factor that was raised is the fact event organisers ensure there is a return of profit for their organisation after event.

Furthermore, event planners are ruled by the theme of client's project which enables them to decide on the decoration. This, they, believe is embedded in the overall practice of event organisation. In this case, clients can approach event organisers with an idea of what they want their event to look like and how their event project should be run. The organisation then creates a mood that the whole event is going to be in and transform event ideas into an exciting and memorable event for the client. Organisations rely heavily on full event management in their practice where they focus mostly on event timeframe, health and safety and risk assessment.

There is also an emphasis on having a lot of systems and procedures in place for the smooth running of events. The critical thing for corporate event organisation is attention to details being paramount especially in their writing itself (event brief) and how communication is key for team members and clients. Also, that they figure out their event logistics and provide an in-depth information from the beginning of an event project to the end which ensure the event went smoothly.

From Questionnaire:

One corporate event organisation mentioned that overall practice is fluid depending upon the reporting and governance required by the end client. As robust or relaxed as necessary. Some event managers see themselves as a collection of visionaries, strategists, planners, and creators, brought together to deliver extraordinary events.

An innovative way of thinking engages clients and their audiences, no matter what their requirements. Event organisers work as an extension of marketing and communication teams to design engaging events, which helps to communicate directly with target audience. There is then an importance aimed at helping customers make the most out of these interactions, creating a fulfilling and purposeful experience.

As Event Management specialists, we provide bespoke solutions which meet your objectives. Whether you require an awards dinner, conference, exhibition, company fun day, team building or recognition event, we create and deliver projects of all shapes and sizes that are designed to engage your audience through live experiences.

Principles, policies, and goals are central to how corporate events are managed. One organisation, in particular, mentioned that their goal is to be the most sought-after boutique events agency in the UK, and principles (or brand personality as described) is how they go about business – organisation prides itself as creative, knowledgeable, passionate and fun to work with and that making themselves fun to work with is something that clients enjoy the most.

ii. **Client Expectation for delivery of event projects:**

From Interview Sessions:

Depending on event type most client would rather approach organisations to run their event needs. For example, a client may have a research need they will approach event organisers to work on their event project but most importantly managers also have the opportunity to build relationships for collaborative working, networking, and gaining reputation for their clients. Event planners also have a need to identify their key performance indicators for the sole purpose of seeking profit for clients and themselves. Health and safety management also remains one of the key important things for corporate events organisers.

The goal for event organisers is transforming spaces into magical places that clients and people who work at the venue have never experienced before. In other words, the goal here for organisers is to give their client a memorable occasion and to ensure that the client gets what has been promised to them and what they deliver as well as managing client expectations. Hence, meeting client's goals. By a strong affirmation, there is a need for event organisers to run their event smoothly and that client approach them to get the stress of themselves, to get high quality, professional support, people working for them and doing the organising for their event project.

From Questionnaire:

Delivery for event project is determined precisely by client's given objectives for each project. It is imperative for event organisers to work continuously with clients to put together their vision and desires for the event. This works by organisers embedding themselves in the team of their client's and becoming an extension of their company. Also, due to level of experience clients know to trust organiser's process of being honest about what is possible and not possible.

There is an understanding that event clients usually have important key messages that they want to cascade down to their teams. For example, a live event that provides the perfect platform.

Clients expect that a standard event format will usually be a conference followed by a formal dinner, the latter usually takes on a party vibe and most delegates look forward to this part, a way to celebrate the days learnings and network.

iii. <u>Determining factors that influences the success of event projects</u>:

From Interview Sessions:

Some event planners take great pride and advantage in their background studies as that is what they are ruled by when it comes to success factors especially when it is underpinned by quality management. One key indicator is looking at the number of attendees coming for the event and evaluate if they have achieved the goals for them and if they didn't what led to it. So, basically evaluating is the underpinned factor for event success. In addition, client satisfaction is a key determining factor as client want product which is of high standard. Also, when a client comes back in the future for another event, they regard the last one as successful. An extra practice is calling the client after an event has been completed to request some kind of feedback as to how the event

went and if it was up to required standard. Other determining factor is the constant habit of promoting hard work in the organisation.

Communication is a big determining factor for event organisers as it is needed to relate information between event teams and client which give rise to event management. Another factor is good supplies of materials and goods necessary for an event, as well as good working relationship with suppliers.

From Questionnaire:

Corporate event organisers go with what whatever the client has decided upon. It can be industry specific sometimes. But usually its delegate feedback scores, organiser satisfaction, remaining within quoted budget parameters, product specification, event team, trust from the customer and years of experience in the industry.

Other organisations believe that great organisation and communication skills with the ability to multitask are influence to event success. Another perspective is when the team is willing to think 'outside the box' and find solutions where problems exist.

iv.   **Key element missing from event project:**

From Interview Sessions:

There was an emphasis that there is no missing element in their event project as they are continuously evaluating their work. They would hold a debrief meeting after a large or smaller event to see what needs improving next time and to work on it. The interesting thing identified by this respondent is the fact that events are almost as a project.

Better time management and better planning process are the key elements missing from some events. The process used in this organisation needs better structuring as there are so many activities to be done every day leading to a lack of management for teams. There is also an acknowledgement that it is difficult to hit timeframes and milestones and if they had a better planning process or a better process of communication from event confirmation that would help their processes. Depending on circumstance, sometimes, it could be budget from client if it doesn't cover the whole cost of their project and cannot produce more for them (client).

From Questionnaire:

Sustainability is getting better within the industry and clients are always looking at ways to navigate this matter, whilst delivering a fantastic event. However, there is always room for improvement.

v. Event strategies for prior-event, during-event, and post-event:

From interview sessions:

For the prior-event phase, the following are considered client needs; event strategy; budget/costing; venue; bringing external resources/people; visitors experience; health and safety; ensure following policy; staffing; ensuring client knows what is going to be delivered to them; presentation is done to clients; preparing item based on client needs and; making sure clients are satisfied with what is about to be delivered and sorting out everything with venue

For the during-event phase, the following are considered pre-event checks; time management; monitor visitors' experience; ensure item is in good quality; ensure everything runs smoothly; ensure that everyone knows what they are doing; and keeping clients satisfied.

For the post-event phase, the following are conducted evaluating process and feedback from every event team involved in the event; follow-up for positive feedback; debriefing how everything went; client feedback; and implementing feedback.

From Questionnaire:

The prior-event phase will encapsulate setting out overall budget and objectives of an event crucial to the delivery of any event project; logistics of the event including health and safety, environmental factors, number of guests, travel, power, and access, set up. To other organisations, content is key, as they strive to ensure that clients key messages are delivered clearly and concisely. In most cases, at the prior stages of an event, the journey starts on the run up (via invite comms).

For the during-event phase, there is a massive focus on general safety and correctly delivering event activities, following the function plan, making sure all suppliers are where they need to be set up and that no issues have occurred. Live events can be done via presentations and video.

The post-event phase will critically look at assessing feedback on objectives afterwards; customer satisfaction, areas of improvement, what didn't work so well, any thoughts towards change for next time, cascade communications (how all stakeholders will receive aligned and accurate information). Most importantly, post-event embodies how delegates understood the purpose of the event and take away any relevant actions.

vi. <u>Corporate Event step-by-step process aligned with project management processes for delivering event projects</u>:

From Interview Sessions:

A typical event process is dependent on the event-type project. First of all, an event document plan is drawn up having important information about the event on it. Secondly, having key contacts for people aiding the event. Health and safety requirements are also put in place. Respondent identifies that event are projects and can break down their event process into; pre-planning (concept); planning (what to do) and build or set up the project; the event itself; managing and evaluating.

Another event planner confirms that there is no designated step by step process that they follow and something like that could be good for their business. However, the following can be considered as typical process they use depending on event type; giving clients list of ideas; booking and ordering everything necessary for the event; ensuring everything is ready; monitoring the event to ensure everything is at the event and in the place where they are meant to be in; getting contract signed offs by the client to commence project and getting feedback after the event.

Additionally, event organisers use the following processes: initial idea (involving phone call from clients and discussing what they want); sort out budget, venue, and equipment's; sort out logistics of everything including having a logistic team in place; production of everything; set up an event team and having a constant flow of communication.

From Questionnaire:

Various step-by-step processes are employed to the delivery of event this is totally dependent on the type of event delivered. However, a typical step-by-step process will involve:

- Initial brief from client once project is confirmed;

- Biennial or weekly catch-up calls thereafter;

- Production of design;

- Content & video services;

- Ongoing management of a project overview document which outlines all areas of the event – examples would be crew/content/video/production/theming/venue/catering – this doc is sent to the client each week and any actions are clearly identified to all parties;

- Ongoing budget management;

- Regular liaison with all suppliers and third parties.

vii. **Tools and Techniques adopted throughout event project life cycle (Gantt chart, critical path method, project scheduling, risk management, resource allocation):**

From Interview Sessions:

The following tools and technique are used in a typical daily event practice; have a schedule they follow; have somebody who manages their step-by-step process; and risk management (involving risk assessment). They also have specific daily tools used in their organisation namely, safety management plan; critical incident plan; coach management plan and emergency incident management. With an affirmative reply, one of the interviewees confirmed the use of Gantt chart for their larger jobs as it helps them for time management process from initial stage of the project all the way through to the completion of the event. Risk management is adopted for their projects in this organisation. They also have a method statement for how they want their project to plan out and allocate resources for the project which includes assigning roles and responsibilities to event team.

Event planners adhere to a thorough risk management technique in their organisation especially for health and safety purposes. Also, from experience there needs to be a public relation embedded to their tools and techniques. Project scheduling was mentioned as the last tool used in project management, and they implement this to event projects.

From Questionnaire:

For all events resource allocation is crucial to the planning phases with risk assessments at the centre of all operations. Critical paths, however, are only used for large complex projects.

At the start of a project, internal teams are assigned. It is then important for event planners to look at additional resource required and contact preferred suppliers to check their availability and get them booked on. In the meantime, internal event pack are worked on which is then communicated to all relevant crew just before the event, this includes:

- Call sheet – with all crew details included;

- Critical path - key dates;

- Agenda;

- Running order;

- CAD plans and;

- H&S – insurance / risk assessment / method statement

viii. **Specific Tools and technique tailored to event type:**

From Interview Sessions:

The purple guide for event management is the one tool used to guide the implementation of event projects. This guide includes guidance on events and safety management. There is also a set process in this organisation where they start up with a mood board which goes to their clients. A loading list is followed, after which resources are allocated to be able to get items from the loading list. A process of risk assessment is conducted. There was an emphasis on the fact that they follow tools and techniques embedded in the project management practice. There is a great attention to detail and clear communication is the paramount technique. Also, constantly checking repeatedly, ensuring everything is in place before and during event.

From Questionnaire:

Most of corporate event tools and techniques are centred around corporate communications. Corporate event organisers spend a great deal of time is spent with clients making sure that the key business objectives for the event is clearly understood, so that the environment and the content that is created helps the client to bring these messages to life.

ix. **Event standards for carrying out daily functions in corporate organisations**:

From interview sessions:

Organisations have a set of standards focused mostly on health and safety and gained the ISO4000 relating to safety standards. A respondent reiterated that the organisation adheres to the purple guide, have an emergency planning crowd, make use of professionals for the execution of their event plan and meeting expectations of event attendees. Safety is paramount at the heart of event planners as well as having a staff code of conduct which everyone must understand and expect to be governed by. Clients get logged into a system to be kept organised and confidential. Warehouse checks are done daily to ensure there is high level of standard and performance for the organisation. According to one of the participants, the following are a set of standards: having a code of conduct for their rules and regulation; ensuring that all drivers sign an agreement; and again, code of conduct for teams; and how people need to speak to others.

From Questionnaire:

For corporate event organisations, daily event operations rely heavily, on risk assessments, quotes, cost calculators, stock lists, staff rotas, task lists, supplier details, briefing sheets.

Every project is bespoke, so each brief is treated as an individual project with different requirements. There are some set methodologies as a standard for carrying out daily functions. For example, specific documentation that is employed is project management and frameworks for content development.

x. **Core factors considered by top-level managers for the effective management of event projects:**

From Interview Sessions:

Core factors are ensuring events delivered meets their needs, events are strategically impactful, ensure that they are staying on budget i.e. been financially effective not wasting money as the money put aside for project can affect the overall success of the event. Having a good track record of events. Having a fair and easy communication is a core factor for this organisation amidst ensuring everyone in the organisation are of the same level of understanding, knows the system, knowledge of organisation standard and practice, and enjoying the event. Managers ensure the smooth running of their events, have everything prepared before and during event, make sure they have the right team with the right skills for the event and that they are representing the company.

From Questionnaire:

Having a functional plan and resourcing a project properly is crucial to its success. However, this is most times linked to people and finding out whether all people are related for the effective management of event projects.

The team must have great attention to detail and must be on top of every aspect of the event.

xi. **Activities undertaken by mid-level managers that ensures the smooth process of event project:**

From Interview Sessions:

There is usually an overall manager for event who focus on the strategic level. Also, there is an event managers role who ensure all event across the department are delivered successfully, having the right people in the right position, looking for strategic impact of event finally organising events, resources, and time. Going to the event is the key activity for this organisation in that they focus on setting up the venue, do an event presentation to client, ensure that contract and invoices are well documented, most importantly ensuring that teams adhere to regulations and code of conduct put in place. Checking everything to the detail and that everyone knows what they are doing by clear communication.

From Questionnaire:

Having a small business sometimes means that top managers are also found doing jobs of mid-level managers.

xii. **Delegation of task to event teams who ensure that project goals are achieved and in line with organisations policy:**

From Interview Sessions:

Firstly, a critical look is given the amount of workload of teams then resources are allocated depending on team experience, availability, and skills in line with organisations' policy. Basically, implementing a workload management system. Secondly, teams need to ensure that they are keeping record of their hours and they are meeting financial regulations. Health and safety personnel with the right level of responsibility is contracted to keep an eye on safety affairs during an event.

There is a warehouse manager who understands strengths and weaknesses of all event team member and allocate duties based on their strengths and skills. Team members are correct and suitable for the role and job, having a project manager in place and ensuring everyone knows what they are doing.

From Questionnaire:

Corporate event leads will always discuss best suited and skilful to deliver efficiently and allocate event activities to that individual. It was interesting to find that all teams are headed up by a department manager to keep the team on track and ensure all tasks are carried out.

xiii. **Existing tools for assessing the progress and end result of event project:**

From interview sessions:

There is no tool however one of the participants mentioned a unique event toolkit key for their event progress. The toolkit provides a step-by-step guide for what needs to be done to organise a

successful event. They do have their own set of resources for example an event brief, event plan template, a checklist template, and a risk assessment template. For conference events, there is a timeline document, allocation of who needs to do what and have a share folder which anyone from the event can access at any time.

Again, there is no specific tool used by this organisation however, event planners sometimes refer to a loading list and then calendar to ensure that they have everything in place ahead of the event, the assessment tool in this case is to find out if the client is happy or not once the event is completed. There is then a document (sign off sheet) that clients sign off when an event has been completed to say elements of their event was completed to satisfactory standards. Getting client feedback is crucial for their practice as it contains how the client felt about their project, then the whole event is logged in through pictures, voice recording or videos which can then be reflected upon on completion of the event to see what can be done next time. Finally, quality control is conducted.

From Questionnaire:

There is no tool for assessing successful corporate event. However, what works sometimes is where clients often conduct their own surveys post event, which they share with event organisers to show feedback and score rates.

xiv.   Considerations for event success.

From interview sessions:

Event organisers links success to what they want and their SMART objectives, they provide feedback forms to their clients or event users. A thorough reflection and evaluation on how event processes are done. For their conference event, they have an idea of how much they are supposed to spend, and they check if they were on course with budget. Stories on the news can be highly impactful on the success of their event. A critical success factor for them is looking at delegate experience, having feedback and clear communication. Getting good feedback from client complete their event especially if there are no complains then that is success. Also, event planners' perspective, consider that a successful event is measured by a happy team and a happy client.

From Questionnaire:

Corporate event practitioners rely on when the client tells tell them that event was a success and providing customer feedback. Onsite, when all the planning comes together to deliver a seamless event from start to finish. Feedback from the client affirms this. As well as feedback from clients, surveys forwarded from the client is an indication for success.

5.3 Summary of discussion of findings.

It is evident that response from first stage of primary data (interview) differ from 2nd stage (questionnaire). The most interesting about the findings from both sets of data collected is that all responses seem to be speaking in one voice. For example, tools and techniques used for the delivery of events were similar regardless of organisation type, event type and scale of business.

Furthermore, from literature review conducted, in relations with organisational resources, this is evidenced in response from P1 when asked "With regards to events strategy, what do you consider the most prior, during and post event?": Sometimes, to bring in an external supplier, so looking at contractors that I need to bring on site to assist with the event setup. It means that this organisation considers their internal and external resources when delivering their events and if they are lacking in any resource, they consider outsourcing. This is a strategy that this organisation believes in that facilitates their event project. This is also applicable to PMOs, if only organisations ensure that they outline their strategy or have a realistic strategic approach, there would not be a gap geared towards having no clear understanding to the strategic future of project success (Müller & Jugdev, 2012) as stated in the statement of problem. This means that the future of project success relies on an effective project management strategic approach that must be in place prior to commencement of any project.

In terms of sustainability, there is a need to establish an understanding of corporate organisation presents itself by revealing that in todays' contemporary corporate or business world, there is a globalised and increased interest on sustainability factors for companies to consider their strategy (Kotter, 2012). This is also evident in response from P6 when asked about missing elements from events, sustainability improvements were mostly mentioned to be lacking within delivery of events.

Furthermore, PMOs have an effective business process management scheme that is able to achieves organisations' competitive advantage and provide high quality in products & services. If project managers can fully understand the concept behind having an effective management scheme in place for their organisation and projects, it will not present any lapse or gaps as evidenced in research covered for PMOs as to why there is no simple effective or universal framework for studying projects (Steinfort & Walker, D, 2007).

From the statement of problem, it was established that there is "*no causal relationships established between success factors, project success and organisational success*" (Steinfort & Walker, D, 2007) however, if project managers can clearly outline the essentials needed to embark on any project-related work then there should be a connection or relationship between success factors, project success and organisational success. From the statement of problem, it was established that there is *no presence of contextual project success constraints and methods for application in any environment particularly the PM framework and application undertaking to enhance or facilitate projects* (Steinfort & Walker, D, 2007). If project organisers can have an effective corporate governance in place, it may become better for organisations to be able to identify presence of contextual project success constraints and methods for application in any environment, particularly the PM framework and application undertaking to enhance or facilitate projects.

In terms of clarity of definition, response from P1 clearly proves that events are projects "*I think each event is a project, but depending on the size of the event, you might break it up into smaller projects and allocate those responsibilities to different team members*". Also, if event planners can approach their event project with an intention of adopting project management technique perhaps there would not be any reason to have any *lack in the process involved with the inclusion of event management in project management* (O'Toole, 2000) as established in the statement of problem**.**

EMOs incorporate client expectation as part of their overall practice when developing any event. This is evidenced in response from P2 when asked "What are the determining factors that influences the success of your event practice?": "*Obviously for us it's client satisfaction. They, they come to us because they want a product to be delivered to a high standard. And as long as we get the confirmation from the client is that what we have delivered or, or we deliver over and above what they expect. That for us is, is the completion of the, of the event. So, to speak. And for us, a successful event is when a client then just looks as for another event*". P3 also added when asked "what do

your clients look forward to the most when delivering your projects?": "*I think it is a case of they want a smooth-running event.* It means that for this organisation takes client satisfaction and experience very important and when there a repeat business from a client this is how they can tell event has been successful".

From interview transcript, it was clear that there a number of themes emerged from the way participants answered questions, however, "*Communication*" appeared to be the most common theme found in all participants and it is crucial for the smooth running of successful corporate event within CEMOs.

To sum up findings from this research, data from both literature review and interviews are presented in a matrix table as seen in Table 7 below. It illustrates how the extracted critical success factors came to be and placing themes from the Interview and questionnaire mapped against the CSFs categories obtained from the Literature Review.

Table 8: A Matrix of CSFs from Literature Review Findings mapped against Interview and Questionnaire Findings

CSF from Primary Data Collection	CSFs from LITERATURE REVIEW Findings					
	Strategic Factors	Leadership Impact Factors	Management Factors	Clarity of Project Definition Factors	Planning Factors	Practice Factors
Strong Relationship	√					√
Clear Aim and Objective	√			√	√	√
Clear Event Brief				√		
Communication	√	√	√	√	√	√
Clear Information				√	√	
Determining Event Factors	√					
Missing Project Element/s				√		
Event Strategy	√			√		
Event Process					√	
Tools & Techniques					√	
Event Standards					√	√
Management Core Factors			√			
Event Activities			√			
Distribution of Tasks/ Workload Management	√	√	√			
Success Characteristics				√		
Event Management			√			
Professional Support	√	√	√	√	√	√
Key Performance Indicators	√					
Quality Management			√			
Health & Safety Standards	√				√	
Strategically Impactful						√
Running Event Smoothly	√					
Risk Management/Risk Assessment	√				√	
Skilful Workers	√			√	√	
Project Management			√			
SMART Objectives						√
Event Feedback			√			
Event Checklist/Toolkit.	√					
Client Satisfaction	√				√	
Sustainability	√				√	
Problem Solving	√					

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 Development of CSF Framework for Corporate Event Project Management (CEPM) in the UK.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter contains summary of both data analysis and discussion of findings towards the overall achievement of research aim and development of the CSF framework for CEMOs. However, the researcher had to first set the scene by explaining the theoretical underpinning and approach to the development of the critical success factor framework for CEMOs in the UK. Also, this chapter contains the rational to the approach taken when developing the framework.

6.2 Theoretical Underpinning

Theoretical framework is the 'blueprint' or guide for research (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). It serves as the foundation upon which research is constructed. The framework illustrated in this research demonstrates the researcher's level of understanding of theories and concepts relevant to critical success factor framework for the management of corporate event projects in the UK (Trochim and William, 2006).

Hence, the CSF framework presented in this research is underpinned by the *theory of project management*. In 1993, Turner claimed that project management is about managing works and that works can be managed by decomposing total work effort into smaller chunks of work called activities and tasks in the PMBOK guide. Based on project management theory, the *theory of project* arises in that project can lead to, transformation; have flow; and add value for generalisation. This means that the developed framework is to be transformed into manageable and well-understood sub-transformation tasks, while transforming inputs into outputs (Koskela and Howell 2002b; PMI, 2002).

Furthermore, the developed CSF within this research is purely theoretical which is to be implemented for the delivery of any event-project-related work. It is a structure that summarises project and event concepts and theories, developed from previously tested and published knowledge which has been synthesised to have theoretical background, or form a basis for data analysis and interpretation of meaning contained in critical success factors of corporate event management organisations in the UK (Kivunja, 2018; Swanson, 2013, p. 122).

According to Indeed Editorial Team (2022), the goal of the CSF framework is to connect new research to existing knowledge and provide an explicit statement of theoretical assumptions to the reader. It also helps to lay the foundation that shows clarity on the analysis of data and an interpretation of CSFs results throughout data stages whilst making a broader generalisation.

6.2.1 Approach for developing the CSF Framework.

The researcher adopted a number of steps for the development of the CSF framework for corporate event management organisations in the UK, which is known as the stepwise generalisation technique (Osanloo and Grant, 2016; Foster *et al.*,2017) as shown below:

Set goal: prior to the start of this research, the researcher explored theories and models of other research developed in the corporate event studies. By so doing, it was important for the researcher to evaluate, compare and select the most relevant theories for this research.

Identified the key concept: it was important to identify key terms for this research. By so doing, the researcher picked the problem statement that drives the entire research (what leads to event success and how can event success be measured). The concepts from different souces have different keyword, it was imperative for the researcher to clearly define each term for the research. This research was designed on the basis of bringing a synergy of project management understanding with event management body of knowledge and coporate event management perspective. This helped to construct a good theoretical framework. The research problem anchored the entire study and formed the basis from which the researcher constructed the theoretical framework.

Brainstormed over the key terms: this step involoved generating a list of novel ideas that had good impact on critical success factors of corporate events in the UK. For example, the following key terms were used to generate a list of CSFs: definition, apply, interpret, describe, compare/contrast, importance/purpose, examples, extract and summarise.

Reviewed relevant ariticles: various papers and ariticles relating to project management, event management and corporate event studies, were reviewed to get a clear vision of other relating studies, but, most imprtantly to anser questions present in this study. By so doing, various articles according to CSFs of critical success factors for corporate event were selected. Reaching the relevant ariticles for this study helped to find the answers to questions raised in this research.

Provided a list of constructs and variables: that might be relevant to this reasearch study and grouped these variables into independent and dependent categories. For example, into sub-CSFs categories and key indicators for success.

Discussed the research assumptions: asides discussing other people's research work, the researcher provided a full discussion of research finidings to give a clear view of the research. It should be noted that the CSF framework helps to show people how this research will be helpful to others within event or project related industry and academia.

6.2.2 Rationale for Approach

By strictly adhering to the approach employed for the development of the CSFs framework for corporate event project management in the UK, underpinned with the theory of project, it means that the CSF framework promises to organise complex scientific documents into readable format. To that end, the following factors were the rationale for approach used in the development of the CSF framework presented in this research (Jacard *et al.*,2010; Ravitch *et al.*,2017):

- Interpretation and coding – new research data can be interpreted and coded for future use.

- Problem Solving – response to new problems that have not previously been identified in other studies and providing a solution strategy. Also, a means for identifying and defining research problems. The CSF framework can be used for prescribing or evaluating solutions to research problems. To also identify important new issues and prescribe the most critical research questions that need to be answered to maximise understanding of the issue.

- Fact-Check – way to discern certain facts among the accumulated knowledge that are important and which facts are not.

- Guide – to be used as a guide to inform research so that it can, in turn, guide research efforts and improve professional practice.

- Relevance and Reference – giving old data new interpretations and new meaning. The CSF framework is expected to provide members of a professional discipline (event or project-related) with a common language and a reference point for defining the boundaries of their profession.

6.3 The CSFs Framework

This CSF framework has been developed:

- Combining the CSFs in an integrated manner appreciated data and information from all aspects of this research (research problem and gaps, research question, aim and objectives). And, given the three key strands (i.e., Literature Review, Interviews, and Questionnaire) of the study, it is evident that there were similarities of data which was common with one aspect confirming key themes mentioned in the other. Hence, to draw a coherent inference of all the phases, Table 9 indicates how all the CSF categories developed across the research phases:

Table 9: Development of CSFs across Research Stages

CSF of PMOs applicable to events.	Factors Influencing the implementation and management of Successful Corporate Event Projects	
Literature Review:	*Interview:*	*Questionnaire:*
Strategy	Relationship/collaboration	Governance
Leadership Impact	Event aim and objective	Strategy
Management Style	Event brief	Providing bespoke solution
Clarity to define Projects	Communication	Engaging audience
Planning Approach	Smooth running	Clients' vision/desires
Overall Practice	Professional support	Client/ customer satisfaction
	Quality management	Event feedback
	Client's needs/experience	Problem-solving
	Event strategy	Communication
	Resource allocation	Organisational skill
	Prior, during, and post-event requirements	Sustainability
	Evaluation	Availability of team skills/experience/team management.
	Event Feedback	Prior, during, and post-event requirements
	Overall management	Meeting budget and objectives
	Risk assessment/management	Supply management
	Full project management	Environmental factors
	Event management	Project management
	Health and safety requirements	Risk assessment/management
	Social impact	Resource allocation
	Scheduling	Critical paths
	Gant Chart	Health and safety needs
	Workload management (team strengths and weaknesses)	Content development
	Toolkit and checklist	Attention to detail
	Rules and regulation	Seamless event.
	Event policies and standards (code of conduct)	
	Representation	
	Overall Practice	

From table 9 above, aspects of PM is found within EMOs and CEMOs respectively and share similarites in the CSFs that influence their organisations. CEMOs on the other hand, have a difference in CSFs influencing their organisation; even though, still share some aspects of CSFs with both PMOs and EMOs. It is evident that PMOs constitute a foundation for all CSFs from EMOs and CEMOs to be identified. The outcome of data from literature review, interview, and questionnaire leads to a concrete discovery of CSFs from PMOs, EMOs and CEMOs, as stated and addressed in the objectives.

- This CSF framework has also been developed for the successful delivery of corporate events, which means that the theroretical aspects within the framework can be applied to real-life corporate or any event-type projects.

Hence, Figure 12 below gives a clear picture of the key areas that make up this research and CSF framework, thereby illustrating the achievement of the research aim and objectives.
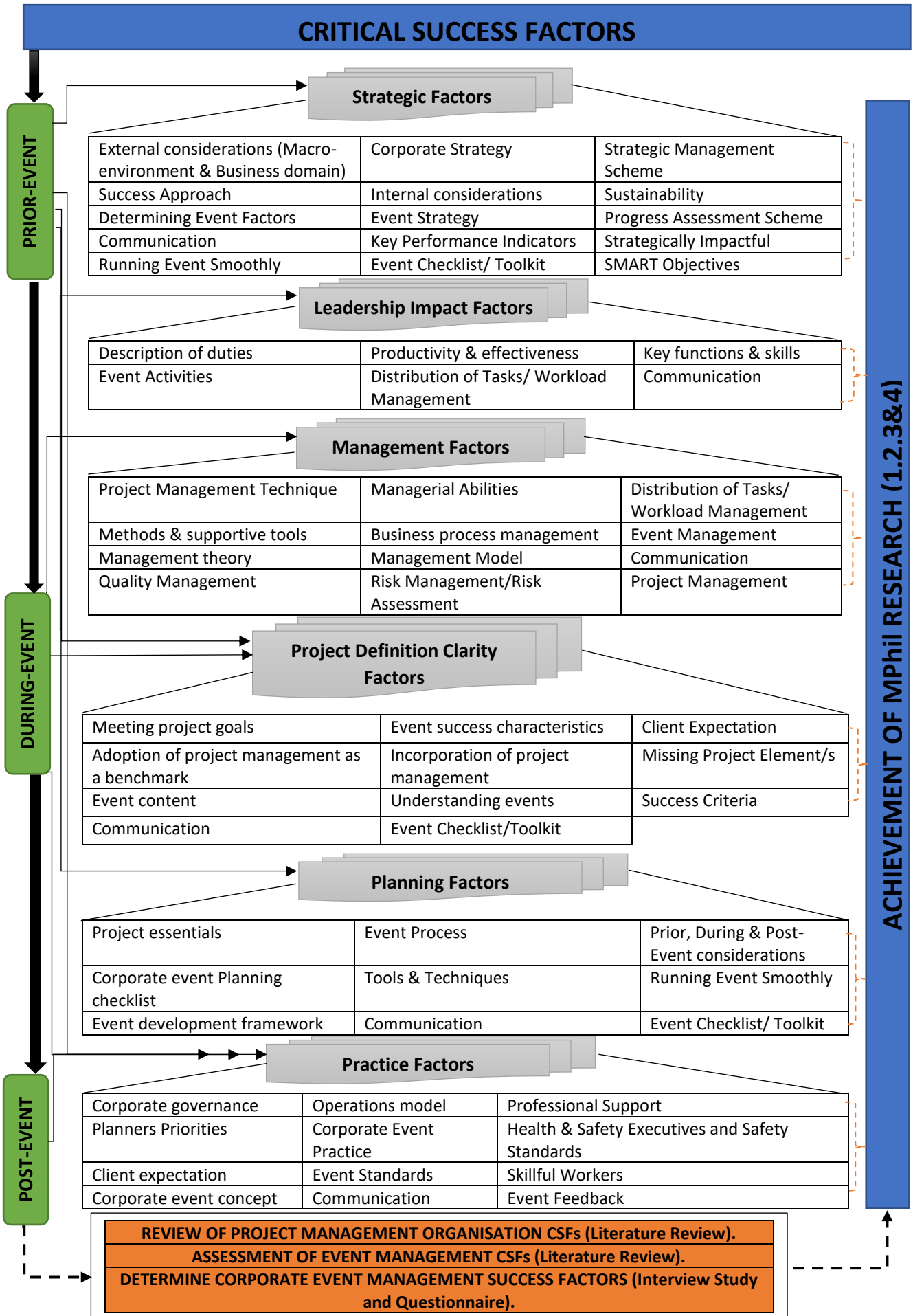
CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Strategic Factors

External considerations (Macro-environment & Business domain)	Corporate Strategy	Strategic Management Scheme
Success Approach	Internal considerations	Sustainability
Determining Event Factors	Event Strategy	Progress Assessment Scheme
Communication	Key Performance Indicators	Strategically Impactful
Running Event Smoothly	Event Checklist/ Toolkit	SMART Objectives

Leadership Impact Factors

Description of duties	Productivity & effectiveness	Key functions & skills
Event Activities	Distribution of Tasks/ Workload Management	Communication

Management Factors

Project Management Technique	Managerial Abilities	Distribution of Tasks/ Workload Management
Methods & supportive tools	Business process management	Event Management
Management theory	Management Model	Communication
Quality Management	Risk Management/Risk Assessment	Project Management

Project Definition Clarity Factors

Meeting project goals	Event success characteristics	Client Expectation
Adoption of project management as a benchmark	Incorporation of project management	Missing Project Element/s
Event content	Understanding events	Success Criteria
Communication	Event Checklist/Toolkit	

Planning Factors

Project essentials	Event Process	Prior, During & Post-Event considerations
Corporate event Planning checklist	Tools & Techniques	Running Event Smoothly
Event development framework	Communication	Event Checklist/ Toolkit

Practice Factors

Corporate governance	Operations model	Professional Support
Planners Priorities	Corporate Event Practice	Health & Safety Executives and Safety Standards
Client expectation	Event Standards	Skillful Workers
Corporate event concept	Communication	Event Feedback

PRIOR-EVENT

DURING-EVENT

POST-EVENT

ACHIEVEMENT OF MPhil RESEARCH (1.2.3&4)

REVIEW OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION CSFs (Literature Review).

ASSESSMENT OF EVENT MANAGEMENT CSFs (Literature Review).

DETERMINE CORPORATE EVENT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS FACTORS (Interview Study and Questionnaire).

Figure 12: Critical Success Factor Framework for Corporate Event Project Management in the UK

96

6.3.1 Framework Explained

The CSF framework was developed on the foundation of a review of CSFs from project management perspective applicable to event projects and factors influencing the implementation of successful events withing corporate event project management. The CSF frameworku illustrates key essentials for each event phase (prior, during and post-event). It was important that the researcher made a link of the CSFs with event phases which brings a clear understanding to how this framework can be implemented for use especially delivering successful corporate event projects in the UK.

Prior- Event – For any event to commence especially at the prior phase the following key factors must be considered:

- Strategic factors – these are factors that needs to be strategically thought of before any event-related project can commence. For example, some vital strategic essentials that should be in place are communication at every event stage; use of strategic scheme management; external and internal considerations (PESTLE and SWOT) that may impact the overall event and key performance indicators that helps in identifying success at the end of an event project.
- Project definition clarity factors – that clearly defines the aim and objectives of the event project. A typical example of clear project definition t the prior phase of any event project is meeting event goals; client expectations; event success characteristics, success criteria and adoption of project management as a benchmark for delivery event projects.
- Planning factors – that plots a road map for the delivery of corporate event projects. To do this, the following factors or essentials are carefully thought of by event practitioners: clear event checklist and toolkit; tools and techniques to be used for the duration of the event; planning with the use of any event framework for event deliver and free flow of information to be communicated at every event stage.
- Practice factors – this ensures that strategies and plans are guided by organisations overall practices. At this prior phase of event project, establish professional and external support to employ when thinking event projects; use of skilful workers (based on staff strengths and weaknesses) and priorities for event planners.

During-Event – this is where strategy or plan of action is transformed into work. There are a few factors that should be considered during event namely:

- Leadership Impact Factors – there is no doubt that more than half of the overall productivity or success of any endeavours is linked to level of leadership influence and impact. Leaders influence

of event for during the event is associated with leaders' skills, ability to be productive and efficient, distribution of tasks and workload management, and leader's level of communication.

- Management Factors – these deals more on the control and monitoring of the event project. Some critical areas that need to be done effectively during event is risk management or risk assessment; business process management; quality management; use of methods and supportive (project management techniques) tools to carry out event activities better and communication.

- Project definition clarity factors – when events are going on it is important to always check that what is done is in line with client needs; event content and elements missing from events.

- Practice factors – production of events has to be in adherence with organisations policy or overall practice. A typical measure for this is to ensure that event adheres to health and safety standards; corporate event practice; corporate governance and operation model.

Post-Event – at this phase event is either coming to an end or has ended already. Some approach to take post-event is related to:

- Practice factors – where measures taken to properly close an event project are done according to the organisations practice. Hence, post-event measures should follow event standards; need for event feedback; client expectations and communication.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 Conclusion.

7.1 Introduction

To draw a coherent conclusion from data conducted throughout this research, a connection is made with research questions and how each question has been addressed through research objectives.

This chapter also contains limitation to study and recommendations to project or event practitioners for (prior, during and post event). Contribution to knowledge is also highlighted especially to project organisations, event organisations inclusive of corporate event and on-going event-related research within academia.

7.2 Achievement of Research Questions.

7.2.1 RQ 1 – Can success factors from project management be implemented in the delivery of any event-related project?

For the achievement of this research question, a review of literature was carried out on project management publication for the sole purpose to review of literature was carried out on project management publication for the sole purpose to review critical success factors from project management perspective that can be applicable to other organisations in the UK. To fully present the review of literature for objective 1, three main step-by-step plan was implemented:

a) Decided the key issue for review: Project management and concept was defined whilst presenting existence of critical success factors within project management organisation. And finally, impact of project management methodologies for the development of critical success factors for project managers.

b) Selection criteria to analyse publications needed for the literature review. The publications that were selected for review were done with an intention to critically examine its authenticity and relevance to this research area.

c) Writing the literature to a logical understanding which gave a clear understanding to how the CSFs emerged.

Literature review was done for the achievement of this research question. It identified different types of successful events with respect to drivers for successful projects within the UK's event

management organisations. At this level, a selection-criteria were performed purely on publications pertaining to event management were reviewed. The following key areas were analysed on event management publications: Planning checklist; Types of Corporate Events; Planning process; Management theories; Tools and techniques to aid event delivery; Managing events as projects and Overall Practice. The analysis and findings of data from literature review, revealed that successful factors within event management organisations are summed up in *Clarity of project definition*, *Planning* and, *Practice*.

Hence, the step-by-step process towards the presentation of literature review led to the discovery that Strategy, Leadership impact, Management Style, Clarity of project definition, Planning, and Practice, are critical success factors from project management organisations that can be applicable to other organisations. Also, addressed the research objective *"Review critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be applied to events within event management organisations in the UK"*. The CSFs derived for objective 1 formed a foundation upon which other emerging CSFs were based. Hence, research question 1 was successfully achieved.

7.2.2 RQ 2 – What are the criteria for developing a critical success factor framework for corporate events management organisations in the UK?

A series of semi-structured interview and questionnaire survey was conducted to achieve this research question. It set out to determine factors influencing the implementation and management of successful projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK. A manual transcription procedure was first employed to present data collected from interview recordings. Thematic analysis (TA) was then employed to make sense of meaningful data from interview transcript. Based on each interview and questionnaire survey, the researcher analysed into focal areas namely: *organisational branding; Client requirement; Success characteristics; Missing element from event; corporate event strategy (prior, during and post-event); Delivery process; Tools and Techniques of corporate event project life cycle; Tools and techniques specific to organisation; Organisation standard for daily functions; CSFs at strategic level; CSF at managerial level; Delegation of task; Model for assessing corporate event success and Goal-oriented CSF respectively.* Additionally, the following factors influence the implementation and management of successful projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK:

Corporate Event Practice, Client Requirement, Determining Event Factors, Missing Project Element, Event Strategy, Tools & Techniques, Specific Event Standards Tailored to Event Type and Organisation, Core Decisions at the Strategic level, Management Core Factors, People Management, Tracking Document, Success Criteria. Hence, addressed research objective 2 "*Determine factors influencing the implementation and management of successful event projects within corporate event management organisations in the UK*".

Furthermore, the researcher appreciated how data progressed from secondary and primary data to develop a comprehensive critical-success-factor framework for corporate event management organisation in UK. Hence, research question 2 was successfully achieved.

7.3 Conclusion Statement

The success of any corporate event project hinges on two main points proper project management and adherence of event management best practice. It is also clear from all research stages that it is indeed possible for event practitioners to adopt project management practices for the delivery of any successful event-related projects.

From a project management point, any work that has a defined start point and end date, that work is considered a project. Which makes it interesting because, events do have a start to finish, and most event organisers or planners consider their events as projects. To fully apply project management principles or as a method to achieve project success, it is important that project or event planners should adhere to all project management phases from initiation to closure of the project.

From an event standpoint, no event is considered a success until all activities done during the project meets targeted goals and client's needs. By so doing, a checklist is used to identify a list of items or essentials required for the duration of the event project. Also, to check things to be done, points to consider and as a reminder for event activities especially with timeframes. Most importantly, the true success of events should involve considerations for prior, during and post-event. This helps to manage client expectation, risks, costing, and scope, and success of the event.

7.4 Limitation to Study.

For this research, the limitation of study is listed below:

1. **Research Resources**: there is insufficient research done in this research area, and no models or framework for the delivery of corporate events in the UK. This made it challenging for the researcher to find sufficient materials towards the analysis of data.

2. **Time**: Due to time factor, the researcher should have conducted a more quantitative data to validate the CSF framework. Nonetheless, the findings from interviews and the framework can be implemented for the delivery of success corporate events in the UK.

3. **Covid-19**: due to covid-19 measures at most working environment, participants found it challenging to grant research audience as it was unsafe to meet in enclosed spaces.

7.4 Recommendations.

Recommendations from this research is given at three main levels that reflects a typical event-life cycle:

1. Prior-Event:

   - Event practitioners should be able to adopt the framework from this study especially with how they can implement a successful event project from a project management perspective.

   - The initial phase within project management lifecycle should be appreciated when thinking event delivery as this defines the main project characters (Vision, objectives, and goal of project).

   - Event organisers or coordinators should consider the following prior to any event project: *Client needs; Event strategy; Budget/Costing; Sorting out Venue; Bringing external resources/people; visitors experience; Health and safety Policy; Staffing and Client Satisfaction.*

2. During-Event:

   - It will be helpful if Event organisers or coordinators employ the planning and execution phases of project management lifecycle. This enables them define work to be done by creating a roadmap for project delivery and how to transform plans into action.

- Other activities that can be incorporated during event is to: perform a *pre-event check; Time management; Monitor visitor's experience; Good quality; ensure smooth running of event; everyone knows their tasks and keeping clients happy.*

3. Post-Event:

Ending any project can be considered as one of the most important stages for any project work. One may say that it is almost as important as starting a project. Hence, the following points are recommended to corporate event practitioners for ending their event projects:

- Employ project management method to closing projects. This is the end of project and project managers' job comes to a close. Key steps for event organisers to take to fully close the project: perform a project performance analysis, Team analysis, Project closure document and post-implementation review.
- Other steps to take are, *Evaluation process and feedback form event team members, Follow- up for Positive Feedback, Debriefing, Client feedback and Implementing feedback.*

7.5 Further Areas to study (Future Research).

Despite the success of this research, some other aspects emerged during the analysis of data which presents an area for further study for the future. Hence, the following areas have been considered:

- Key performance indicators for project success within corporate event management organisations.
- Research into existing methodologies and standards for the delivery of events projects.
- Comparative study between project management practice and event practices.

7.6 Contribution to Knowledge.

The development of the critical success factor framework for corporate event management organisations is the major element that separates this research from any other research undertaken in the past. It highlighted elements that leads to success within PMOs, EMOs and

CEMOs. It also identified criteria to be considered in the prior, during and post phases of any event project regardless of the event type. This research provides knowledge for both academia and organisations as explained below:

- For the academic sector, this research provides clarity to on-going research in related topic areas as this research. It also presents a clearer understanding to CSFs of events and key element to be considered when embarking on any event related research.

- For organisations who run event and project-related work, this research provides clarity to factors and criteria leading to successful projects that have been analysed by researchers from various studies from a theoretical and practical perspective (Dancsecz, 2008). Also, this research presents some key performance indicators (KPIs) which is beneficial to any event-related projects. More so, it serves as a guide on how PM can be implemented in event management, operations, and daily business activities.

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9.0 Appendix 1 – Detailed CSF from PMOs

Table 10: Project management Critical Success Factors

Identified Critical Success Factors (CSFs)	Key Author	Key Findings	Relevance to Research Area
Management Technique	Burke, 2014	PM is designed to manage all sorts of projects	Findings from literature review and conducting interview session breaks down the different aspects of corporate event. PM will give this research a clear perspective to how those different corporate event types can be effectively managed.
Clear definition	PMBoK 4th Ed	Knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques are applied to project activities to meet project requirements.	Findings from PMBoK provides this research and the corporate event organisation a clear definition as to how to apply PM knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to their event projects. Moreover, it will aid with the document analysis in reviewing and evaluating the utilisation of PM concepts (i.e. practice, process,

			principles, tools, and techniques) by event organisers.
	APMBoK 5th ED	Projects are defined, planned, monitored, controlled and delivered such that agreed benefits are realised.	Definition from APMBoK clarity on PM will serve as a guide to the typical processes involved in any project regardless of its type. And as event share similar characteristics as PM, corporate event organiser should be able to adopt and incorporate APMBoK definition to their event type.
Scope, Schedule and Budget/Cost	Goatham, 2013	Project is a success when it delivers all that is set out in the scope regardless of schedule and budget. However, the delivery of the project must be in accordance to schedule and must be within agreed budget to the expected quality standards.	This presents a clear success criteria as to key elements to consider when focusing on project success. Scope, schedule and cost will serve as part of the key elements for event organisers to consider when planning event strategy.
Success Approach	Machado & Prá Martens, 2013	Identified that the iron triangle approach is the most traditional approach that affirms main aspects of a project Scope, Cost & Time.	Focusing on the main aspects of PM gives this research the holistic picture as to main aspects a project should be focused on. Event practitioners should be able to adopt this iron triangle approach when devising their event strategy.
Practice	Alias et al.,2014	PM practice leads to direct and indirect projects success which encompasses many elements that must be synchronised for projects to be delivered on time.	This research explores both primary and secondary forms of data collection to ascertain key direct and indirect factors of project success. Adopting Alias et al's findings sets this research on the approach as to how to synchronise both forms of data and analyse as one.
Clear framework	Dalcher, 2012	PM framework increases organisational value	Using PM as a benchmark provides this research in depth knowledge as to how to best contribute to academic and industrial knowledge, leading to overall productivity.
	Badewi, 2015	PM increases effectiveness and efficiency of human effort	The final findings from this research will be able to assist project managers with key elements to better increase their effectiveness and efficiency in the work place.

10.0 Appendix 2 – Detailed CSF from EMOs

Table 11: Event Management Critical Success Factors

Identified Critical Success Factors (CSFs)	Key Author	Key Findings	Relevance to Research Area
Concept of event definition	Berridge, 2007	Identifies Donald Getz and Goldblat definition of event	Having a clear definition as to what event is provides this research a holistic picture as to what it entails. Findings from literature review informed this choice of investigation through interview to further have an in-depth understanding as to how event practitioners define their corporate event practice.
Defining event success	Gerristen & Olderen, 2014	Defining event success is dependent on characteristics and event experience. This is the most important success factor within event planning.	Event success differ from one event practitioner to the other, which has created and led to a curiosity for the investigation of the point event can be categorised as being a success and success criteria. Moreover, this investigation addresses questions raised by Rofner (2009) as stated in the statement of problem (i.e how can success be quantified? When do event organisers consider an event successful?

Corporate event planning checklist	Hancahr, 2018	Having a comprehensive planning checklist is needed when building events of any size or form	This will be able to address some of the pitfalls event planners encounter when planning their projects. Moreover, having a planning checklist will be able to highlight key success criteria needed to run a project successfully.
Importance of a strategic planning checklist	Lindsey, 2011	Intensive planning process is the only guarantee to event success	From statement of problem and justification of study other authors have identified the need for a thorough planning strategy when running their projects.
Event development	Salem *et al*, 2004	Framework for systematic identification and deconstruction of four major stages of event development. These stages are; decision stage; detailed planning stage; implementation stage and evaluation stage	This framework can be used as a tool by event managers to be able to plan successful events. Through semi-structured interview, this research promises to identify key corporate event processes or stages. Moreover, the findings from interview will feed into the final assessment tool that can be used by event practitioners and researchers.
	Yeoman *et al*, 2012		
Event success factors	EventMB, 2020	Budget, innovation and networking are key consideration for event planners.	Literature review has identified the need for project planners to have a clear idea on key elements to prioritise when planning their project. This affirms question raised during interview session on determining factors that influences event success.
Clients' needs & event standard	Sharples, 2014	Experience is the most crucial aspect of event success and event success is achieved ensuring event design is of high quality.	Most of the event practitioner build their ide of event success around client needs, expectation and general experience. This research investigates the need of putting clients' needs by asking the key question "what clients look forward to the most when delivering their event project" and how it has to be of high quality, have a structured event design and meet their desired goal

11.0 Appendix 3 – Interview Analysis

Table 12: Thematic Analysis of Interviews

Categorised Questions	Emerging themes	CSFs	Participant 1	Participant 2 (Respondent 1)	Participant 3 2 (Respondent 2)
Organisational Branding Factors.	Meeting and building a strong relationship	Corporate Event Practice	√		
	Clients aims and objectives		√	√	
	Impact in the society		√		
	Event brief		√	√	√
	External resources		√		
	Return of profit		√		
	Creating an event mood			√	
	Full event management			√	
	System & Procedures				√
	Attention to details				√
	Communication		√	√	√
	Event logistics				√
	In depth information		√		√
Client Requirement Factor.	Build relationships, collaborative working, Networking, Reputation	Client Expectation	√		
	Key Performance Indicators		√		
	Health & Safety Management		√		
	Memorable experience			√	

	Managing client's expectations			√	
	Meeting client's goals			√	
	Running event smoothly				√
	High quality & Professional support				√
Corporate Event Success Factors.	Quality management	Determining Event Factors	√		
	Key indicator		√		
	Number of attendees		√		
	Evaluate if goals have been achieved		√		
	Client satisfaction			√	
	High standard			√	
	Feedback			√	
	Promote hard work			√	
	communication				√
	Event Management				√
	Good supplies of materials				√
	Good working relationship with suppliers				√
Success Factors missing from Event Projects:	Description of events as project	Missing Project Element	√		
	Better time management			√	
	Better planning process			√	
	Better structure			√	
	Lack of team management			√	
	Better communication process			√	√
	Budget				
Corporate Event	Prior Event – client needs, event strategy, budget/costing, sorting	Eve nt	√	√	√

Strategies (Prior, During & Post-Event.	out venue, external resources/people, visitors experience, health & safety, policy, staffing, event delivery and presentation				
	During Event – pre-event checks, time management, monitor visitors experience, quality checks, event runs smoothly and clarity of duties,		√	√	√
	Post Event – evaluation process feedback and debriefing		√	√	√
Delivery Process.	Drawn up an event document plan		√		
	Clear information about event	Clear Event Process	√		
	Having key contact for people		√		
	Health & safety requirement		√		
	Pre-planning (concept); Planning (what to do); build or set up project; the event; managing and evaluating.		√	√	√
	Providing clients with list of ideas; booking an ordering event necessity; signing off contracts; commencement of project and getting feedback			√	

	Sorting out budget, sort out venue & equipment, logistics and having constant flow of communication				√
Tools & Techniques of Corporate Event Project Life Cycle:	Project schedule	**Tools & Techniques**	√		√
	Managing step-by-step process		√		
	Risk management (Risk assessment)		√	√	√
	Safety management plan; Critical incident plan and emergency incident management.		√		√
	Gantt chart			√	
	Time management; Method statement;			√	
	Resource allocation & Assigning of role and responsibilities and; Public relation			√	
Organisations' Specific Tools & Techniques.	The Purple guide	**Specific Event Standards Tailored to Event Type and**	√		
	Mood board			√	
	Loading list			√	
	Project Management tools & technique			√	
	Attention to details and clear communication				√
Organisations' Standard for	Health & Safety Executives; Safety standards (ISO4000); Purple guide; emergency		√	√	

Daily Functions.	planning crowd; Professionals and Meeting expectations				
	Staff code of conduct; Client log in system; warehouse checks; high level of standard and performance			√	√
	Clear rules ang regulation and signing agreement;				√
CSF for Strategic Level.	Event delivery	Activities during Event	√		
	Strategically impactful		√		
	Staying on budget		√		
	Good event record		√		
	Communication; level of understanding knowledge of system, organisation standard and practice			√	
	Running event smoothly				√
	Team with right skill and representing the company				√
CSF at Managerial Level.	Focus on strategic level	Management Core Factors	√		
	Events are delivered successfully		√		
	Right people in the right position		√		
	Strategic impact of event and Organising events, resources and time		√		
	Setting up venue; event presentation to client; document contract and invoices;			√	√

	regulations and code of conduct; clear communication					
Delegation of Tasks.	Team experience; availability of skills and workload management system	Distribution of Task	√	√		
	Keeping records of hours; meeting financial regulations and keeping an eye on safety affairs.		√			
	Consider strength and weaknesses			√		
	Project Manager in place					√
Existence of Assessment Tool.	Event toolkit; event plan template; checklist template and risk assessment template.	Tracking Document	√			
	Time document		√			
	Loading list; calendar and document sign off sheet			√		
	Client feedback					√
	Pictures, voice recordings or videos					√
	Quality control					√
Goal-oriented CSF respectively.	Using SMART objectives	Success Criteria	√			
	Feedback forms		√	√		
	Reflection and evaluation		√			
	Project was on course with budget		√			

	Stories from news and delegate experience		√		
	No complains			√	
	Event ran smoothly				√

12.0 Appendix 4 – Cover Letter and Interview Questions

University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

The School of Engineering,

Fylde Rd Preston PR1 2HE,

Lancashire, United Kingdom.

COVER LETTER

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Queen Uchechi Anele, an MPhil student in the field of Project Management with the above-named institution. Under the supervision of Dr. Godfaurd Adjaie John my director of studies and Dr. Abdulkadir Ganah my second supervisor, I am currently embarking on my thesis that aligns project management principles/practices and corporate event practice together with the aim to "*investigate critical success factors from a project management perspective that can be used to improve the delivery of event projects within corporate event management organisations in the United Kingdom*".

The information gathered from the interview session should provide some clarity to my on-going review of literature thereby drawing out key themes required for the full and successful achievement of my research aim and objectives.

I would also like to use this medium to inform you that this research is of academic interest only and all information provided will be handled in strict confidence and information gathered will not be divulged to a third party. Findings of this investigation should be of interest to event and project practitioners to enhance their individual productivity and project delivery output and their organisation at large and also providing clarity to on-going academic research in related topic area as this research. Hence, the output of this research will be shared with your organisation for the growth and development of your organisation.

The interview session will take no more than 45minutes to conclude with a minimum of 2 key persons in your team and it is with utmost regard for your time and input that I implore you to please grant me research audience. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to respond the questions in the following pages and contributing to knowledge, success and overall productivity of this research.

Yours faithfully,

Queen Uchechi Anele (Research student)

SECTION A – ORGANISATION PROFILE INFORMATION

1. Location of Organisation………………………………………………………………………………………….

2. Type of Organisation
    a. Consultancy ☐
    b. Contracting ☐
    c. Private/Freelance ☐
    d. Local authority ☐
    e   Other, please
        specify……………………………

3. Type of Corporate event (tick as many that applies)
    a. Seminars ☐
    b. Conferences ☐
    c. Trade shows ☐
    d. Executive retreats ☐
    e. Product launch ☐
    f. Team building ☐
    g   Other, please specify
        …………………………………………

4. Have you already implemented Corporate event management in your projects?
    Yes ☐
    No ☐

5. If yes, for how long? ………………………………

6. Number of Corporate event management driven projects handled by your organisation since inception.
    a. 0 – 9 ☐
    b. 10 – 19 ☐
    c. 20 – 29 ☐
    d. 30 and above ☐

7. Staff strength (number of both technical and management staff)
    a. Less than 5 ☐
    b. 5 – 15 ☐
    C. 16 – 24 ☐

d. 25 and above ☐

8. Designation of Respondents and role played
   ………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………

9. Years of Respondents Experience
   a. 1 – 4 ☐
   b. 5 – 9 ☐
   c. 10 – 20 ☐
   d. 21 and above ☐

10. Respondents Academic Qualification
    a. HND ☐
    b. BA/BSc ☐
    c. MA/MBA/MSc ☐
    d. Other, please
       specify……………

11. Respondents Professional Qualification
    a. Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) ☐
    b. PRINCE2 ☐
    c. Certified Event Planning Specialist (CEPS) ☐
    d. Certification in Meeting Management (CMM) ☐
    e. Certified Special Events Professional (CSEP) ☐
    f. Other, please
       specify…………………………………………

SECTION B – (QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS)

Specific Information about Critical Success Factors Influencing the Implementation and Management of Corporate Event Projects.

Q1: In terms of principles, policies, goals, approach and concepts that governs your event practice how would you describe your corporate event practice?

Q2: What do your clients look forward to the most when delivering in their projects? For example, do your clients have any desired outcome for their event project and any requirements you must meet given their event type.

Q3: What are the determining factors that influences the success of your event projects?

Q4: What do you think or consider to be the key element missing from your project? Surely, in your daily business activity you reflect over every event.

Q5: With regards to event strategies, what do you consider the most prior, during and post event?

Q6: What is your typical event process like; and are they aligned with project management processes? Your step-by-step process for delivering your event project.

Q7: Which of the following tools and techniques do you adopt when going throughout your event project life cycle (gantt chart, critical path method, project scheduling, risk management, resource allocation)?

Q8: Do you have your own unique tools and technique tailored to your event type?

Q9: What do you use as a standard in carrying out your daily functions in your organisation? For example, any set rules, statutes or methodologies.

Q10: What are the core factors considered by top-level managers for the effective management of event projects in your organisation?

Q11: What activities are undertaken by mid-level managers that ensures the smooth process of your event project?

Q12: How do you distribute tasks to event teams who ensure that project goals are achieved and in line with organisations policy?

Q13: Do you currently have a tool for assessing the progress and end result of your event project?

Q14: At what point do you consider your event a success?

13.0 Appendix 5 – Full transcript from Interview Sessions.

Organisation 1: University

Q1) Speaker 1: How would you describe your corporate event practice?

Speaker 2: So whenever I hear about any event, I always want to try and meet with the person that is leading that. So they would effectively become a client in a way. So, I'd speak to them, I want to know what their aims and objectives are and basically what they want to achieve through the event cause that can impact on our design of it, who was invited, that sort of thing. So we offer advice around good ways of running an event, good locations, um, the timing, the operational factors, that sort of thing.

So once we've had that initial meeting, we write up an event brief and that event brief, we'll detail things like, time, date and location. So we might have to hire in additional resources for that. And it's really just being able to advise the client on what they can do.

Q2) Speaker 1: What do your clients look forward to the most when delivering the projects?

Speaker 2: it really depends on what kind of event it is. So looking back at academic conferences, often an academic will want to promote their area of research. They will want to give an opportunity to build on that. So bringing together practitioners from that area of research gives an opportunity for collaborative work in for networking, that sort of thing. One of our kind of key performance indicators that we have each year.

Q3) Speaker 1: What are the determining factors don't influence the success of your project?

Speaker 2: There's a number of different things we look at. I'm very, my background in my studies was service quality management. So looking at how we can evaluate the success of an event in a number of different ways. So one key indicator would definitely be the number of attendees we have. For every event we have an idea of how many people we want to attend and can therefore clearly say whether we've achieved a key indicator on the event. We think about the process they're going to go through. So for some large events we have

zone managers and it's their task to monitor their area, to make sure that things are running smoothly and to pick up on an area where guests are having a bad experience.

Q4: What do you think is the key element missing in your project? Obviously in your daily business function, you might think, Oh, this could actually be incorporated into our daily project. So when planning for your events, what you would think is a key thing?

Speaker 2: Our team always continuously evaluate in the way that we work. So after large events, we always have a debrief meeting after our smaller events. We have like an evaluation process that we go through and we look and say if there is anything that comes out of that for us to improve next time to work upon, to make sure that there's something in place to deal with that potential thing happening again.

Q5) Speaker 1: With regards to events strategy, what do you consider the most prior, during and post event?

Speaker 2: So prior, the needs of the client, the strategic objectives and aims, the budget. You have to also get things approved so you have to get it approved and find out what budget code it's going to be under, who can approve that money. So everything goes through that. I need to consider the health and safety around cloud management and how people are going to access the space, how they're going to move from one area to the next and how they're going to move out of the building before the building goes over casting. So, we always risk assess events and we have to make sure that our contractors are working safely on site, that we're following health and safety procedure and working with the States as well.

We have debrief meetings with our team, just as our team. And then we have a debrief meeting with the services that were involved because it's impossible for us to have done it on our own. And we do, we look at the pre planning side of things with them, they implement it with our support and then we look at it afterwards and say did that plan actually work? Was it safe? Is there any areas we need to change for next year? That sort of thing. Okay.

Q6) What are your typical event process like? What process do you use before you embark on a project or after?

Speaker 2: It depends on the event. So we don't have, apart from my car event brief, I do have an event planned. So an event planned document is brought together, which will have again, information about what the event is, but then it has all the things that are happening. So the day before, for example, it might say this contract is coming in to move the furniture in this venue, this just coming in to put in new furniture in the venue, that sort of thing. Then on the day of the event, it has step by step what needs to happen. When staff need to be onsite, what's happening throughout the program. Is there any additional things that we need to know about, like VIP is arriving at certain times, that sort of thing. On that we also have contact numbers for key people.

Speaker 1: I was reading up and I realised that, with the typical event process, the corporate event process, you have like, planning, execution, control, closure things like that.

Speaker 2: I suppose we can break it up into the different areas. So we have pre-planning where we, we get the concept of the event given to us. Somebody turns up and says, I want to do this. I'm like, all right, what does that look like? What does that look like in your head? How do you want to achieve that? What do you want to get from it? So we've got like the pre planning, but the planning bit comes in when we know what we need today. So we know what the venue is, what the client wants, how many attendees they want, what cater and they want, that sort of thing. Um, the event itself happens, um, where we manage everything throughout the day. We have the, well there's probably more steps in there actually. There's planning, there's build or up, um, which can be quite small or quite big depending on the event, the event itself. Then we have breakdown afterwards. And then we have the evaluation phase.

Q7) Speaker 1: Which of the following tools do you adopt when going through your event, project life cycle?

Speaker 2: Because I think I probably use them, but I haven't done training in project management. I've done training and events management, so it's probably called something else.

Speaker 1: Critical path method is basically seeing where you are at the moment. Where are you going at the end of the project? And it's just like a timeline basically. Project scheduling is basically planning, putting things and resource allocating, is basically providing resources for your project, things like that.

Speaker 2: We have an operations manager and the operations manager's job is to have their schedule. So she has a step-by-step what needs to happen when plan. And that includes a separate marketing communications plan. We need to make sure our risk assessment is completed. Last one, we have to do a safety management plan. And also critical incident management prior to it happening. So we have in that a coach management plan cause that's a really big thing. We also have a communication plan we also have an emergency planning and emergency incident management.

Q8) Speaker 1: Do you have your own unique tools tailored to your event type?

Speaker 2: So in the, I'd suggest the purple guide. It's an online access thing that we have got access to it as a team the industry standard for event management. And there's also the health and safety executive. They have got guidance on events, safety management as well.

Q9) Speaker 1: What do you use any standard in carrying out your daily functions?

Speaker 2: Having, following standards sort of thing, we have a set standard in regard to its health and safety, the ISO4000. Events standard wise, we do work with the purple guide, make sure we are meeting the standards that we have, also put our team through a training with the emergency planning, which has to do with crowd safety management. We make sure that the work that we are doing is professional, that it is meeting all of our obligations, in regard to health and safety.

Q10): What are the core factors considered by top level managers for the effective management of event projects in your organisation?

Speaker 2: So, our lead is very keen to ensure that the events that we deliver are meeting their needs, that they are strategically impactful and that we are showing ourselves off as a professional service and the organization. There's a very good track record of senior managers taking staff welfare into account that we are an incredibly busy team. So, obviously we need to ensure that we're staying in budget of things. Speaker 1: So, you have to make your time a bit in that way.

Speaker 1: Because sometimes the funding or the money you put aside for upsetting project actually affects the overall success of the event, doesn't it?

Speaker 2: It can do. If someone wants to do have an event and they want to completely change this half of a venue, for example, for that we have to take into account the cost of bringing a contractor in to remove all the furniture to store it somewhere and then the higher end, this strange specialist furniture that they want to have in the venue. So, we do have those discussions to make sure that we are not wasting money. That's the way which any business should do. And when we spend a lot of time negotiating with suppliers and contractors as well to make sure that we're getting the best deal for the university.

Q11) Speaker 1: what activities are undertaken by mid-level managers to ensure the smooth operation or process of your project?

Speaker 2: Yes, so in our department we have an overall manager who would focus on the strategic level. We also have our events manager role is to ensure that all of the events across the department are being delivered successfully, and that the right people are in the right positions to be leading on them. So, our department leads will be looking at the strategic impact and also the overall workload of the team, and the event managers looking at the practicality. It's like making sure we've got the tools that we need so we can organize our events and the resources and the time.

Q12) Speaker 1: How do you distribute tasks to event teams to ensure that project goals are achieved at the end of the day and is a line with your organization policy or department policy?

Speaker 2: So if I was, say I was leading on an event, I would go to my team to ensure that there were at least two members of staff that were working on an event at any one time, just as partly as a contingency. So if somebody is there's always somebody in who can deal with queries on that or someone's on holiday, that sort of thing. When looking for that person, I'd look at the workload of the team. So, we have coordinators like me and we also have event assistants who will offer that support. I also look at what their experiences, so does a member, the team for example, that has a lot of experience in marketing and design.

If it's to do with conferences, we've got a specialized member of the team that her entire career has been to do with conference organization. I do consider the skills of that person experienced to that person as well as their availability as well in line with the organisation's policy, the main policies we have that we look to do with, but management, making sure that staff working like a lot of us work on multiple flexi time, so we have to keep a record of our hours and make sure that we're not going over a certain number per week or month or whatever and our team often do. And also going through the contractor health and safety process that we have in place.

Speaker 1: And it comes down to health and safety as well. So, everything does.

Speaker 2: Yes. Like it wouldn't be appropriate for me to delegate the health and safety management of an event to an event assistant who hasn't got any experience in health and safety.

Speaker 1: Alright

Q13) Speaker 1: Do you currently have a tool for assessing the progress and end result of your, um, event project?

Speaker 2: No, a tool is, I think something that I'm working on at the moment is an event toolkit. We did have our own set of resources, so we've got the event brief that I mentioned earlier. We've got an event plan template, a checklist template, a risk assessment template. So, we do use those as a way of planning and managing and ensuring that we're doing everything that's required. For our conferences in particular, we have, well we call it a timeline document. And keep track as well. So, we have shared folders. So, everything that

we work on goes into the shared folders. Then if anything needs picked up, you can go into it, find the document, and then pull that out so you can work on it. Okay.

Q14) Speaker 1: At what point do you consider your event a success?

Speaker 2: We do think about what we want to achieve from an event before we start planning it. So we set ourselves SMART objectives in regard to the number of people we want to run over a certain amount of time. It's difficult to measure some things. Which is why we use different tools. So, we'll have the feedback from them to measure their enjoyment of certain activities or if they want us to change things or on a scale of one to five, how much they enjoy the catering, that sort of thing. But we also, we talk to them, which is why we do like the managing by walking around am observing people that are there. We look back at how well our processes for their like access to the event work. So if we've planned to have a queuing system here to access you has that actually done what it needs today? So that's a success factor in itself. Have we achieved that, that financial goals?

Speaker 1: Alright.

Speaker 2: But also, it's quite often with our strategic events.

Organisation 2: Corporate Event Management Organisations.
Participant 1:
Q1) **Speaker 1: How would you describe your corporate event practice in terms of approach, principles, standards?** How would you explain it to someone for the first time?
Speaker 2: So we as a company, we are predominantly event theming and deco. So, the majority of our business comes from a client who already has a venue, already has food and drink sorted, but they come to us for those, those final touches to create that theme, to create the mood that the whole event is going to be. We have to look at obviously, well, every event we have to do our health and safety. We have to do the risk assessments. We need to keep to a certain timescale, which has already been pre-agreed with ourselves, with the venue and with the, with the client.

Q2) **Speaker 1: What do your clients look forward to the most when delivering the project?**

Speaker 2: So, our goal is to transform spaces into magical places that clients and people who work at the venue have never experienced before. So our goal is to, is to wow the guests when they walk in and make it that memorable occasion. So it's for us, the, the clients look forward to seeing the transformation after what we've, from what we promised to them, what we deliver. And it's, it's making sure that we, we do that with, with clients and manage their, their expectations.

Speaker 1: So, it's basically meeting client goals.

Speaker 2: Yes. I'd like to say that it's probably more exceeding the client's goals. And

that's what we, that's what we pride ourselves on.

Q3) **Speaker 1: What are the determining factors that influences the success of your event practice?**

Speaker 2: Obviously for us it's client satisfaction. They, they come to us because they want a product to be delivered to a high standard. And as long as we get the confirmation from the client is that what we've delivered or, or we deliver over and above what they expect. That for us is, is the completion of the, of the event. So, to speak. And for us, a successful event is when a client then just looks as for another event. So, we usually tell by repeat business as to how obviously are, how successful an event can be.

Speaker 1: So, say if you get good feedback from a particular project they will get your hands for the next one.

Speaker 2: Yes. Correct.

Speaker 1: What I find is with the, event industry, sometimes some people don't get in the

Satisfaction of their projects.

Speaker 2: Yes. of course. You would never get feedback. I often. So my, my personal practice is that after I've done an event, whether it might be a couple of days after, a week after and the events kind of settled in, I'll call our client back up to say how, how did we do? Just to get that any kind of feedback, because sometimes the night can be fantastic, but it might be that following week at work, one of their employees has said, well, well actually my table center was a bit wobbly.

Speaker 1: It's good for the follow- up as well.

Speaker 2: Of course. Yes, exactly. And then sometimes then brings it back to the determining factors and we, we're promoting the fact that we want to work harder for, for next time for the next event. Okay.

Q4) Speaker 1: What do you think is a key element missing in your project? So if you have done a particular event project for the week or for the month. You might sit down and be I could have done that or even better.

Speaker 2: I think in some instances it, I think it all falls back to better time management and, and better planning. The process that we obviously you see here, there's so much stuff going on and we have multiple events on every day. So it's just managing those time expectations obviously because, we are very busy and it's difficult to always hit those time frames. But I think if we had a better planning process or a better process of communication from event confirmation to then get in it to the, to the warehouse team, that would, that would help our, our processes.

Q5) Speaker 1: What do you consider the most prior during and post event?

Speaker 2: So prior to the event is just ensuring that the client knows what is going to be delivered to them. So there's, there's often a lot of back and forth with the client. So, so how we do it is we will send them a presentation. During the event, the strategy is obviously just to ensure that all of the items are as good a quality as, as what the client expected. Again, most of it revolves again around the client's expectancy and, and the, the end goal is obviously making sure that the client is happy with what they get. So then during the event it would just be to ensure that the product is as good as what they expected. And then post

event, like I said, my strategy is to just follow up to make sure we get the positive feedback and that we've achieved our target, which was to create a successful event.

Q6) Speaker 1: What is your typical event process like? The steps you follow when drafting an event plan or even as acute in an event itself. What is your step by step process?

Speaker 2: So, in all honesty, I wouldn't say that we have a designated step by step process that we, that we follow and something like that could be good for us at the moment. Everything because of me and my directors and everyone's in experience within the industry, we just, I suppose, have our own formula as to how we, how we process the event, how we set the event up. So, it's always just making sure that we book the stuff in. We, make sure that the client again knows what they're going to get, order everything so that it's going to be here in time, do all the preparation in advance and just have our own checklist. Our processes to start with the loading lists so that then everybody down here has the loading list. So, they know what items to get. Then on that loading list, if they then come back to us and say, we need more paint, we need more of this, we need more that then we go through the ordering process and so on and so forth. We don't particularly have a system that we follow.

I think it's more of just a system that's ingrained in our events, knowledge as to the timeframes before setting up for an event as to how long we've got and how, how much needs to be done prior to doing so. So, we probably lack in that sense because we actually do need a process to follow and a timeframe as to make sure that the event is as successful as it can be.

So obviously our initial stages, the client comes to us and we then give them a list of ideas. And once that's then confirmed, then our next processes, the booking and the ordering and making sure that everything's ready. Then during the event we have the process of monitoring to make sure that everything's there and in place and we can get the contract signed from the client, the event that happens. And after that we get the feedback. And then after the feedback element we, we sign that job off to say that was complete. That was a success. And we do have for the larger jobs, we do have a debrief to say, what could we have done? How could we have done that differently? Where could we have saved money

that so on and so forth. And then ensure that we get the job next year or the year after to make sure that we do it again. Oh, thank you for that one.

Q7) Speaker 1: Which of the following tools and techniques do you adopt when going new through your event project life? So do you use a Gantt charts, critical paths, project scheduling?

Speaker 2: So, for the, for the larger jobs that we do, we do always use a Gantt chart. We always do risk management because each one of our jobs for insurance purposes, we have to do a risk assessment and a method statement as to how we're going to complete that task. We definitely stick with the Gantt Charts. That always helps us obviously just for the time management process of things from the initial stages all the way through to the follow the completion of the event and making sure that then everything gets put back into place. We use risk management and not particularly resource allocation either.

Q8) Speaker 1: do have your own unique tools tailored to your events?

Speaker 2: we have our processes are that it would start with the mood board which goes to the client. We would then show that once the client has confirmed the items, we will make the loading list and the loading list has every element that is required for the event that comes down to the guys down here. We also do resource allocation, that's when we put the processing to do the risk assessments, the method statements, so on and so forth.

So I think that's how we kind of tailor it to ourselves, um, at the end that we just need to make. We just need to make sure that we've, our number one goal is to make sure our clients receive what they, what they expect. And the processes that we use here. I suppose we do follow those, those practices to make sure that that's how they are delivered.

Q9) Speaker 1:What do you use as a standard in carrying out your daily functions in your organisation?

Speaker 2: I mean as standard, so things like say safety wise, um, I've recently come up with, so we have a, um, we've got a staff code of conduct. So everybody has signed that staff code of conduct so that everybody understands what we expect of them as a bare minimum. So

anybody who's driving, they know if they've had an accident that they get in touch with those. The other daily functions really are just making sure that the events that we have coming up are being looked at by the guys down here in the warehouse so that everybody knows what, what's happening.

Q10) Speaker 1: What are the core factors considered by top level managers?

Speaker 2: Core factors for me, when I first started there was limited communication between. So I've brought into effect that we can, we just needed to communicate better and treat everyone on a, on a similar level. So, it's making sure that everybody's of a certain level. So I'd say that that's one of the core factors is making sure that there's fair and easy communication. Another, another use of effective management is just to ensure that everybody knows the systems, and everybody understands the systems because otherwise if, if we're telling them to do one thing from one kind of document upstairs but they don't understand it, that as then it's not going to it's not going to be successful. And say that, I'd say that separate for me, communication and effective knowledge of us, our standards and our practices is the most important thing for us. So, making sure that everybody's happy, community, good communication, but I think making sure people are happy then just boils down to good communication again. Really.

Q11) Speaker 1: What activities are undertaken by mid-level managers to ensure the smooth process of the event?

Speaker 2: I'd consider our mid-level managers is the people that we would use to go to an event. To ensure that all the contracts and, and uh, invoices are sent and all of that kind of documentation. And then I might hand it over to one of our mid-level managers to then go and run the event and do the table centers. Set the venue up, the check of a so on and so forth. Those, those smaller elements. And I think, again, it's the, the activities for them and to make sure that there's a smooth for an is to again, have good communication with the client, be presentable and well mannered, which is all again in our, our, uh, code of conduct. And that's why we have that code of conduct so that if I get feedback from a client to say,

Q12) Speaker 1: How do you distribute tasks to event team who ensure that project goals are achieved?

Speaker 2: we have somebody who then has assistant to the warehouse manager, so people, so the warehouse manager knows that he gets the stock list first. So, we allocate, we distribute the tasks according to the, according to people's strengths.

Q13) Speaker1: Do you currently have a tool for assessing the progress and result of your event project?

Speaker 2: not at all specifically. I think we just, we always refer back to the loading list and the calendar just to make sure that we've got the everything in place ahead of the event. The assessment tool is whether or not the client is happy. Once the event has been completed. The only way that we can actually tell via a document how, how successful an event has been or we get an email from a client, which we do regularly get to say thanks for your event.

Q14) Speaker 1: At what point do you consider your event a success?

Speaker 2: So, pretty much just a completion of the event. What if everything, if we don't get a call from the client on the evening to say something's gone wrong or once the guys have brought everything back here and nothing is damaged and it's all back on the shelves, that for us is pretty much a complete event.

Response from 2nd Respondent

The respondent also gave his permission for the interview to be recorded followed by consent after interview. These were the following response during the interview session:

Q1) Speaker 1: How would you describe the practice?

Speaker 2: It's very good practice actually. I think that there are a lot of systems in place that allow, the events to run smoothly. There's obviously a lot of detail that has to be taken in. So attention to detail is, is paramount in something like this, especially in my writing itself. And the only way you can do that is by communication as well. Communication with each other, communication with the clients. So, getting that detail from the client straight away to then pass on to whether that be the warehouse team, just from the team upstairs in the office. Um, figuring out the logistics of the events as well as the, those things need to be taken into consideration. And there's more in-depth information that you can get from the beginning. Obviously the easier it is for you to solve that event.

Q2) Speaker 1: what do your clients look forward to the most when delivering your projects?

Speaker 2: from my experience, I think it's a case of they want a smooth-running event. Really, I'm a stress free and the reason they come to a company like yours is to take that stress away from them to get a high-quality event. But at the same time with no stress to them. And I think that as long as they get professional, um, people working for them like they do here, I think it's that that's what they want is to take that there's so much to think about when an organizing an event or any kind of event really have a big or small, um, it allows them to just deal with their guests themselves or whatever that, whatever the event may be and let someone else sort out the detail for them within the event to make it look good. Okay.

Q3) Speaker 1: What are the determining factors that influences the success of your events projects?

Speaker 2: Again, I think communication is a big one for that. Whether that be with a venue, would that be the, with the event management, whether that be with our team communication all the way through so everyone knows what's going on. If we don't have that, then Pass ware obviously things start to fail. Um, so communication's one thing, supplies and another to make sure that we get the right correct. Um, materials and the goods, whether that be is supplying it, whether that is sourcing it out, outsourcing it to different companies. So again, it's having a good relationship with our other companies that

we use to bring things in, whether that be prop builders and manufacturers, anything like that.

You need to build up that rapport and relationship with so that you know that you can get things on time. You know, it's a high quality. Um, yeah, so communication, good relationships, um, and good teamwork ready as well. I think if you've got a good team behind him and working for you, that's very essential so you can trust them and rely on, you said, deliver something of good quality. Interesting. Thank you.

Q4) Speaker 1: What do you think is the key element missing from your project? So say if you sat down and see, okay, the project is over, I could have done that, I could have done this. What do you think is missing from your project?

Speaker 2: difficult? Really? I think it depends on the circumstances. It could be. Sometimes you can look at an event and it could be the fact of if the client had a slightly lighter budgets and then we have never been able to produce more for them.

Speaker 1: What do you think you could have improved on?

Speaker 2: just again, it depends on the actual situation. Depends on the event itself. It could be from anything.

Q5) Speaker 1: With regard to event strategies, what do you consider most prior, during and post event?

Speaker 2: making sure the client's happy, making sure the venue is happy. That, again comes down to communication and making sure that they know when we're arriving, when During the event, making sure everything runs smoothly. Again, that's having the right team behind you to make sure they know what they're doing. Having the detail then therefore in the beginning so the team know when to arrive, what to do when they get there. Making sure the whole, the venue know what they're doing. Again, communication with the clients and the venues to make sure that they are happy. How they may, they may have some feedback for us, um, from both of them. And trying to implement that feedback and we'll see if we deliver the same or similar events again and if it was improvements we needed.

Q6) Speaker 1: What is your typical event process like? Do you have like a step to step thing that you follow?

Speaker 2: So obviously once you have the go ahead for the, they're happy to go ahead with the event. It's sourcing everything from transportation and hotels. If we were to do venue hire, if they've already done themselves constantly, full logistics of everything and then you go into production of producing everything. And so once we know what we're doing with them, produce it all, again, logistics of how to get to and from venue team, making sure that they're all accounted for if their free book or your team in, um, production of making everything. Then getting that from here to the venues

Q7) Speaker 1: Tools and techniques you use in planning for your project or even coming up with an idea and even executing it. What kind of tools do you use? Do you use a Gantt chart? Critical part, permitted project schedule in risk management or even risk association and allocation?

Speaker 2: So, obviously risk management orders that we have when it comes to risk assessments for everything. We need to use that for every everything we do. Obviously, health and safety is very important. We, well me personally from my previous experience, personal PR project scheduling with that actually scheduled everything from beginning to end.

Q8) Speaker 1: Do you think you have, a specific or unique tool tailored to your event type or is, what do you think is yours personally?

Speaker 2: Yeah, I believe that's a attention to detail from my role anyways. Paramount, there's so much to go through constantly. And so it takes a, a good eye to constantly check through things. And again, the communication with all departments, we cross section a lot of stuff. Whether that'd be production, logistics, operations, there's a lot to do when it comes to just one event when you're trying to handle five events all at one time or as we have at the minute Yeah. So for me it's for, especially from my role, it's constantly checking over and over again and making sure I've got everything in place.

Q9) What do you use as a standard in carrying out your daily in this organisation? So, just as in from systems that we have in place. Yes. Any standards. Do you have any policy, any rules?

Speaker 2: Regulation code of conduct, things like so each does a code of conduct for each team member that works here. So they have to, whether that be, and some of it is quite specific for their roles. So, all of our drivers have to sign for instance, drivers agreements and making sure that they're abiding by how we want them and we'd like them to, uh, present themselves and how obviously you're there representing this company at the end of the day. So driving responsibly, um, things like not driving, um, when you're using your mobile phone, things like that, what you'd think is common sense, but that's all in our code of practice for our drivers and the team. Or would I have a code of conduct as well when, whether that be working here or whether that be working within a venue. Um, and that can compete for the smallest things. How you present yourself to how you're talking to people and make sure that you're polite, just small little things. But, I think some of those things go a long way.

Q10) Speaker 1: What are the core factors considered by top level managers for the effective management of events project?

Speaker 2: definitely the smooth running of things. It has to, every event has to flow and obviously you can imagine it's, some of them are quite stressful because there's quite a lot to do. But it's just keeping on top of things and making sure that you have everything prepared and events of six good preparation, um, will allow you to run that event as long as you've got everything with you. Cause some, obviously we may do an event which is hundreds of miles away. It's not like you can just pop to the warehouse to get something again. So every event is just as good as the last one and it doesn't matter how big or small

Q11) Speaker 1: What activities are and taken by mid- level managers for the smooth process of your event.

Speaker 2: Again, checking everything [inaudible] to detail over and over again communicates to everyone. Um, it's just that making sure everyone knows what they're

doing. As soon as someone doesn't know what they're doing, then you're going to, that's when problems happen. So, it's the same procedures as before. Yeah, just going through everything, checking it, double, double checking everything. Showed that what the client wants cause there's no point in you tightening up thinking you know, what the client wants. If you don't say

Q12):Speaker 1: How do you distribute tasks to event team for to ensure that project goals are achieved at the end of the day?

Speaker 2: Again, I think it's making sure that the team members are correct for that role and for that job. Um, every team member has their strengths and weaknesses like we all do. But it's about knowing your team and knowing that, uh, some people are better on certain jobs under this. Some people might not be as customer facing as other people. So it's about having the right people in place and sometimes you may need to sense every team on an on job. Um, having, um, an IC, so someone in charge, the project manager, um, making sure they're fully aware of what they're doing and how, what team they've got. And just again, making sure everyone knows what they're doing. I think communication and awareness is a big thing.

Q13) Speaker 1: Do you currently have your own tool for assessing the projects, the progress of your project and even the end result?

Speaker 2: So, for us again, it's about the client being happy. So feedback from our clients is very important. That could be just a conversation at the event. And we'll also do a follow-up feedback, making sure we can get as much feedback because obviously once the event's finished, the client may go home and go, well actually I think I might have done this, this, this differently. So, feedback is crucial for that. And we always try and log everything. So whether that'd be photos of everything just to make sure. And also quality cause mid-level management can't always be at every event. So it was making sure that these events, how you envisaged them and how they should be.

Q14) Speaker 1: At what point do you consider your event a success? And if everyone's happy, if it goes well?

Speaker 2: ideally, again, there's a lot of people involved. So if our team are happy, if the client's happy, if the venue that it's been held out, they're happy without how everything went, that there's nothing that I think for to say that if everyone enjoyed the event, um, and it all run smoothly, and that's quite a big, big markers of success.