

## EDITORIAL

It is our great pleasure to bring you the fourth issue of the 14th volume of IJISPM. In this issue, readers will find important contributions on project management competencies, metrics in agile software development projects, digital platform concepts, and project managers' leadership.

### **Bridging competency gaps in project management through importance-performance analysis**

Danijela Ciric Lalic, Mirjana Jokanovic Djajic, Miroslav Vujičić, Sanja Kovačić, Uglješa Marjanović

*This research aimed to identify and address critical competency gaps in project management using Importance–Performance Analysis (IPA). The study explored key competencies essential to project success and assessed their current performance levels to provide actionable insights for improvement. A survey of 257 project management professionals evaluated the perceived importance and actual performance of various competencies. The IPA methodology was applied to analyze discrepancies and categorize competencies into IPA matrix quadrants. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, gap analysis, and a paired-sample t-test ensured robustness. Significant gaps emerged in areas such as informal communication, visual competencies, competence control, and methodological integration, indicating a need for targeted development programs. The IPA matrix offered a strategic framework for prioritizing resource allocation, identifying urgent improvement areas, and strengths. This study introduces a novel approach to optimizing resource allocation and improving project outcomes by integrating IPA into competency evaluation. The findings support practitioners and organizations in enhancing project management effectiveness through focused training and investment.*

### **Adaptive metrics in agile software development projects**

João Barata, Sharon Coyle

*Multiple metrics are available for agile software development (ASD), but adapting them to its evolving conditions is a challenge. To be truly agile, the metrics must be goal-oriented, flexible, and aligned with the principles of people interaction. This paper presents the results of a multi-year action research project conducted in different companies adopting ASD. Our contribution describes the organizational routines and a framework (3View) to incorporate meaningful metrics supported in three main pillars: comparability with past projects, relevance to measuring project expectations, and adaptability to remain valid in dynamic project conditions. The proposed framework includes (1) a reference model to build metrics and (2) a process model to guide practitioners. Measures of all types of attributes in ASD can be evaluated differently, depending on the project stakeholders and lifecycle stage. Dynamic environments require adaptive metrics that guide interpretation and project development. Failure to adopt these recommendations may lead to ceremonial conformity to measurements that do not reflect practice. Our work extends the literature on ASD metrics, expanding their role as enablers of agile project assessment and transparent communication throughout the project lifecycle. It explains how ASD metrics can be tailored to align with stakeholders' perceptions while maintaining rigor and transparency in their reasoning.*

### **Towards conceptual clarity in digital platform research: a systematic literature review**

Ilyass Zeamari, Wim Laurier

*The emergence of digital platforms has attracted considerable attention in economics and information systems, shaping scholarly discourse over the past few years. Digital platforms have been the subject of extensive research by scholars, who have examined them from various perspectives, including technical, economic, and socio-technical perspectives. However, despite the frequent use of the term 'digital platform' in the literature, its definition covers a wide range of meanings. Scholars often use the term to mean distinct concepts, which creates semantic confusion within the scientific community. To clarify the different elements and perspectives that shape the definition of a digital platform, a systematic literature review was conducted. A total of 74 definitions from 58 scholarly resources were collected and analyzed through qualitative content analysis. This analytical process aimed to isolate and identify the fundamental elements used in defining digital platforms, as well as the multiple theoretical perspectives through which the term is*

*conceptualized. Furthermore, this study traces the evolution of the term's definition alongside the rapid development of digital platforms in recent years.*

## **One man's meat is another man's poison: Assessing the role of variations in project managers' leadership and structures on the relationship between neoliberal governmentality and project performance**

Muhammad Yousaf Malik, Linzhuo Wang, Fangwei Zhu, Muhammad Salman Latif

*Variations in human aspects of governance and management, and in the structure of project-based organizations (PBOs), may synergize or contrast with one another, eventually impacting project performance (PP). To investigate these variations, the study develops a conceptual model using neoliberal governmentality (NG), transformational (TFL), and transactional leadership styles (TSL) of project managers, centralization of governance structures (CEN) with PP. The data for the study were collected from PBOs in the construction sector. Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was applied to assess the results. Later, the conceptual model was validated using an Artificial Neural Network (ANN) Approach. The results revealed that TFL positively mediates the relationship between NG and PP in PBOs characterized by decentralized governance structures (Low CEN). TSL shows partial mediation with NG and, hence, appears to be the least important predictor of PP in the studied context. Using contingency theory, the study extends the Sociological Perspective of Governance (SPG) to develop a cohesive model for understanding the variations of humans and structures for PP. Project owners, governors, and practitioners should hire synergetic project managers and provide them with training and communication opportunities during the project. NG requires decentralized decision-making to empower TFLs for better PP.*

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the distinguished members of the Editorial Board for their commitment and for sharing their knowledge and experience in supporting the IJISPM.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to all the authors who submitted their work for their insightful visions and valuable contributions.

We hope that you, the readers, find the International Journal of Information Systems and Project Management an interesting and valuable source of information for your continued work.

The Editor-in-Chief,

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