VILNIUS UNIVERSITY
BUSINESS SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

Simona Mikėnaitė

MASTER THESIS

Projekto vadovo požiūris į komunikacijos veiksnius lemiančius projektų naudą kūrybinėse industrijose	Project Manager's Perspective on Communication Factors determining Project Benefits in Creative Industry

Student _____

(signature)

Supervisor _____

(signature)

Part. Assoc.prof. Artūras Bučinskas

Name, surname of the supervisor

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SANTRAUKA

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETAS

VERSLO MOKYKLA

TARPTAUTINĖS PROJEKTŲ VADYBOS PROGRAMA

SIMONA MIKĖNAITĖ

PROJEKTO VADOVO POŽIŪRIS Į KOMUNIKACIJOS VEIKSNIUS LEMIANČIUS PROJEKTŲ NAUDĄ KŪRYBINĖSE INDUSTRIJOSE

Trumpas darbo aprašymas: Komunikacija vaidina lemiamą vaidmenį organizacijos gyvenime ir turi didelę įtaką projekto sėkmei/naudai. Pagrindinis asmuo, užtikrinantis efektyvią komunikaciją projektų valdyme yra projektų vadovas, todėl svarbu atskleisti projektų vadovo požiūrį į komunikacijos veiksnius valdant projektus ir kokie konkretūs komunikacijos veiksniai yra laikomi esminiais siekiant projekto naudos ir išvengti projekto nesėkmės ateityje. Tyrimas buvo sutelktas į kūrybines industrijas, darant prielaidą, kad šiai industrijai reikia specifinio požiūrio.

Darbo tikslai ir uždaviniai: ištirti kūrybinių industrijų specifiką ir atskleisti projektų vadovo požiūrį į komunikacijos veiksnius lemiančius projekto sėkmę/naudą kūrybinėse industrijose bei identifikuoti veiksnių sąrašą.

Darbe naudoti tyrimo metodai: Literatūros apžvalga ir kokybinis tyrimas naudojant pusiau struktūruotą interviu, interviu rezultatai perrašyti ir analizuoti pagal literatūroje atskleistus komunikacijos veiksnius, įtakojančius projekto sėkmę/naudą.

Atliktas tyrimas ir gauti rezultatai: Nustatyti projektų vadovų, dirbančių kūrybinėje industrijoje labiausiai vertinami komunikacijos veiksniai, darantys įtaką projekto sėkmei/naudai.

Pagrindinės išvados: Atsakomybių pasiskirstymas, didesnių įgaliojimų suteikimas projektų vadovams, ir specifiniai lyderystės įgūdžiai yra svarbiausi komunikacijos veiksniai, darantys įtaką projektų sėkmei/naudai kūrybinėse industrijose.

SUMMARY

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PROJECT MANAGER'S PERSPECTIVE ON COMMUNICATION FACTORS
DETERMINING PROJECT BENEFITS IN CREATIVE INDUSTRY

MA thesis supervisor – Part. assoc. prof. Artūras Bučinskas

MA thesis prepared – 2022 Vilnius

MA thesis scope – 62 pages

Number of tables in MA thesis – 11

Number of figures in MA thesis – 2

Number of references in MA thesis – 60

A short description of MA thesis: Communication plays a crucial role in an organizations life and has a great impact for project success/benefits. The key person ensuring the effective communication in project management is the project manager, therefore it is important to reveal the attitude of the project manager on communication factors managing projects and what particular communications factors are considered to be crucial in order to reach project benefits and avoid project failures in the future. The research focused on the creative industries presuming that this industry requires a different approach.

Aims and objectives of MA thesis: to research creative industries specifics and reveal the project manager's attitude towards the project communication in creative industries, and create a list of communication factors, that according to them affect project success/ benefits.

Methods used in MA thesis: Literature review and qualitative research using the semi-structured interview, interview results analyzed according to the communication factors impacting project success/benefits revealed in literature.

Research carried out and results obtained: Most valued communication factors impacting the project success/benefits by project managers in creative industries were identified.

Main conclusions: Responsibilities distribution, higher level of authorization for project managers, trust and specific leadership skills are the most important communication factors impacting projects success/benefits in creative industries.

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INTRODUCTION

Can we consider that the whole life is based on communication? If we consider even our cells interact (communicate) with each other thus forming our whole, I would say yes. Is communication important? I would say it's crucial because people need to communicate in order to meet their needs and seek their goals. Is communication only information? No. It is a much wider term, a phenomenon worth researching, cause it affects us to great extent.

„*The silence of speechlessness is never golden. We all need to communicate and connect with each other – not just in one way, but in as many ways as possible. It is a basic **human need, a basic human right. And more than this, it is a basic human power*** " (Williams, 2000)

As an author of this thesis, I chose the above-written citation to reveal the high importance of communication for individuals in general referring to basic human **needs, right even power.** The "need" is considered to be essential rather than desirable. "Through communication, we meet universal human needs". No need to mention Maslow's need hierarchy, which described basic human needs, and on his findings science still refers.

On the organizational level, researchers try to understand what are the human needs, and how to meet them to seek particular goals, the scholars and businessmen are looking for answers to what is effective communication, how to manage communication for healthy organizational interaction, etc. Communication in project management is also the area under the focus of the business, project practitioners, and scholars, since communication is all about people, and the right attitude towards them, can lead the project to success. As mentioned above people have needs, thus management shall consider them. The findings of the literature research show that despite it being acknowledged that communication is crucial in project management nonetheless this area is poorly managed or not managed at all thus leading projects to failure. Literature research also revealed that creative industries differ from other industries to great extent and it is a challenge for project managers to manage projects in this industry.

To resume:

- the needs and meeting those needs are essential for humans;
- Humans (stakeholders) are the core of project management;
- Communication is the tool to meet stakeholders' needs and thus can lead the project to the success/benefits;
- The project manager as a leader manages the project, working with stakeholders (humans) requires him to have a particular attitude and the right competencies including communication skills.

Relevance of the topic: the focus on communication in project management according to the practitioners and scholars is not sufficient, and communication is not managed effectively or not managed at all. Since project benefits are closely related to effective communications it is crucial to determine communication factors that affect project benefits. Communication in managing projects in creative industries according to scholars is insufficient researched. There is a need to explore the attitude of the project managers in creative industries and to indicate which particular factors of communication they find beneficial for projects. Since communication is all about people, this thesis aims to **research communication factors in project management also through project managers' relations with employees and other stakeholders.**

Problem statement: what **is the attitude** of the project manager on communication factors managing projects in creative industries and what **particular communications factors** are considered to be crucial in this industry in order to reach project benefits and avoid project failures in the future.

Goal: the goal of this master thesis is to reveal communication factors impacting project success/benefits of the project management in creative industries

Aims:

1. To review scientific literature in order to:
    a) analyze communication in general revealing its essence and benefits;
    b) analyze project and project management and project communication management;
    c) indicate the specifics of creative industries;
    d) to create a list of project communication factors that contribute to the project's success/benefits.

2. To conduct the research on projects managers' perspectives working in creative industries in order to:
    a) reveal the project manager's attitude towards the project communication and create a list of communication factors, that according to them affect project success/ benefits;
    b) compare opinions on project communication factors in literature and practice;
    c) to reveal the specifics of project communication management in creative industries.

3. To provide suggestions on how to improve project communication management in creative industries according to the literature analysis and research findings.

1. COMMUNICATION

1.1. Defining communication, its importance, and benefits

There are different aspects of communication, but this thesis aims to research communication as organizational communication, particularly communication in project management, thus leading finally to the project manager's perspective on communication and trying to explain what communication strategies shall be applied in project management in a specific area – creative industries. Nonetheless to start with it is important to reveal the essence of communication.

Traditionally, communication is viewed as a simple process, in which a message was transmitted by a sender to a source (or receiver), who understands, internalizes, and acts on the message (Goldhaber et al., 1978). Of course, communication also can be understood simply as information (noun) or the transfer of it (process). But it wouldn't be sufficient to define this term. Author Alleyne (1995) provided a difference between these two terms: communication and information. He stated, that despite it being a close linkage between them, nonetheless the communication is broader and shall be related to **commonness, agreement, and identity.** Communication has the power in creating **communities.** (Alleyne, 1995).

It is also significant to explain "commonness" also from a linguistic aspect. "Communication" and "community" share Latin roots with the words *communis* (common) and *communicare* (to make common to many, to share) (Oxford English Dictionary, 1971). Communication as the exchange of ideas, information, etc. can occur only if something is shared. The logical conclusion is that something has to be shared so two or more people would have something in common.

With an idea that communication is much more than just information and it's sending agree authors Plowman, and Diffendal (2020) adding that communication can be considered as a mechanism to reduce uncertainty, build trust, demonstrate leadership, generate support, manage change, mitigate conflict and facilitate stakeholder's satisfaction.

Another conceptualization of communication is considered as a tool by which organizational activities can be unified whereby members understand their own role.

"Communication" term has been widely and extensively studied and discussed in the scientific literature from a variety of angles – starting with communication as a science, organizational communication, communication in psychology, etc. Many authors described this phenomenon, but since it is a very broad topic, there is no unified one. The description also differs among authors according to their area or topic of the research. Several definitions are pictured in the table below. Despite the way the definition is provided, the main idea of communication and its general characteristics are **the**

interaction among individuals; two-way communication; communication helps to express and exchange the ideas, knowledge, individual's/business's needs; communication help to reach individuals's/business's goals, communication creates community.

Table 1. *Definitions of "Communication"*

AUTHOR	DEFINITION OF "COMMUNICATION"	SCIENCE AREA
WALTER AND HASKELL (2016)	It is the process of passing information and understanding from one person to another person. It is a two-way interaction between two or more people.	Management
ANDREWS AND ANDREWS, (1988)	Communication is the transfer of information to achieve a goal.	Business management
LOUI (1964)	"Communication is the sum of all the things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening, and understanding."	Management

Source: created by the author based on a literature review

Tompkins (1989) defines organizational communication as follows: "the study of sending and receiving messages that create and maintain a system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more persons". The main idea, communication is a tool for people to work together to reach goals. Brewer and Westerman, (2018) provide the newer updated version of organizational communication, which, according to the authors, is important nowadays and shows the critical challenge for organizations. The definition is as follows: 'the study of the process of creating meaning and understanding through the coordination of verbal and nonverbal communication within and between organization'.

Communication can be divided into to main groups:

- Internal communication;
- External communication.

Internal communication is the term used to describe an organization's managed communication system, where employees are regarded as an internal public or stakeholder group (Vercic et al. 2012). According to the authors, internal communication is among the fastest-growing specializations in public relations and communication management (2012).

Internal communication according to authors Welch and Jackson (2007) is an important tool to build employee engagement. Continuous internal communication can promote employees' commitment to the organization, create a sense of belonging to it, awareness of its changing environment, and understanding of goals. The authors also note that internal communication's parties are the organization's strategic managers and its internal stakeholders. The interaction between them is within the company (Welch and Jackson, 2007). Other researchers also notice that internal communication can be used as a strategic instrument to manage relations and interactions between stakeholders.

The findings of the research made by Men (2014) also demonstrate the impact and influence of internal communication on employee satisfaction. The study also indicates that *the leader's role is major* in implementing an internal communications strategy, therefore suggesting training leaders and developing their communication skills.

Employers are interested in employees' high job performance which brings positive outcomes to the corporate. A variety of research is made to reveal the relation between various variables and employee satisfaction which affects job performance. Organizational culture, according to the scholars, has an impact on employees. While there was large research made on organizational culture from a cognitive aspect, which describes how organizational members think and behave, authors Men and Yue, notice that there is insufficiently researched and insufficient focus is given to emotional culture, which reveals how do organizational people *feel* (Men and Yue, 2019). The distinguishing feature between cognitive and emotional culture is thinking versus feeling. These two different cultures also have different transmission types. Cognitive culture is often expressed verbally, while emotional culture is transmitted in a nonverbal fashion through body language and facial expression (Barsade & O'Neill, 2016).

Researchers Barsade and O'Neill (2016), in a Harvard business review state that „Every organization has an emotional culture, even if it's one of suppression" also stating, that organizations are starting to search for ways to enhance positive emotional culture, but management in this area stays very poor or even not managed at all.

Findings show that internal communication has a positive effect on cultural effect and that communication is fundamental to both the creation of **culture and organizational identity** (Men and Yue, 2019).

External communication on the other hand is linked to the outside and involves the communication of an organization with its environment.

Strategic communication management can positively impact organizational outcomes in managing internal as well as external communication. The communication strategy is a well-planned strategic approach to carrying out communication with resources and timeframes. It can be noted that communication management like any other strategic management shall identify the expected outcomes and how you plan to measure them. While developing a communication strategy it is important to consider and identify the goals, objectives, target audience, communication channels, tasks.

The Process of Communication:

1. **The sender,** first of all, formulates a clear idea wants to convey;

2. **Encoding the message.** The idea is then translated by the sender into verbal or non-verbal actions that the sender expects the receiver to understand;

3. **Suitable media.** The sender selects suitable media for the transmission of the message. The message is conveyed with the help of the media selected;

4. **Received message.** The receiver tries to understand by decoding the message sent;

5. **Receivers action.** Receives acts according to the message as he has understood it;

6. **Feedback.** Finally, the effectiveness of communication is measured through feedback.

If the communication creates intended changes in the actions or behavior of the receiver, it can be assumed as successful communication. Otherwise, if there is no change in the actions or behavior it can be stated that miscommunication has occurred.

Author Anbuvelan (2007) distinguished these aspects of communication and their importance:

1. Communication is the basis of organizational function;

2. Communication is an aid to planning;

3. Communication is an aid to leadership;

4. Communication helps to co-ordinate;

5. Communication helps to overcome resistance to changes and helps to implement them;

6. Communication is the basis for good human relations;

7. Communication builds good public relations;

8. Communication facilitates delegation of authority;

9. Communication as pervading all walks of organizational life.

To conclude the communication importance we can refer to the definition of communication

according to Andrews and Andrews, (1988) who revealed that communication is to achieve a **goal.** Scholars also define a business as an organization that along with persons, structures, and processes, also seeks to achieve one or more **goals.** It can be resumed that organizations seeking their goals are using communication as a tool. Organizational communication can be described as a very complex phenomenon which affects the everyday life of an organization and has an impact on the activities, the success, and the future of every organization.

2. PROJECTS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

2.1. Defining the project and project management

The organization's objective is to create value for its stakeholders. In project-based organizations **projects and project management** is a tool to accomplish this objective.

2.2. Projects

In project management **project** is "a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique project service or result" (PMBOK, 2017). The project according to PRINCE2 is a temporary organization that is created for the purpose of delivering one or more business products according to an agreed business case. A project differs from traditional work by its uniqueness because it is not based on a routine operation, but on the operations designed to accomplish a specific goal. "One reason for organizing a task as a project is because it is a unique, one-time task. If it is a task that will be performed repeatedly, it is left with the base organization to perform. The problem with a unique task is that no one has performed it previously" (Andersen, 2004). This definition of a project is very suitable in the context of project management in creative industries because in this industry the product is created and introduced once and never can be repeated in the same form or way. Projects differ from functional work and in order to better understand the differences between them the table below is presented.

Table 2. *Differences between projects and function work*

	Functional	Project
Type of work	Repeated-ongoing	Unique, no rehearsal. Often involves change
Focus	Operations, accomplishing effective work	Completing the project
Management responsibility	Managing people	Managing work
Budgets	On-going operational budgets	Project budgets to the budget specific project
Responsiveness to customers and changing environments	Less responsive. Longer response time	More responsive. Shorter response time
Consistency and standards	Industry standards	May have few standards

		because the work is unique
Cross-cultural relevance	Varies across cultures	More constant across cultures
Risk	On-going work is stable and less risky	Higher risk because the work is unique and unknown
Visibility	It May have a little visibility if standards are not met	Obviously noted if objectives of the project are not met

Source: Richman L. Project Management Step by Step (2002)

To resume it can be stated that project-based organizations act differently compared to functional organizations and this requires a different way of management.

2.3. Project management

It can be stated that project management focuses on research related to projects and temporary organizations (Geraldi and Soderlund, 2016). **Project management** as a profession is a quite new one counting its existence since the middle of the last century. Nowadays more and more organizations are becoming more project-based versus role-based (traditional). According to the author Lau (2021), this tendency will keep growing also due to the pandemic of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Lau predicts project-based work to be the future. Surely pandemic situation affects and will affect organizations' decisions on working project-based, but it is worth mentioning other reasons why this method of working is desirable. Business leaders see these benefits of project-based working:

- clear goals, milestones, and deliverables;
- increased speed and agility;
- faster innovations;
- quickly pulling skills internally and externally as needed;
- efficient operations, dialing up and down skill-based resources by drawing on the workforce ecosystem (Lau, 2021).

Project-based organizations, on the other hand, has and critical opinions from scholars. For example, the author Hobday (2000) who made researches to find out the positivities and negativities of project-based organizations versus functional-oriented organizations stated that despite, that project-based organizations are considered strong in coping with project-specific aspects, has the potential to foster innovation and promote effective project leadership across the business functions. but research

has revealed that they are not such strong on aspects commonly found in more functional organizations, for example performing routine tasks, they can also suffer from a lack of technical leadership and direction (Hobday, 2000).

Talking about project management and in general, it is impossible not to mention PMBOK by PMI and PRINCE2 (**PR**ojects **IN C**ontrolled **E**nvironments) – worldwide projects management methodologies. PMBOK and PRINCE2 both aim to improve project performances only the approach is different. PMBOK is applied in North America while Prince2 is the standard method for project management in the United Kingdom. While project management is being constantly standardized it contributes for project management practitioners to deepen their knowledge to be in time with changes in this field and to manage projects in a particular way to meet organizational goals.

Project management according to PMBOK is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements. Project management enables organizations to execute projects effectively and efficiently. PMBOK Guide breaks **project management into process groups and knowledge areas.**

Project management process groups: 1) initiating; 2) planning; 3) executing; 4) monitoring and controlling; 5) closing.

Project management knowledge areas: 1) integration; 2) scope; 3) schedule; 4) cost; 5) quality; 6) resource; 7) communications; 8) risk; 9) procurement; 10) stakeholder management.

It is expected, that PMBOK Guide techniques on effective project management shall lead to 1) the organization's focus on the most important work; 2) the work will be done correctly and in the most time-cost-effective manner; 3) risks will be identified and planned 4) communication will be managed effectively 5) quality will be achieved. These factors shall result in stakeholders' satisfaction and achieve business objectives (Mulcahy, 2018)

Project management is considered a critical competency (Hurt and Thomas, 2009). The other opinion is that the main purpose of applying a project management framework is to increase organizational value (Dalcher, 2012).

To resume it can be concluded that project management is a particular way of managing project-based organizations in order to reach organizational success/benefit and to reach organizational goals.

2.4. Project success

To reach the organization's goals projects and its management must be successful. Of course, looking from a different perspective – wider than the scope of the project, it should be noted that sometimes projects can be assumed to be unsuccessful but to be beneficial for the company. But the main goal of project management is to reach project success. It is also important to mention, that project

success and successful project management are also different definitions. Cook (2005) distinguishes these differences by stating that *Project management success,* is measured against the traditional indicators of performance (time, cost, and quality), while *project succes*s is measured against the overall objectives of the project.

One of the main key processes of project management is to evaluate the project's success. Project success is a widely discussed topic among project management specialists and scholars. The project's success is probably one of the most uncertain definitions. Authors Serra eand Kunc (2014) highlight that the researcher Ika L.A. made an overview of 30 different articles on project success published between 1986 and 2004 and concluded that no consensual definition was indicated. The understanding of project success has been changing historically from the traditional definition of completing the project within time, cost, and scope to a wider extent of meeting stakeholder requirements and to achieving customer satisfaction (Jugdev and Muller, 2005). It is not easy to define what is the uniform definition of project success, one of the reasons is the different understanding among various stakeholders. Authors Muller and Jugdev (2012) describe project success as "predominately in the eyes of the beholder," which means that one stakeholder may find a project successful, while another one will find it a failure. Therefore, PMBOK recommends clearly indicating which factors are the most important for the particular project and documenting it. The question which has to be answered by project stakeholders and project managers:

1. What does success look like for this project?
2. How will success be measured?
3. What factors may impact success? (PMBOK)

Author Jugdev and Muller (2005) agree and approve that success criteria should be agreed on with the stakeholders before the start of the project, and repeatedly throughout the project.

Literature shows that a lot of authors, researchers, and scholars are trying to reveal what factors lead the project to success. Authors Turner and Muller (2005) while researching how the project manager's leadership style influences project success, found several success factors mentioned by respondents:

- Client satisfaction;
- Repeat business;
- Stakeholder satisfaction;
- Objectives met;
- Project value;
- Functionality, quality met;

- Cost met;

- Time met;

- Safety;

- Respond to problems;

Some authors raise concerns and notice that if project success only refers to the variables of time, cost, and scope, then project management is perceived as providing tactical (operational) value and not strategic value (Jugdev and Muller, 2015). According to the authors Shenhar and Dvir (2008), it is not sufficient to consider only traditional project success criteria such as budget and time and it is important to go beyond these measures. They suggest five criteria:

1. Project success is measured in terms of meeting time and budget goals;

2. Impact on the customer to address meeting customer satisfaction, benefits, and loyalty;

3. Impact on the project team that considers personal growth, retention, and satisfaction of team members.

4. Business results are measured in terms of return on investment, market share, and growth;

5. Preparation for the future to assess how the project will prepare the company for using new technologies, reaching new markets, and providing new capabilities (Shenhar and Dvir, 2008).

Project success and its factors are of great interest to authors Pinto and Prescott (1988) who conducted a great amount of research on this topic. Authors distinguished these 10 success factors:

- "Project mission (clarity of goals and directions);

- Top management support (willingness of top management to provide necessary resources and authority/power for project success);

- Project schedule/plan (a detailed specification of individual action steps required for the project implementation);

- Client consultation (communication, consultation, and action listening to all impacted parties);

- Personnel (recruitment, selection, and training of the necessary personnel for the project team);

- Technical tasks (availability of the required technology and expertise to accomplish the specific technical action steps);

- Client acceptance (the act of "selling" the final project to its intended users);

- Monitoring and feedback (timely provision of comprehensive control information at each stage in the implementation process);

- Communication (the provision of an appropriate network and necessary data to all key actors in the project implementation);

- Troubleshooting (ability to handle unexpected crises and deviations from the plan)." (Pinto and Prescot, 1988).

Authors Pinto and Slevin (1988) also revealed that project success is extremely related to the need for communication channels as well as the ability to problem-solving. They also pointed out, that the absence of some of the characteristics of a project manager can lead to project failure. These characteristics are as follows: human, administrative, and influencing skills of a project manager.

Jugdev and Müller (2005) gave a retrospective glance at defining the project success over the 40 years starting from the middle of the 1900s showing that the attitude for evaluation of the project success is constantly rising. First, there was the focus on implementation and efficiency evaluating them only by metrics such as time, cost, and quality. Later on, stakeholders' satisfaction was taken into consideration while evaluating project success. Later there was noticed the development of various frameworks with different perspectives. Finally, we see that organizations are considering more and more relevant measures of project success, and project management is considered to be a strategic tool to reach project success.

There is another relevant point of view on success factors by authors Ananttamula and Rad (2018) which notices, that employers working on projects in different industries are not necessarily educated in the project management discipline, that is why according to the authors one of the success factors is learning from the past projects to improve project performance.

The project's success is not only understood differently by various authors but also researched by different approaches. For example authors Serra and Kunc (2014) conducted research on success through these two different approaches:

- project management performance;
- project success.

Project management performance or in other words efficiency usually evaluates success based on budget, schedule, and requirements goals while project success which evaluates how successful projects deliver the benefits required by business strategies in order to meet wider business objectives and to create value.

The table below sums up that the measuring of project success during the times has changed and that the primary iron triangle metrics such as time, cost, and quality remain important till nowadays. We can conclude the initial measurement of project success starts with the iron triangle, but new units of measurement emerge as project management improves.

Research Focus	Period 1 1960s–1980s	Period 2 1980s–2000s	Period 3 21st Century

Success criteria	"Iron triangle"
	(time, cost, quality)
		Iron triangle
		Client satisfaction
		Benefits to organization (org)
		End-user's satisfaction
		Benefits to stakeholders
		Benefits to project personnel
			Iron triangle
			Strategic objective of client organizations
			    and business success
			End-user's satisfaction
			Benefits to stakeholders
			Benefits to project personnel and
			    symbolic and rhetoric evaluations of
			    success and failure

Success factors	Anecdotic lists	CSF lists and frameworks	More inclusive CSF frameworks and symbolic and rhetoric success factors

Emphasis	Project management
	success
		Project/product success	Project/product, portfolio, and program
			    success and narratives of success and
			    failure

Figure 1. Measuring success over time.

Source: Ika (2009) "Project Success as a Topic in Project Management Journals

   To resume it could be stated that project success can be understood differently and can be measured in various approaches, but the main idea stands that the success and benefits are the main goals of organizations. It is important to set clear goals for the whole project team for projects.

3. PROJECT COMMUNICATION

3.1. Defining the project communication

The focus on project communication is constantly arising. It can be illustrated also by PMBOK taking into account that in its first edition back in 1996 PMBOK's project communications management knowledge area consisted of only 8 pages indicating 4 processes. The latter 6th edition of PMBOK (the seventh edition is due in august 2021), already has 35 pages, indicating 3 processes (PMBOK, 1996, 2017). Nevertheless, the scholars find that focus on project communication is crucial, but the management is insufficient, or communication management is not managed at all. Though most organizations undervalue project management, it is suggested to acknowledge the **value of project** management, including **project management communications. (PMI's Pulse of the profession, 2013).**

PMI 2013 published an in-depth report ‚The essential role of communication showing the impact of communication on project management. The report is based on the results of the global survey performed by Pulse of the profession. Findings show, that:

- effective communications **to all stakeholders** is a critical core competency, **the most crucial success factor in project management;**
- communication has an impact also on **the budget** of the project: effective communication is associated with a 17 percent increase in finishing projects within budget;
- On average, two in five projects do not meet their original goals and business intent, and one-half of those unsuccessful projects are related to ineffective communications.

Project communication refers to communication that takes place among stakeholders and it is related to some aspect of the project and its execution. **Stakeholders** are any group of individuals who can affect or are affected by the project (Plowman and Defendall, 2020). Projects are sociotechnical entities, and only technical knowledge alone is insufficient to reach project success. Communication skills are essential to project management and certified project managers shall have such competencies (PMBOK). Communication is a so-called "soft skill" but is crucial in project management.

3.2. Project communication management

Project communication management is one of 10 knowledge areas of the PMBOK Guide, where project communication management is defined as follows: project communications management includes the **processes** necessary to ensure that the information needs of the project and its stakeholders are met through the **development of artifacts** and implementation of **activities** designed to achieve effective information exchange.

It should be mentioned, that as every group of people is united by their languages, it is important,

that employees working in project-based companies would talk the same language to understand each other. PMBOK and PRINCE2 give standards for project-based organizations. Standards are applied to enable the whole project team to talk the same language – project language thus forming the project team as a community talking common language and using the same terminology. Common language has an impact on communication.

The project communication management process is performed throughout the project. The process identifies all aspects of effective communication such as the appliance of proper technologies, techniques, and methods. It is important to review communication constantly to evaluate changing needs of stakeholders and the project (PMBOK).

The whole picture of communication management is depicted in the picture below.
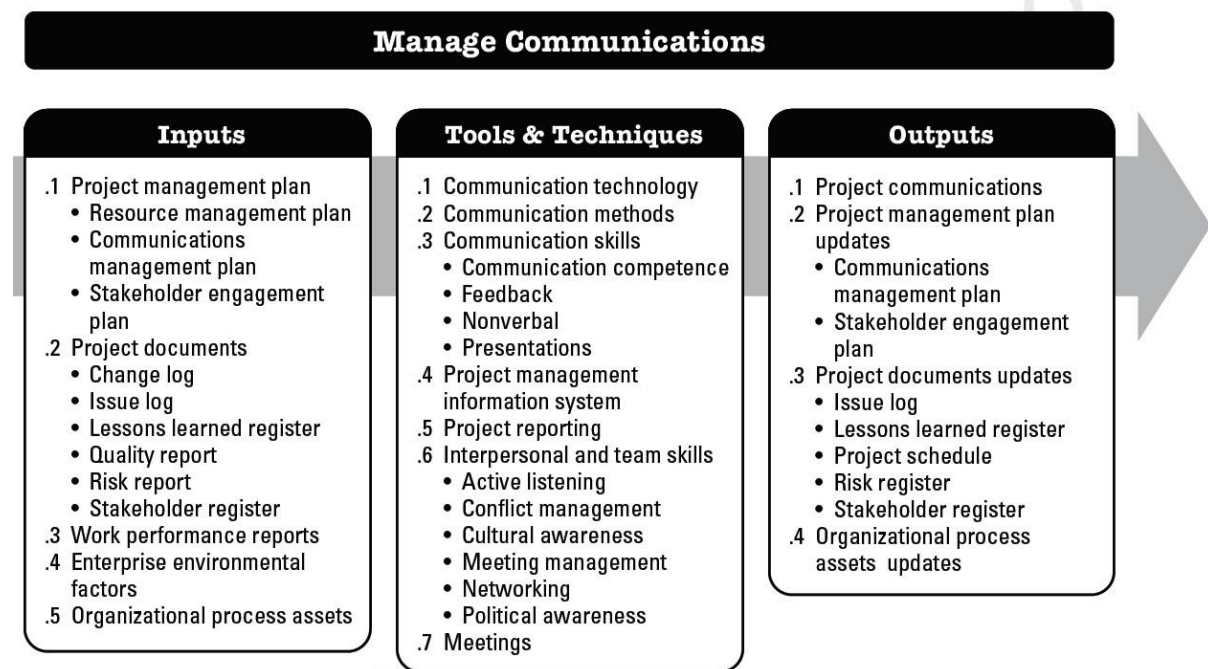
Figure 2. Manage communications: inputs, tools and techniques, and outputs

Source: PMBOK, 2017 (6th edition), p 379.

Project communication management **processes** according to PMBOK are:

- Plan communications management.
- Manage communications;
- Monitor communications.

3.3. The role of the project manager and project team in communication management

The project is based on teamwork and a lot of stakeholders are involved in the processes to reach a common goal. There is the question – **who's responsible for project communication** in project management? Literature shows that there is no unified opinion on this topic.

According to the authors, Adzmi and Hassan (2018), the project manager is responsible for effective communication and has the responsibility to precisely define and communicate the roles and responsibilities of the project team. This shall ensure clear communication which helps to avoid ambiguities and misunderstandings. Moreover, since mistakes are avoided, no extra work is required to fix them – which will increase the productivity of the project team (Adzmi and Hassan, 2008). Since the project manager is the key person who must ensure effective communication, this does not mean that he is the only one who sends all the communication, but the project manager's role is crucial in managing and ensuring effective processes. It means the project manager is responsible that the message would be sent, received, and understood. To reach this goal project manager has to identify communication modes and means to enable those modes and to be responsible for the integrity of the process during the project lifecycles (Pritchard, 2013).

On the other hand, despite whom's fault in the team is for communication failures, author Cervone (2014) notices that the entire project team is responsible, and their mission is to ensure effective project communication. If the entire team realizes this fact, it could prevent further disasters in the project. To prevent such disasters project team shall understand the goals, objectives, outcomes, and benefits of the project, indicate typical errors in communication, and create a successful communication strategy.

To resume the above mentioned it can be stated that the entire team shall be engaged in the communication processes, but the project manager shall engage them in these processes: to set clear goals, to be familiar with project goals, to monitor, and motivate. In other words, the project manager shall be the leader. It can be also resumed that just like the heart ensures that oxygen would be distributed throughout the entire body, the project manager's responsibility is to ensure that information would be distributed throughout every process of the project among all necessary stakeholders.

Project manager as a leader in communication management

Researcher Zulch (2014) notices that a leadership style chosen can vary from leader to leader, from project to project. The leader can apply an effective particular style of leadership, to adapt it to necessary circumstances, to reach effectiveness, but the main part of leadership is communication with people. Leaders' personalities influence their decisions and behaviors in potentially important and complex ways (Judge et al., 2002).

Author Kerzner (2001) points out that even project managers are being selected according to their leadership styles.

3.4. Effective project communication

According to the literature mentioned above, inefficient communication leads to project failures. This chapter explores effective project communication, success factors, and project failures.

"In recent years it has been recognized that effective project management depends heavily on people, team members, and stakeholders. Effective communications are required to use these resources to the best advantage" (Pilkington, 2013). According to Pilkington (2013) the effective communication strategy including project managers' competencies used at the proper time can lead the project to the realization of the project benefits.

According to the author Greenbergen (2016) project managers know well project management processes and techniques but one important factor receives too little attention and it is stakeholder communication. According to the author, effective communication strategies and tactics are the tools that can contribute to successful project management. It is necessary to use appropriate skills and techniques how to communicate effectively when people are angry, upset, and suspicious of everything. He suggests 6 rules for effective communication with stakeholders which are as follows:

1. Be prepared (not only for the expected);
2. Express carrying and empathy (making the human connection);
3. Borrow a little credibility;
4. Avoid jargon;
5. Act nonverbally (nonverbal signs are three times more powerful than verbal ones);
6. Take credit (the bottom line is that project managers managing communication do good work, often under very difficult circumstances) (2016).

Applying these rules, the author states that it should help project managers react quickly, identify potential areas of concern and address them expeditiously (2016).

Another author Palmer (2021) points out, that **regularity** is essential in order to guarantee workplace morale and business success. The author also gives an insight on what communication techniques could be applied to ensure effective communication:

- **Interactive communication** (for immediacy) – sensitive and important communication is being shared through a) in-person meetings b) phone calls c) video conferences;
- **Push communication** (for large amounts of information) – sending information without expecting an immediate response through a) emails b) newsletters c) project outlines.
- **Pull communication** (for accessibility).

Author Clarke (1999) identified that applying project plans as working documents and especially keeping them simple, make them useful communication tools and effective monitoring devices for the project. According to Clarke (1999), a project plan serves as a good communication tool to make the

process of communicating progress much easier because clear objectives and scope are set.

3.5. Communication failures

Author Cervone (2014) distinguishes these common mistakes in communication that lead to unsuccessful communication:

- **Not differentiating stakeholder needs** (not every stakeholder of the project needs the same type of ways of communication);

- **Assuming too much (or too little) of stakeholders** (not every team member or stakeholder can be engaged on the same level. For example, the senior leader typically wouldn't care about the day-to-day issues, while team members of different levels cannot see the whole picture of the project and shall be focused on different tasks);

- **Overlooking cultural differences (**For example, a communication plan that suits well for the project team (blog or an e-mail) can be culturally unacceptable to others. A variety of techniques shall be considered while working with different stakeholders);

- **Not recognizing how communication needs change over time** (stakeholders shall be constantly informed about ongoing projects and be updated about the changes. Besides, sometimes it is necessary to review if changes affect stakeholders and review their engagement in the process) (Cervone, 2014).

4. COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

4.1. Defining creative industries and their specifics

The creative economy is a concept, while the creative industry is the activity of the concept. Very often cited definition of creative industries is "*those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property*" (DCMC, 2001). Lately, in the past decades, creative industries are gaining more attention from society and the academic world and are considered important contributors to the economy (Knight and Harvey, 2015; Pitts, 2015). Some authors notice that there is research made with a focus on creativity, but still lacks findings on the management of creative industries (Pick et al, 2015). The term "Creative industries" combines two elements – creativity and commerce. Creative industries can be understood as a *metaphor that implies*, *that creative production has been industrialized, set up in factory-like structures, and managed along with the same principles as the manufacture of any other mass-market goods* (Davies and Sigthorsson, 2013). By this metaphor, the authors give the reference to the fact that creative industries are driven **by the work of people, like any other industry**.

Some authors raise arguments and doubts about the creative industry as such stating that every industry can be considered creative. They also point out that it is very difficult to define and distinguish specifics of this industry that would not be common to other industries (Pitts, 2015; Freeman, 2012). According to Freeman (2012), creative industries are not a recent phenomenon but are historically central to the development of the modern industrial economy. However, most of the research defines a creative organization as an organization engaged in a creative industry. The Dictionary of media and communication (Oxford University Press, 2011) creative industries describes as *commercial and industrial production sectors involved in generating new cultural contributions through creativity, skill, and talent. Definitions variously include art, music, film, performance arts, and games; architecture, design, designer fashion, and craftwork; books, publishing, and software; television and radio; advertising and public relations.* Special advisor to the Minister for Culture of UK, John Newbigin notices, the increasing importance of creative industries. He points out, that if it is sometimes said that where oil was the primary fuel of the 20th-century economy, so creativity is the fuel of the 21st century.

The leading creative and media business management scholar and culture researcher Bilton C. while giving an interview on his book for Tokbaeva (2018) noticed, that defining "the creative industries" is very difficult, and he doesn't find that UK government would define it properly. Bilton C. raises doubts about this definition which emphasizes 'individual creativity, skill and talent' and "generating and exploiting intellectual property" noticing that any other industries use individual talent

and intellectual property in some form. Bilton C. notices the key elements which distinguish creative industries among others by giving a focus on 'symbolic goods' – the fact *„they are dealing with ideas, images, and experiences whose meaning and value depends upon an act of interpretation by the receiver"*. This definition also creates the difficulties in **managing the creative industries:**

- unpredictability and subjectivity in the processes of production and consumption;
- consumer co-creation;
- short product life cycles;
- sustainability of the project-based enterprise.

These clauses create the necessity for creative industries to apply a different approach. Project **managers need to be:**

- more adaptable,
- inclusive;
- interactive;
- have excellent people skills;
- be able to work with small teams;
- understand the nature of the products or services they are dealing with – not just as 'products' but as carriers of symbolic meaning. (Tokbaeva, 2018)

Despite the variety of opinions on creative industries, this master thesis refers to creative industries as industries that generate cultural products with a creative approach and thus contribute to the economy to great extent. The creative industries face the challenge to keep the right balance between creativity and management. Creativity refers to freedom, while on the other side – management, requires procedures and efficiency. The further section of this chapter will describe how to manage the creative work.

4.2. Managing creative industries and creative work

Literature analysis shows that researchers come to the conclusion that working in creative industries requires a different strategy, performance, and form of management (Townley et al, 2009). The creative industries are often described as being characterized by the uncertainty of demand (Pokorny et al, 2018). We can illustrate it with the example when no one can predict if a new single of an artist or a new film will be successful if the film will reach box offices. We can conclude that creative industries have to undertake big risks.

Literature research also shows that the major challenge in creative industries is to manage them in such a way that wouldn't affect people's motivation to create, and that art/creativity and business have to be balanced or integrated (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2007). Creative individuals react negatively when they are tried to manage over systematically (Davis and Scase, 2000).

Aspects to which project leaders shall refer while working in creative industries are:

1. to manage **business and creativity which is** crucial for project success;
2. The need to manage the work of employees in creative projects in such a manner that wouldn't kill employees' creativity (Berube and Demers, 2019).

According to the authors, Petrovic et al. (2017) creative organizations do not have a unified way of working and often use a hybrid approach that is appropriate to their organizational culture and projects managed. They use a variety of project management approaches: from traditional project management to using agile or hybrid approaches. Authors notice that even project managers in creative industries creatively manage their projects and only they can tell which approach is relevant for their current project. It could be concluded that even project managers which are working with creative people have to think creatively. Some researchers noticed that on the other hand if the project manager is not creative himself, he may be good at managing motivating, stimulating, and supporting creativity in others. (Jones et al, 2004). These authors acknowledge that project managers shall consider these aspects while working with creative people:

- Creating an atmosphere suitable for creativity;
- Encourage creativity in the physical environment;
- Showing an example of open-minded thinking thus stimulating their behavior;
- applying brainstorming sessions to spread ideas and encourage them to share them;
- discussing, challenging, and giving pauses.

Usually working in creative industries employees are involved in a bunch of projects at the same time which creates challenges to manage all of them at the same time. Such complexity creates some chaos therefore it is necessary to manage not only the particular project but the complex project. Some authors indicate that the critical success factor for creative organizations is project portfolio management which shall help to answer the following questions on **project selection, prioritization, resources allocation, and compliance with business strategy:**

- which projects should be realized.
- how to organize the projects effectively seeking desired goals;
- which project management approach to apply;
- Which is the right relationship between projects?
- Which project mix can give the best results?
- Which projects are of the highest priority?
- How should resources be distributed among different projects? Petrovic et al. (2017).

Authors Koehorst et al. (2019) also have revealed differences between creativity as someone's

profession and creativity as a skill to be better at a job. She points out that differences can be seen between „creative job functions" (artists, designers, art directors) and „non-creative" job functions (producers, project leaders). „Non-creative" employees can be considered as supporting or executive roles. Though project leader is an exemption because he's closely related to the management of a creative job. Creativity as a skill is very important was at the beginning of the process, when there is a phase of ideas generation, and later on, the execution-related employees begin to play their role (Koehorst et al., 2019).

Authors conclude that working in creative industries the most appropriate management style is "out of the box thinking" to generate ideas. Though authors admit that creative processes also need a discipline that would allow the development of ideas through the allocation of resources and exchange of ideas (Bilton & Leary, 2010).

Scholars Holzmann V. and Mazzini L. (2020) revealed that outcomes of leadership have a very high impact on project success thus reinforcing the assumptions on the vital importance of leadership in project success within the creative industries. Leadership skills according to the authors in creative industries shall be constantly developed.

Authors Malmelin N. and Virta S. (2015) revealed that key factors in creative industries is creative workers' inner motivation and encourage project managers working in creative industries to focus on creating such environment and conditions that support creators' motivation, to grow the competencies of individuals and to inspire for team collaboration.

It was mentioned in previous chapters, that communication is one of the tools for managing the projects and dealing with stakeholders. Effective communication plays an enormous role in project management and in project success. Project leaders shall consider that working in creative industries requires an appropriate and specific way of managing, including the right way of communication, especially leadership skills in order to keep creators motivated.

5. COMMUNICATION SUCCESS FACTORS BASED ON LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of this master thesis is focused on the communication factors which impact project success/benefits in creative industries. Therefore, one of the aims was to create a list of communication success factors based on the literature analyzed and to research these factors in creative industries.

The literature analysis showed that creative industries require a different approach than other industries and that the biggest challenge in creative industries is:

- to keep the balance between creativity and the management;
- to manage the work of employees in creative projects in such a manner that wouldn't kill employees' creativity.

The question still remains what particular communication factors could be applied and considered as impacting the success/benefits of the projects in creative industries.

Literature showed the communication importance, suggested success factors for effective communication management from the project management perspective, and revealed aspects of creative industries specifics. The table below shows identified communication factors impacting project success/benefits.

Table 3. *Communication factors determing project managers perspective (based on literature)*

	Communication factor	**Purpose**	**How it impact success/benefit of the project**
CF1	Defining project success/benefits and its measurement with a team before the project starts	The clear goal and expectations are discussed on project success/benefits	The clarity for the whole team is given, and clearly informed what is the purpose and what is the goal. Satisfaction of the employees if cexpected outcomes occur
CF2	Drawing up a communication plan is recommended in project management and is considered a tool for effective communication	Clear objectives and scope are set	Communicating progress is much easier
CF3	Recognizing how communication needs to change over time and informing stakeholders constantly	Stakeholders updated about the changes	Stakeholders are well informed and undertake appropriate actions on time and meet the changes properly

	Table 3. continuity		
CF4	The project manager shall be the one responsible for effective communication	Clear responsibility attributed	No ambiguities about who's in charge, clear roles and tasks, and responsibilities are clarified
CF5	Regular meetings	Updated on project performance	Stakeholders are regularly updated and informed, clarity that everything is under control
CF6	Appropriate communication methods by identifying and differentiating stakeholder needs	To distribute information and to communicate with the right identified stakeholders through the proper channels	Stakeholders receive the information they are related to through proper channels. Communication becomes more fluent.
CF7	The leadership and communication skills of a project manager	Effectively manages and communicates	Employees are engaged in the processes, are motivated, and information is properly distributed
CF8	Managing in such a manner that wouldn't kill the creativity of employees	To keep creators motivated and creative	Project managers recognize creators' specific and apply proper communication method
CF9	Trust		
C10	Lessons learned		

Source: created by an author based on literature analysis

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research question: which communication factors project managers in creative industries perceived as bringing success/benefits to the project?

Research objectives:

1. To research communication specifics in creative industries which affect particular communication applied in project management;
2. research and indicate which particular factors of communication project managers find beneficial for projects.

Research sample frame

The purposive sampling technique is considered the most effective when one needs to study a certain cultural domain with experts within. 6 respondents were selected according to these criteria:

1. Working in creative industries as project managers (music and entertainment business);
2. Having more than 5 years of experience (to investigate professionals);
3. Having international practice.

Data and data collection

Semi-structured interviews were applied as the proper method in order to explore the topic and get wider insights. In addition, semi-structured interviews were explorative, allowing new ideas to be expressed in the interviews based on what each interviewee said (Longhurst, 2010). The open-ended questions allow to define the topic under investigation but provide opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail. Face-to-face interviews were chosen because it is a more convenient way to encourage respondents to talk and engage in the conversation. Interview questions were designed according to the insights revealed in the literature review.

Implementation of interviews and used communication channels

Before the meetings with respondents, the phone conversations were done to agree on convenient and suitable dates and places for respondents. On agreed days meetings were held face-to-face at the respondent's proposed place (in all cases respondents' office conference rooms).

Ethics of the research and procedure

Before starting the interview I thanked the respondents for their time given and contribution to my master thesis. Later on, fluent information was given on the master thesis topic and objective. It was assured that respondents' names, surnames, company names, and other personal information won't be revealed. Respondents were also informed that the conversation approximately will take 30 minutes. I

asked for permission to record our conversation and confirmed that the recordings will be deleted after the transcription is done. Respondents were informed that information will be used only for the master thesis purpose. During the interviews I tried to create an emotionally comfortable ambiance, was listening actively, and in order, that the respondent would understand the question properly I was giving more clear questions if needed.

Research limitations

The research was conducted only with the project managers who are working in the entertainment business and music industry therefore research analysis reveals this industry, but doesn't reflect the whole creative industries in general. The entertainment business and music industry can differ from other creative industry types.

Table 4. *Interview design*

Question	*Purpose*		
Opening	*Provide interviewee with the information on the research purpose, goals, and objectives. To get permission to record the conversation. To create an ambiance for non-formal conversation, to gain trust*		
	Purpose	**Research topic and statement**	**Questions**
Introductory	To enter the topic and understand the general approach to project success/benefits and its measurement	Defining the project success/benefits and its measurement with a team before the project starts	1. Does your team have the definition of the project success/benefits in general? 2. Does your team discuss and define project success for a particular project before it starts? 3. Do you discuss how the success of the particular project will be measured?
1.	To investigate the respondent's	Communication is crucial in achieving	1. Do you agree with the statement that communication is a crucial factor in project management to

	perspective on the topic statement and to gather additional in-depth information on creative industries specifics	project success	achieve project success/benefits? 2. Could you confirm that communication in creative industries is an important factor for project success/benefits?
2.	To confirm or deny that drawing up a communication plan at the beginning of a project is a factor in a successful project	Drawing up a communication plan is recommended in project management and is considered a tool for effective communication	1. Do you agree that a communication plan helps to manage communication processes and thus impacts project success? 2. Do you prepare a communication plan before the project starts and discuss it with team members? 3. If yes who's responsible for communication plan implementation?
3.	To confirm or to deny that changes need to be monitored constantly and interested stakeholders shall be informed	Recognizing how communication needs to change over time and informing stakeholders constantly is vital for effective	1. Do you agree with the statement that communication needs change over time and it is vital to inform interested parties constantly in order to ensure effective communication? 2. Who's in charge of change

		communication and project success	management?
4..	To confirm or deny that responsibility for ensuring the effective communication is the function of the project manager and to explore how the project manager engages the team in the communication	The project manager shall be responsible for effective communication, though the entire team shall be engaged in the communication processes	1. Do you agree that the project manager is responsible for ensuring effective communication? 2. Are you the only one who's responsible for communication management? 3. How do you engage people in the communication processes?
5.	To confirm or deny that regularity is an important factor for effective communication and project success	Regular communication is an important factor in ensuring the success of a project	1. Do you agree with the necessity for regularity and that affects effective communication? How regularly does your team meet? 2. How do you define how regularly will you communicate during the project?
6.	To confirm or	It is necessary	1. Do you agree that it is important

	deny that communication methods in creative industries differ according to the nature of stakeholders and to explore what communication channels are being applied	to apply appropriate communication methods by identifying and differentiating stakeholder needs	to apply appropriate communication methods for different stakeholders according to their needs? 2. What are the differences in communication with different stakeholders? 3. What kind of communication channels do you apply for particular stakeholders and which are considered to impact project success?
7.	To confirm or deny that leadership and communication skills are critical contributors to effective communication	The leadership and communication skills of a project manager are crucial for effective communication	1. Do you agree that a project manager must have leadership qualities and especially communication skills when working in the creative industries? 2. What kind of leadership qualities should a project manager have when working in creative teams?
8.	To confirm or deny that creators require a specific communication attitude towards them	The ability to manage the work and communicate with creators in such a manner that wouldn't kill employee's creativity is a	1. Do you agree that the project manager shall consider communication specifics while communicating with a creator in order to not kill the creators/employee's creativity? 2. Do you think that proper communication methods are

		success factor in creative industries	applied to contribute to communication effectiveness and the project's success? 3. Could you describe the creator's specifics?
9.	To explore what do project managers think about trust and confirm or deny if trust is a contributor to effective communication	Communication can be considered as a mechanism to build trust	1. Do you agree that communication is a mechanism to build trust among stakeholders? 2. Do you think that trust is a factor that affects communication effectiveness and project success/benefits?
10.	To confirm or to deny that project managers organize lessons learned discussions with a team and if it is considered necessary to improve communication success	Lessons learned are a mechanism to avoid communication failures in the future and it is considered to be the communication success factor	1. Do you discuss the project and lessons learned with your team after the project completion? 2. If yes do you think that identified communication mistakes/failures can impact the success of further projects?
ADDITIONAL	To explore the what communication success factors	Communication factors that are missing in the current project	1. How could you evaluate the effectiveness of communication in your environment?

	are missing and what desired	manager's environment and can be improved	2. What could be improved in project communication management in creative industries to impact project success/benefits?
ADDITIONAL	To find out if the project manager working with creators has to be creative itself	Project manager in creative industries has to be creative	1. Do you think that the project manager working in creative industries has to be creative to impact the success/benefits of the project

Source: composed by the author based on literature review

Data analysis

Conducted interviews were recorded to avoid handwriting and scripting mistakes and to stay attentive to the interviewee, so as not to miss the important information. Recordings were listened to and transcribed. Since the questions were not asked in order as in the interview design thus trying to let respondents give wider insights, transcribed memos were analyzed by categorizing information linked to the initial questions.

7. RESEARCH RESULTS

Respondents were coded according to the order of the interviews: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6.

Table 5. *Respondents characteristics*

No.	Experience	Role	Industry	Field/area
R1	8 years	Project manager/Project owner	Creative industries	Music/performers management/entertainment business
R2	30 years	Project manager/Project owner	Creative industries	Music/performers management/entertainment business
R3	5 years	Project manager	Creative industries	Music/performers management/entertainment business
R4	9 years	Project manager/Project owner	Creative industries	Music/performers management/entertainment business
R5	5 years	Project manager	Creative industries	Music/performers management/entertainment business
R6	20 years	Project manager	Creative industries	Music/performers management/entertainment business

Source: composed by the author based on research data

7.1. General perception of project success/benefits and communication management

As the introductory question was asked in order to enter the topic and to understand the general attitude towards project success/benefits and its measurement, respondents and the interviewer had a general conversation on creative industries specifics (music industry to be precise) and discussed project success/benefits and the complexity on this definition. All the respondents clearly understood the iron triangle metrics, stakeholders' satisfaction, etc., but it was clearly stated that the success of the project varies from project to project, and in creative industries, it is very hard to measure the success of the project because it is related to the cultural product and the big uncertainty such as consumer's reactions, etc. (R1, R3). All respondents confirmed that the team always discusses the possible outputs and success criteria, but it is not upon a very strict iron triangle. It is desirable to meet cost, time, and budget, but not all projects are supposed to reach this goal considering them as investment projects and preparation for the future or gaining other benefits. Some of the respondents pointed out that they focus on particular criteria such as tickets sold to the concert or streaming numbers of a newly released single on music

platforms.

Additional findings and broadening of understanding. Since every respondent work in the music industry with creators/artists and event management they distinguished two types of projects they deal with and indicated examples of success measurement. Results are shown below in the table.

Table 6. *General perception of project success/benefits*

Project type	Project success/benefits perception	Measurement insights
1. Working with creators (authors, performers) and related projects to their creative products (release, distribution, advertisement, etc);	1. Creates image for the artist and the organization; (R1, R3) 2. Cultural product (music single) created - investment for the future projects e.g. possibility to participate in concerts, and events and promote an artist, create further projects.	1. For example, if the project is based on the creator's new single release the measurement can be calculated by streaming numbers on music platforms or increased number of followers of artist accounts on social media (R1) 2. The commercial benefit to an organization can be seen only in a longer perspective (R1, R3, R5)
2. Working with events/concerts/festivals organizing and management.	1. Usually, concerts/festivals, etc. events are more complex projects involving a lot of stakeholders (including external ones) and require bigger attention to the iron triangle.	1. For example, if the project is related to the concert of the artist, the success will be measured: iron triangle from the perspective of concert organization. Other measurements will be tickets sold, reviews after the concert, engagement with an artist, etc.

Source: composed by the author based on research data

Communication is crucial in achieving project success

All of the respondents agreed that communication is a very important success factor. Not everyone agreed that it is the main criteria (R2, R4, R5, R6), though two of the respondents strongly agreed that it is one of the main (R1, R3). Respondent R4 stated that effective communication doesn't

determine the overall project success but contributes to a great extent. Respondent R1 added that communication is a crucial factor especially under current circumstances existing in the world, by this he meant the digital era, enormous communication 'noise' and efforts to reach the right recipients. Respondent R1 distinguished that an enormous attitude shall be given to external communication and gave an example that digitalization has changed the whole work with musicians and their products – it is a challenge how to involve the consumer to commercially use their music works. It is a mission of effective communication. Of course, respondent R1 paid attention to the fact that despite effective communication projects can be unsuccessful due to other issues, but communication shall be considered in every project to the maximum.

Drawing up a communication plan is recommended in project management and is considered a tool for effective communication

The majority of the respondents confirmed that at the beginning of the project the communication plan is usually being prepared and documented and is considered a facilitator for communication effectiveness (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5). All these respondents except one (R5) stated that the communication plan is for external communication only. The communication plan focused on the internal stakeholders as stated R1 and R2 are in the project manager's head and since the communication among inner ambiance (team, managed artists) is constant there is no need to document this plan. Respondents R3, R4, and R5 added that the communication plan is changed during the project processes but still is vitally necessary to monitor processes. Respondent 6, having almost twenty years of experience in this field and those roles are overlapping (project manager and project owner) was the only one who disagreed that a communication plan is crucial because according to him the system is well known and there is no need to plan communication – everything comes within the process, besides the industry is very dynamic and it is impossible to preview everything.

Recognizing how communication needs change over time and informing stakeholders constantly is vital for effective communication and project success

By the time this question was asked respondents had already revealed that all of them recognize that communication needs change over time even by highlighting that the creative industry is particularly dynamic where changes occur all the time. It can be repeated that all of the respondents agree that the project manager is responsible for communication monitoring including identifying changes and informing related stakeholders.

The project manager shall be responsible for effective communication, though the entire team shall be engaged in the communication processes

All of the respondents agreed that to seek the effective management and monitoring of communication there is a huge need to appoint one particular person to be in charge of it. Respondent 2 those roles overlap (project manager and project owner) states that every team member has to constantly update the project manager and give feedback regularly so the project manager could keep control. Respondents when asked how to engage people in active communication, stated to set clear goals during the meetings (R1, R2), remind them constantly, or ask for updates (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6). R1 also added that the project manager shall be considered the contact person for any communication both internal and external.

7.2. Regular communication

Regular communication is an important factor in ensuring the success of a project

The majority of the respondents agreed that regularity is an enabler for effective communication (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5). Two of them strongly stated that at least one time a week they are meeting the inner team to discuss the processes to keep control (R1, R2). R2 added that the best time to meet on regular basis is on Mondays starting the new week. Thus a clear view of the current situation is brought to the scene, the agenda of the week can be updated and decisions made. Respondents R3 and R4 stated that there are no agreements made to meet regularly therefore they regretted and expressed a strong desire for this to happen quite often. Both (R3 and R4) pointed out that despite that communication is constant, there would be effective to meet on regular basis to get updates from team members even on those projects they are not related to in order to feel the member of an organization and to feel the satisfaction and loyalty for an organization. It could impact employees' engagement in an organization. Respondent R5 revealed that the team is trying to meet regularly but unsuccessfully and related it to the poorly managed strategy of internal communication. Only one Respondent R6, an experienced project manager and also a project owner argued that regularity is unnecessary because the communication is constant anyways among people who self-control themselves and ensure communication individually according to the necessity. He also added that such features of the small creative industry area as multitasking and enormous dynamics, and lack of time doesn't let such a "luxury" to meet without a particular task. He also mentioned that one of the related team members cannot meet when the meeting is necessary – other team members shall update him.

Table 7. *Regularity*

RESPONDENT NO	AGREES REGULARITY IS NECESSARY	REGULARITY IS IMPLEMENTED	INSIGHTS
R1	Yes	Yes	Satisfied with current regularity
R2	Yes	Yes	Satisfied with current regularity
R3	Yes	No	Feels necessity of regularity, thinks it creates employees' engagement to an organization
R4	Yes	Partially	Feels necessity of regularity, thinks it creates employees' engagement to an organization
R5	Yes	Trying	Trying to improve, feels the necessity
R6	No	No	No need for regularity

Source: composed by the author based on research data

7.3. Identifying stakeholders, their needs, and differences in communication

It is necessary to apply appropriate communication methods by identifying and differentiating stakeholder needs

The discussion between the interviewer and the respondents started by defining different types of stakeholders. It was resumed that the interviewer seeks to investigate such types of stakeholders: a) creator (artist) which is managed by the project manager b) project team (organizational level) c) external stakeholders such as customers, service providers, etc). All respondents agreed that it is important to identify every stakeholder within the project and consider their needs and according to this apply appropriate communication methods and channels. Some respondents were fluent in providing information (R1, R3, R4, R5). Two respondents having the biggest experience in this field resumed shortly: R2 only stated that he identifies and plans communication according to different stakeholders and their needs, he identifies them during the project and based on common sense according to the circumstances. Communication method: with creators – face-to-face, external stakeholders – phone and e-mails, team – face-to-face, documents in e-mail. R6 stated that nothing much differs among various stakeholders and he's willing to communicate with every stakeholder face-to-face which according to him is the best way of communication and impacts project success. Of course, he admitted that written

forms of documents are necessary with external stakeholders. He refers to the process, practice, and common sense as well as R2. Other respondents (R1, R3, R4, R5) agreed with R2 and R6 that stakeholders' needs are identified and monitored during the project and based on insights on the current situation, but there are some differences between creator and external stakeholders in applying different means of communication. They gave these interesting insights:

R1 explained that external communication is different by all means: more strict, formal, business-based, and keeping time table. Communication with the creator is more intense and more tight. Constant communication with the creator is necessary to keep a close connection with him as well as to keep control of organizational goals and ensure effective management. R1 denied that creators are not disciplined, he revealed that his practice shows that the creator is interested himself communicating often and following the agreed project plan. Relations are based on clear goals for both sides, strategies are made for 1 year at least. Channels of communication according to R1 are different: with external stakeholders have mostly written e-mails to document and gave proof of the scope agreed, sometimes calls, to clarify the situation, rarely face-to-face, while communication channels with the creator are rarely written, informal way of communication is possible such as social platforms, shorts messages. The most desirable way of communication with the creator is face-to-face, though he notices, that face-to-face meetings are necessary and effective for new ideas generation and technical issues can be effectively managed by calls, e-mails, etc.

R3 agreed to R1 and R4 that communication with the creator and with external stakeholders differ. She also revealed that communication differs with all stakeholders in general because every human has different values and attitudes to work ethic and this fact influences the identification of communication methods and even channels. Distinguishing communication with the creator and external stakeholders she revealed that the connection with the creator is more sensitive, the project manager shall constantly communicate with him on the creative product, to hear his ideas. The mistake is not to consider creators' needs and to demand to implement only the scope of the project from the project manager's perspective – it shall be a fluent dialogue. It requires empathy. Creator informs his ideas, project manager advises how to achieve them. R3 also agreed to R1 that creators are active in communication and initiate it themselves. Besides communication with the creator, a human connection is necessary that needs to be controlled to keep boundaries between personal and work content (R4, R5, R6) confirmed. While talking about communication with external stakeholders she pointed out that the focus is on cost reduction, optimization, and how to properly represent the creator's interest. Formality is required in a written document to fix the dates, the scope, etc. (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6). She also agreed with R1 that the most effective communication form with the creator is face-to-face, small issues, and reminders can be discussed on social platforms, in short messages (R3, R4, R5 agreed). Only

timetables are being shared through e-mails. Investigating the characteristics of the communication with the team project managers agreed that face-to-face communication is the most effective and appropriate way of communication (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6). Only technical documents or files that have to be documented are sent by e-mail (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6). Respondent gave an interesting insight that communication with creators differs according to their level of celebrity status. According to R5, she finds it appropriate and effective not to differentiate the method of communication according to if the creator is a beginner or a superstar. The majority of respondents (R3, R4, R5, R6) noted that it is important to consider the creator's emotional state of mind and to apply the communication accordingly. R6 adds that sometimes creators mix their personal life with work.

All the respondents strongly agreed that with a creator exist sensitive and close relationships while with internal stakeholders the more formal.

Table 8. *Differences in Communication with stakeholders, communication channels*

	DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION WITH DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS	COMMUNICATION CHANNELS APPLIED
Creator	1. Non-formal 2. Close relationship 3. Empathy and dialogue	1. Face-to-face for ideas generation and constant relationship 2. Social platforms for small issues 3. E-mails for timetables, technical issues 4. Phone calls
Team	1. Non-formal	1. Face-to-face 2. Written only if documentation needed
External stakeholders	1. Formal, strict 2. Deadlines 3. Written form to prove facts 4. Cost reduction 5. Business optimization	1. E-mail 2. Phone calls 3. Face-to-face rarely

Source: composed by the author based on research data

7.4. Leadership and communication skills

Leadership and communication skills of a project manager are crucial for effective communication

All participants strongly confirmed that project managers shall have leadership qualities. The topic strongly relates to statement No 5. described above, because the communication skills are crucially necessary to effectively communicate by recognizing stakeholders' characteristics, and knowing, and feeling them. Especially these skills are perceived by project managers as crucial for effective communication:

- ability to effectively distribute the information (all participants);
- empathy (all respondents); R3 adds that this skill is very important because the project manager shall sense how the creator can react to a particular crisis, prepare him, and motivate him. R5 adds that sometimes creators can perceive the situation very personally.
- sensitivity (all respondents);
- patience (R1, R3, R5, R6);
- emotional intelligence (all respondents); R3 adds that this skill is very important because the project manager shall sense how the creator can react to a particular crisis, prepare him, and motivate him.
- flexibility (all respondents);
- self-control (R3, R4, R5);
- perceptivity (R3, R4, R6);
- fast reaction and reorientation (R6) – R6 highlights that creative industries especially the music industry is very small and project managers are multitasking with a lot of projects which is why fast reaction and reorientation is so crucial);
- ability to use „different language" (R6) – R6 points out that in this industry there are a lot of different stakeholders which require a different type of language (formal, non-formal, etc.);
- ability to take responsibility (R1);
- perception of aesthetics (R4);
- stable psychology (R4) – R4 points out that this skill is necessary to stay calm while moderating between creator and external stakeholders;
- innovation (R1);
- mediation skills (R4, R5, R6);
- consciousness (R2, R3, R4, R6);
- motivation (all participants);
- project management skills (including time planning, budget, etc) (R1, R2, R3);

- ability to draw a line between personal and work relations; (R3, R4, R5, R6).
- ability to make individual decisions (R6) – R6 highlights that it is a crucial skill in creative industries due to the necessity of fast reaction and problem solving as soon as it is possible despite it will overgrow your budget or your project scope. To avoid failures project management has to take fast decisions to act even if it was not planned.

7.5. Managing creativity

The ability to manage the work and communicate with creators in such a manner that wouldn't kill employee's creativity is a success factor in creative industries

All respondents agreed that it is an important factor for project success because projects are based on creators' productivity. As was already mentioned in the previous analysis, creators have personal characteristics which shall be considered while working with them. First of all, participants stated that creators have their particular function and role: to create therefore project managers shall engage them in bureaucracy or technical issues to the minimum and if only vitally necessary. Though R5 notices that creators shall be involved in some processes but to a minimum extent. R3, R4, and R5 clarified that it is important not to demotivate creators by focusing on the positive side and not escalating the negative one. It is important to notice then a creator need to be motivated or encouraged. The project manager has to notice when the new ideas and new projects shall be proposed (R4). Respondent R5 also noticed that creators themselves sometimes kill their creativity and enthusiasm and therefore another task for project managers is to discuss with them properly by calming them down. This situation is very common for young creators which have unreasonable expectations and expect very fast results. R5 revealed that it takes time to persuade them that only step by step and working hard is possible to achieve results. R1, R2, R4 also revealed that it is very important to formulate clear tasks, define clear goals and give the creator space. R3 pointed out that sometimes negative information can demotivate the creator, but on the other hand sometimes it brings positivities for example creator look at his creation from a different side and angle, which can encourage innovative creativity.

Project manager in creative industries has to be creative

Half of the respondents stated that project managers working in creative industries have to be creative themselves (R4, R5, R6) while another half told that not necessarily (R3) or not at all (R1, R2).

7.6. Communication based on trust

Communication can be considered as a mechanism to build trust

While discussing with the respondents on trust according to their reaction and their enthusiasm in replying it can be concluded that trust is one of the key elements of working in creative industries.

All respondents strongly agreed to the fact that communication is the factor that builds trust among the stakeholders including creators, team members, and external stakeholders. Respondent R4 stated that trust doesn't come easily and it has to be built and earned. She mentioned that communication with creators builds trust among the project manager and the creator, the creator becomes more open thus leading to more productive work and project results. R5 talking about trust between team members revealed that informal communication such as team buildings can impact trust thus contributing to more effective further communication. R1, R2, R5, R6 told that if team members trust the project manager thus leads to more successful project outcome. Respondents were asked if trust itself affects communication effectiveness – no doubts were on this topic. R1, R3, R4 pointed out that if there is no trust the communication faces barriers. Respondent R6 admitted that creative industries is small industry and it is crucial to put efforts to maintain trust in this industry. R5 also noticed that trust creates honesty and there is no fear to express criticism, which according to her is very effective way to improve.

7.7. Lessons learned

Lessons learned are a mechanism to avoid communication failures in the future and it is considered to be the communication success factor

The most unvalued and underrated factor among respondents was revealed – the practice of the lessons learned. Only two respondents agreed with the statement that lessons learned are a mechanism to avoid communication failures in the future and it is considered to be the communication success factor (R4, R5). Despite that two respondents agreed with the statement however the practices of lessons learned do not occur in their environment or occur very rarely. The majority of respondents did not agree (R1, R3, R6), and one agreed only partially. The respondents do not think that lessons learned could impact project success or benefits referring to the fact that the industry is very dynamic and lessons can be learned only during the processes and project managers can learn themselves individually (R1, R2). Only two respondents (R2, R4) organize such practices though very rarely only after the completion of a project of big scope (R2).

Table 9. *Lessons learned*

RESPONDENT NO	AGREES TO THE STATEMENT	ORGANIZES "LESSONS LEARNED IN PRACTICE	INSIGHTS
R1	No	No	Doesn't see the benefit or efficiency cause of the dynamics of the industry. Learning is only in the

			process
R2	Partially	Rarely	Finds it beneficial only after the completion of the project of big scope
R3	No	No	Doesn't see the benefit or efficiency cause of the dynamics of the industry. Learning is only in the process
R4	Yes	Rarely	Admits that it could contribute to more effective communication in the further projects
R5	Yes	No	Finds it necessary to get feedback, to hear or to tell critique
R6	No	No	Assumes that everyone is self-conscious and there is no need to discuss it

Source: composed by the author based on research data

7.8. Factors for more effective communication

Communication factors that are missing in the current project manager's environment and can be improved

Respondents were asked to indicate which communication factors are perceived as impacting project success but is poorly managed

Table 10. *Necessary communication factors considering project management perspective*

RESPONDENT NO	NECESSARY COMMUNICATION FACTORS	OUTCOME EXPECTED
R1	Define the responsibilities more clearly	1. To avoid misunderstandings 2. To avoid overlapping tasks 3. Project control is more effective
R2	Strengthen the monitoring function Ensure reminders are sent constantly	1. Avoid delays 2. Promote processes

R3	Lack of clarity in the organizational structure between team members Work principles	1. More effective communication between team members 2. Avoidance of ambiguities 3. Every team member knows his responsibilities and scope of independence to take decisions
R4	Regularity of updates and meetings	1. Increased 'belonging' to the team feeling which increases engagement and satisfaction
R5	To decrease accidental meetings without a clear purpose To hire organizational experts /trainers consulting on an organizational aspects To organize training with the psychology consultants Clarify distribution of tasks	1. Save productivity 2. To self-assess and look out of the box and get insights from outside to improve 3. To raise knowledge on how to motivate people (creators) and to be prepared for burnout 4. Avoidance of multitasking

Source: composed by the author based on research data

To sum up the results analyzed it can be stated:

- that majority of respondents agreed on the communication factors (CF) identified and analyzed in the literature and perceived their importance such clear distributions of the tasks and responsibilities, one person to be appointed as responsible etc, except that the majority of respondents didn't agree on the communication factor *"lessons learned"*, which according to them is not perceived as necessary or impacting the success/benefits of the project. It can be discussed if this denial of knowledge management shows a poor level of project management or if it is due to the specifics of the industry. It was noted, that knowledge can be gained only on the processes because the ambience of the industry is very dynamic and you can not learn from the past mistakes for the future.

- The most valuable factor on which is based communication in creative industries according to the project managers is **trust.** It can be concluded that in creative industries first off all effective communication with stakeholders build trust and later this trust enables communication thus contributing for project success/benefits. In other words project managers are using

communication to build and gain trust and later communication become more effective cause of the trust.

▪ No specific success factors were identified which wouldn't be common to the traditional industries except the only one key element which could distinguish creative industries is the fact that an *artist or creator* stands at the core of the projects and their management. It is them who creates the product (creative products, songs etc.) which are consumed by consumers thus creating object to manage. The biggest challenge is the *creator's personal characteristics* and their *work nature*, which require a particular attitude towards them including special communication skills, methods, and channels.

▪ Leadership and communication skills were identified as crucial in creative industries in two aspects: a) specific approach to the creator (empathy, sensitivity) b) dynamic ambience of creative industries that strongly requires high level skills such as fast reaction and reorientation etc.

Communication factors perceived by project managers as impacting project success/benefits in creative industries are shown in the table below. I as an author of the master thesis indicated only those factors which could reflect the nature of creative industries.

Table 11. *Communication factors perceived as impacting success/benefit of the project (by respondents)*

CF No	Communication factor (CF)	Source of CF	Importance justification
CF1	Clear roles and responsibilities distribution	Literature/Research	To clear understand the responsibilities appointed, to avoid stress, and conflicts and to ensure tasks are not overlapping
CF2	Higher level of authorizations for project manager	Research	No fear to take risks and take decissions. Bigger tolerance for the risks. Clarity, freedom created for the projetc managers
CF3	One person appointed as a key communicator	Research	To avoid missed information, delays and misunderstandings
CF4	Trust as value for communication	Literature	It builds effective relationship among stakeholders and ensures effective communication, time consuming, engages team and creates job satisfaction
CF5	Face-to-face communication with creators/artists	Research	In order to ensure a close relationship, motivate

			creators, and raise their productivity
CF6	Specific leadership skills: communication skills, empathy, sensitivity, flexibility, fast reaction, and reorientation	Literature/Research	Abbility to work with creators which require specific approach as well to survive in dynamic industry environment

Source: created by the author based on research results

8. CONCLUSIONS

1. First of all it was noted that project managers in the creative industry lack of clear distribution of roles and responsibilities which leads to miscommunication, stress, time consumption and tasks overlapping.

2. The responsibility of project communication management on the perspective of project manager shall be attributed to one person and he has to be the key contact person in order to control communication. Despite that conducted research showed that respondents support this factor as a contributor to the project's success/benefits, there is evidence that the system doesn't work properly.

3. Since the research results showed that creative industries are very dynamic and unplanned circumstances can occur at a critical moment that requires fast decision making, therefore project managers indicates the necessity for the higher level of authorization for project managers shall be attributed. That should ensure clarity and limits.

4. The key element indicated in creative industries is that the core of the industry is the creator/artist who creates the product and this product is the base for further projects. Based on the project managers perspective it is vital to keep creator motivated, creative, and according to them productive project managers shall have specific leadership skills such as empathy, sensitivity, ability to motivate, and constantly communicate in order to do not lose the connection.

5. Communication in creative industries can be grouped into three sections: communication with the creator b) communication with team members c) communication with internal stakeholders. The problem was revealed based on project manager's perspective that the project manager is concentrated to the communication with creators and external stakeholders. The minimum focus is given to the communication between team members. In order to engage team members and to create job satisfaction it is crucial to consider this fact.

6. The most valuable communication factor perceived by project managers in creative business is trust. Project managers are using communication as a tool to build and gain trust and later communication become more effective cause of the trust.

7. Knowledge management and lessons learned were not perceived as a communication success factor by respondents, which raises the discussion of whether it shows a low level of project management maturity or the specifics of the industry. According to the respondents, it is impossible to learn from the past cause of the dynamics of the industry the only possibility is to learn during process.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the data gathered and analyzed, project managers perception on communication factors degerming projects success/benefits in creative industries were revealed, and conclusions made. Hereby I, as an author, referring on the findings of this master thesis provide the recommendations, which assumed to positively affect the communication in creative industries.

1. To document the responsibilities and roles of each team member, if necessary before each project which can require different scope.
2. To attribute one key contact person responsible not only for communication management but as key contact as well in order to control the processes and to ensure that necessary information was gathered and distributed accordingly to the related stakeholders.
3. To authorize project managers on a higher level in order to clear the limits of their individual decision.
4. To organize team buildings.
5. To raise competencies of project managers on the psichological aspect of communication with creators. The respondents indicated that there is unclear how to keep balance between personal interactions and work.

10. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE RESEARCH

1. The research was conducted only with the project managers who are working in the entertainment business and music industry therefore research analysis reveals this industry, but doesn't reflect the whole creative industries in general. The entertainment business and music industry can differ from other creative industry types.

2. Since the doubts were raised on the project management maturity level it could be assumed as a further object for the research.

3. Only the project managers' perception was researched. Moreover it was assumed that they are concentrated only to project success as such but not to organizational benefits. Further research could be applied on project owners in order to reveal different perspectives on communication factors which impact organizational success and benefits.

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