

# Conceptual framework for enhancing project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management

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## Abstract

This paper develops a conceptual framework to enhance project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management. By addressing unique challenges such as balancing work-life responsibilities, overcoming gender biases, and accessing resources, the framework leverages strengths like creativity and communication skills. It includes practical strategies and tools for effective planning, resource management, stakeholder engagement, risk management, and continuous evaluation. The framework's application in real-world scenarios is discussed, providing actionable recommendations for women entrepreneurs. The paper also identifies future research directions, including empirical validation, case studies, technology integration, cross-cultural analysis, and longitudinal studies, to further refine and expand the framework.

**Keywords:** Women Entrepreneurs; Event Management; Project Management; Conceptual Framework; Risk Management

## 1 Introduction

Event management is a multifaceted industry crucial in various sectors, including corporate, entertainment, sports, and social events. It encompasses various activities, from planning and coordinating events to managing logistics and ensuring smooth execution (Ziakas & Getz, 2020). The significance of event management lies in its ability to bring people together, create memorable experiences, and drive economic growth. Events such as conferences, weddings, festivals, and trade shows require meticulous planning and execution, making effective project management practices indispensable (Afolabi, 2024; Venske, 2021; Ziakas & Getz, 2020).

In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in women entrepreneurs entering the event management industry. This trend is part of a broader movement toward gender diversity and empowerment in business. Women entrepreneurs bring unique perspectives and skills, often excelling in creativity, communication, and multitasking. Their growing presence in the event management industry is reshaping the landscape and contributing to the sector's innovation and growth. However, despite their increasing numbers, women entrepreneurs face significant challenges, including gender bias, limited access to resources, and balancing work-life responsibilities (Kamberidou, 2020).

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to develop a conceptual framework for enhancing project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management. By focusing on this specific group, the study aims to address their unique challenges and provide tailored solutions that leverage their strengths. The framework will improve efficiency, effectiveness, and success in event management projects.

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To achieve this objective, the study will explore several key areas. First, it will examine project management practices within the event management industry, identifying common strategies and prevalent gaps. Second, it will analyze women entrepreneurs' challenges, including any systemic barriers that may impede their success. Third, the study will integrate gender perspectives into the framework, ensuring that it is inclusive and responsive to the needs of women entrepreneurs. Finally, the study will offer practical tools and techniques that can be easily adopted and implemented in real-world scenarios.

## 1.2 Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study is centered on women entrepreneurs operating within the event management industry. This focus is chosen to provide a targeted analysis and specific recommendations directly applicable to this group. The study will cover various aspects of project management, including planning, execution, monitoring, and evaluation related to event management. It will also consider the broader context of entrepreneurship, addressing issues such as resource access, networking, and professional development.

However, the study acknowledges certain limitations. First, while the conceptual framework is designed to be broadly applicable, it may not address all individual circumstances or niche areas within event management. The diversity within the industry means that different types of events (e.g., corporate vs. social events) may require tailored approaches beyond this study's scope. Second, the study will primarily rely on existing literature and theoretical models, which may limit the ability to capture emerging trends or innovative practices not yet widely documented. Despite these limitations, the study aims to provide a robust starting point for enhancing project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management.

In conclusion, the importance of event management and the growing role of women entrepreneurs in this field highlight the need for effective project management practices. By developing a conceptual framework tailored to women entrepreneurs' unique challenges and strengths, this study aims to contribute to their success and the overall advancement of the event management industry. The following sections will delve deeper into the literature review, the development of the conceptual framework, its practical application, and concluding recommendations, providing a comprehensive guide for women entrepreneurs seeking to enhance their project management practices.

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## 2 Review

Event management is a complex and dynamic discipline that involves planning, organizing, and executing events of various scales and types, including corporate meetings, conferences, festivals, weddings, and sports events. The process requires meticulous attention to detail, strategic planning, and efficient coordination of resources and personnel. The primary goal of event management is to create seamless and memorable experiences for attendees while achieving the objectives set by the event organizers (Animashaun, Familoni, & Onyebuchi, 2024; Van Winkle & Bueddefeld, 2020).

The discipline encompasses several core activities: venue selection, budgeting, scheduling, marketing, risk management, and post-event evaluation. Effective event management also demands strong leadership skills, the ability to handle unexpected challenges, and the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances. With the advent of technology, the field has evolved significantly, incorporating digital tools and platforms to streamline operations, enhance communication, and improve attendee engagement. Social media, event management software, and virtual reality have transformed how events are planned and experienced, making the industry more innovative and responsive to market trends (Rahman, Hossain, Akter, & Hassan, 2022).

### 2.1 Women Entrepreneurs in Event Management

The participation of women entrepreneurs in the event management industry has been steadily increasing, reflecting broader societal shifts towards gender equality and empowerment. Women entrepreneurs bring diverse perspectives and skill sets to the field, often excelling in creativity, communication, and multitasking. Their presence is particularly strong in wedding planning, corporate events, and cultural festivals, where their ability to connect with clients and understand nuanced requirements is highly valued (Ezeh, Ogbu, Ikevuje, & George, 2024; Serrano et al., 2023).

Despite these strengths, women entrepreneurs in event management face several challenges. Gender bias and stereotypes can hinder their access to high-profile projects and leadership roles. Additionally, they often encounter difficulties securing funding and resources, as traditional financial institutions may be less inclined to invest in women-led businesses. Balancing work and personal life is another significant challenge, as event management demands can be intensive and time-consuming. However, there are numerous opportunities for women entrepreneurs in this field. The growing demand for personalized and unique event experiences plays to their creativity and client relations strengths.

Additionally, networks and support systems specifically for women entrepreneurs are expanding, providing mentorship, training, and financial assistance. By leveraging these opportunities, women entrepreneurs can overcome barriers and thrive in the event management industry (Cohen-Hatton, 2023; 로미, 2021).

## **2.2 Project Management Practices**

Project management is integral to successful event management, providing a structured approach to planning and executing events. Several project management practices and frameworks are particularly relevant to event management. These include the Project Management Institute's (PMI) Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), Agile methodology, and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) (van Antwerpen, 2023). PMBOK outlines a comprehensive framework encompassing five process groups: initiating, planning, executing, monitoring and controlling, and closing. This framework emphasizes the importance of defining clear objectives, detailed planning, effective execution, continuous monitoring, and thorough evaluation. PMBOK also highlights the significance of stakeholder management, risk management, and quality control, which are critical for event success (Daraojimba, Nwasike, Adegbite, Ezeigweneme, & Gidiagba, 2024; Yakovchuk, 2022).

Agile methodology, known for its flexibility and iterative approach, is increasingly adopted in event management. Agile emphasizes collaboration, adaptability, and continuous improvement, allowing event managers to respond swiftly to changes and feedback. This approach is particularly useful for complex and dynamic events where requirements may evolve (Amorim, da Silva, Pereira, & Gonçalves, 2021). EMBOK is a specialized framework tailored to the event management industry. It covers five core domains: administration, design, marketing, operations, and risk management. EMBOK provides a detailed roadmap for event managers, guiding them through each stage of event planning and execution. It emphasizes the integration of various elements to create cohesive and successful events (Daraojimba et al., 2024; Obiuto, Adebayo, Olajiga, & Clinton, 2023).

## **2.3 Theoretical Foundations**

Several key theories and models will underpin the conceptual framework for enhancing project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management. These include the Resource-Based View (RBV), Gender Role Theory, and the Stakeholder Theory. The Resource-Based View (RBV) posits that a firm's competitive advantage lies in its ability to utilize and manage valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources. For women entrepreneurs in event management, this theory highlights the importance of leveraging unique skills, networks, and innovative practices to differentiate their services and achieve success (Rosca, Agarwal, & Brem, 2020).

Gender Role Theory explores the impact of societal expectations and norms on individual behavior and opportunities. This theory is pertinent in understanding the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and in designing interventions that address gender-specific barriers. By recognizing the influence of gender roles, the conceptual framework can be tailored to empower women and promote gender equality in the event management industry (Bullough, Guelich, Manolova, & Schjoedt, 2022; Olutimehin, Ofodile, Ejibe, Odunaiya, & Soyombo, 2024).

Stakeholder Theory emphasizes the importance of managing relationships with all parties involved in a project, including clients, suppliers, team members, and the community. This theory is crucial in event management, where collaboration and stakeholder satisfaction are key to success. By incorporating Stakeholder Theory, the framework will ensure that women entrepreneurs can effectively manage diverse relationships and meet the expectations of all stakeholders (Freudenreich, Lüdeke-Freund, & Schaltegger, 2020).

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## **3 Conceptual Framework**

### **3.1 Framework Development**

Developing a conceptual framework for enhancing project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management involves a systematic and evidence-based approach. The rationale behind this framework is to create a tailored guide that addresses the unique challenges women entrepreneurs face while leveraging their inherent strengths. The process begins with thoroughly reviewing existing literature on project management, women entrepreneurship, and event management. This review helps to identify common challenges, best practices, and theoretical models that can inform the framework.

Next, the insights gained from the literature are synthesized into a coherent structure. This involves mapping out the key stages of event management and identifying where women entrepreneurs face the most significant challenges.

These stages typically include project initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and control, and closing. Specific strategies and tools that can enhance efficiency and effectiveness are identified for each stage. The framework is then refined through consultations with industry experts and experienced women entrepreneurs, ensuring it is practical and applicable in real-world scenarios.

The final step in the development process is validation. Although this framework does not include empirical data or case studies due to the study's scope, it incorporates stakeholder feedback to ensure its relevance and utility. This iterative process of development, consultation, and validation ensures that the conceptual framework is robust, comprehensive, and tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs in event management.

### 3.2 Key Components

The conceptual framework comprises several key components designed to enhance project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management. These components are categorized into five core areas: planning, resource management, stakeholder engagement, risk management, and evaluation.

- **Planning:** Effective planning is the cornerstone of successful event management. The framework emphasizes the importance of setting clear objectives, developing detailed project plans, and establishing realistic timelines. Tools such as Gantt charts and project management software are recommended to facilitate detailed scheduling and tracking. Strategic planning techniques, including SWOT analysis and SMART goals, are incorporated to ensure that projects are well-defined and achievable.
- **Resource Management:** Efficient allocation and utilization of resources are critical for the success of any event. The framework provides strategies for managing both human and material resources. This includes guidelines for team formation, delegation of tasks, and procurement processes. Techniques such as resource leveling and resource smoothing are suggested to optimize the use of resources and avoid bottlenecks.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Successful event management relies heavily on effective communication and stakeholder collaboration. The framework includes strategies for stakeholder identification, analysis, and engagement. Techniques such as stakeholder mapping and communication plans are recommended to ensure that all parties are informed and involved throughout the project lifecycle. The framework also emphasizes the importance of building strong relationships and networks, which particularly benefit women entrepreneurs.
- **Risk Management:** Managing risks is a crucial aspect of project management. The framework outlines a comprehensive approach to risk management, including risk identification, assessment, mitigation, and monitoring. Risk registers and risk matrices are recommended to manage potential issues systematically. The framework also includes contingency planning to prepare for unforeseen challenges.
- **Evaluation:** Continuous evaluation and feedback are essential for ongoing improvement. The framework includes methods for monitoring project progress and measuring outcomes against established objectives. Techniques such as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Balanced Scorecards, and post-event evaluations are incorporated to provide insights into project performance and areas for improvement.

### 3.3 Integration of Gender Perspectives

A distinctive feature of this conceptual framework is the integration of gender perspectives, recognizing the unique challenges women entrepreneurs face and their inherent strengths. Gender-specific challenges such as balancing work-life responsibilities, overcoming gender biases, and accessing resources are addressed through tailored strategies.

- **Balancing Work-Life Responsibilities:** The framework acknowledges many women entrepreneurs' dual roles and incorporates flexible planning techniques. Tools such as time management software and flexible scheduling options are recommended to help balance professional and personal responsibilities. The framework also encourages establishing support systems, such as family support or professional networks, to provide additional assistance.
- **Overcoming Gender Biases:** To address gender biases, the framework includes strategies for building confidence and leadership skills among women entrepreneurs. This includes mentorship programs, leadership training, and participation in women-focused business networks. By fostering a supportive environment and providing opportunities for skill development, the framework aims to empower women entrepreneurs to overcome biases and succeed in the event management industry.
- **Accessing Resources:** The framework guides how women entrepreneurs can effectively access financial, human, and material resources. This includes information on grants, loans, and other funding opportunities specifically targeted at women-led businesses. The framework also emphasizes building strong professional networks and seeking partnerships to provide additional resources and support.

- **Leveraging Strengths:** Women entrepreneurs often bring unique strengths to event management, such as creativity, communication, and attention to detail. The framework incorporates strategies that leverage these strengths, such as creative problem-solving techniques, collaborative planning approaches, and detailed quality control processes. By building on these inherent strengths, the framework aims to enhance women entrepreneurs' overall effectiveness and success in event management.

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## 4 Application and Implementation

### 4.1 Practical Implications

The conceptual framework developed for enhancing project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management has significant practical implications. By addressing women entrepreneurs' unique challenges and leveraging their strengths, this framework can be applied effectively in various real-world scenarios to improve efficiency, productivity, and overall success in managing events.

One of the primary practical implications is the framework's potential to enhance the planning and execution phases of event management. By adopting the detailed project planning strategies outlined in the framework, women entrepreneurs can ensure that every aspect of an event is meticulously planned and organized. This includes setting clear objectives, developing comprehensive timelines, and allocating resources efficiently. For instance, a wedding planner can use the framework to create a detailed schedule that outlines every task, from the initial consultation with the couple to the final execution of the wedding day. This ensures that nothing is overlooked and allows for adjustments and flexibility to accommodate any changes or unexpected challenges (Raji, Ijomah, & Eyeyien, 2024).

Furthermore, the framework's emphasis on stakeholder engagement is crucial for the success of any event. Women entrepreneurs can apply stakeholder management strategies to build strong relationships with clients, suppliers, team members, and other stakeholders. This involves regular communication, active collaboration, and addressing stakeholder concerns promptly. For example, an event manager organizing a corporate conference can use stakeholder mapping and communication plans to ensure that all parties are informed and involved throughout the planning and execution process. This collaborative approach helps build trust and ensure that the event meets the expectations of all stakeholders (Komolafe et al., 2024; Obeng, Iyelolu, Akinsulire, & Idemudia, 2024).

Risk management is another area where the conceptual framework has practical implications. By incorporating comprehensive risk management strategies, women entrepreneurs can identify potential risks early on and develop contingency plans to mitigate them. This proactive approach minimizes disruptions and ensures the smooth execution of events. For instance, an event planner organizing an outdoor festival can use risk registers and risk matrices to identify weather-related risks and develop contingency plans, such as arranging tents or alternative indoor venues, to ensure the event proceeds smoothly despite adverse weather conditions (Anaba, Kess-Momoh, & Ayodeji, 2024; Eyeyien, Adebayo, Ikevuje, & Anaba, 2024; Oyeyemi et al., 2024).

The framework also highlights the importance of continuous evaluation and feedback. Women entrepreneurs can apply evaluation techniques to monitor the progress of their projects and measure outcomes against established objectives. This involves using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Balanced Scorecards, and post-event evaluations to assess an event's success and identify improvement areas. For example, an event manager can use KPIs to track attendance, client satisfaction, and budget adherence, providing valuable insights that can be used to refine future events.

### 4.2 Tools and Techniques

The conceptual framework incorporates several specific project management tools and techniques that are particularly beneficial for women entrepreneurs in event management. These tools and techniques provide practical solutions to their challenges and enhance their ability to manage events effectively.

- **Project Management Software:** Tools such as Trello, Asana, and Microsoft Project offer comprehensive solutions for planning, scheduling, and tracking project activities. These tools provide task assignment, timeline visualization, and progress tracking features, allowing women entrepreneurs to manage their projects efficiently. For example, an event planner can use Trello to create boards for different stages of an event, assign tasks to team members, and track the progress of each task in real-time (Weerasuriya, Pereira, Perera, & Nanayakkara, 2022).
- **Gantt Charts:** Gantt charts are essential for detailed project planning and scheduling. They provide a visual representation of the project timeline, showing each task's start and end dates and their dependencies. This

helps identify potential bottlenecks and ensure that all tasks are completed on time. Women entrepreneurs can use Gantt charts to plan complex events, such as multi-day conferences or festivals, ensuring that all activities are well-coordinated and executed.

- **Stakeholder Mapping:** Stakeholder mapping is a technique used to identify and analyze the interests and influence of various stakeholders involved in a project. This helps in developing effective communication and engagement strategies. Women entrepreneurs can use stakeholder mapping to identify all key stakeholders and address their needs and expectations. For example, an event manager can use this technique to map out all stakeholders for a charity event, including donors, sponsors, volunteers, and beneficiaries, and develop tailored communication plans for each group.
- **Risk Registers and Matrices:** These tools systematically identify, assess, and manage risks. A risk register lists all identified risks, their potential impact, and mitigation strategies, while a risk matrix helps prioritize risks based on their likelihood and impact. Women entrepreneurs can use these tools to manage risks and develop contingency plans proactively. For instance, an event planner can use a risk register to list potential risks for a large outdoor event, such as equipment failure or security issues, and outline strategies to mitigate these risks (Obeng et al., 2024; Scott, Amajuoyi, & Adeusi, 2024).
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** KPIs are metrics used to measure the success of a project against predefined objectives. Women entrepreneurs can use KPIs to track various aspects of event performance, such as attendance rates, client satisfaction, budget adherence, and return on investment. This helps evaluate an event's success and identify areas for improvement. For example, an event manager can use KPIs to track the effectiveness of marketing campaigns for a product launch event, measuring metrics such as social media engagement, lead generation, and sales conversion (Sultan, 2022).
- **Balanced Scorecards:** The Balanced Scorecard is a strategic planning and management tool that provides a comprehensive view of an organization's performance. It includes financial and non-financial metrics, helping women entrepreneurs to align their event management activities with their strategic goals. For instance, an event planner can use a Balanced Scorecard to track key performance areas, such as customer satisfaction, financial performance, internal processes, and learning and growth, ensuring that their events contribute to the overall success of their business (Ejibe, Olutimehin, & Nwankwo, 2024; Ngure, 2021; Olutimehin et al., 2024).

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## 5 Conclusion

This paper has explored developing and applying a conceptual framework designed to enhance project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management. Key findings highlight the importance of effective planning, resource management, stakeholder engagement, risk management, and continuous evaluation. Women entrepreneurs face unique challenges, such as balancing work-life responsibilities, overcoming gender biases, and accessing resources. However, they also bring distinct strengths to the field, including creativity, communication skills, and attention to detail. Integrating these gender-specific perspectives into the framework provides a tailored approach to managing events more efficiently and successfully.

The framework emphasizes practical strategies and tools such as project management software, Gantt charts, stakeholder mapping, risk registers, KPIs, and Balanced Scorecards. These tools help women entrepreneurs address their specific challenges and leverage their strengths. Effective planning ensures that projects are well-defined and achievable, while resource management optimizes available resources. Stakeholder engagement fosters strong relationships and collaboration, risk management prepares for potential issues, and continuous evaluation provides insights for improvement.

### *Recommendations for Women Entrepreneurs*

Based on the findings, several actionable recommendations can help women entrepreneurs enhance their project management practices in event management:

- Utilize project management software and Gantt charts to create detailed project plans and schedules. These tools help visualize the project timeline, identify potential bottlenecks, and ensure all tasks are completed on time.
- Build strong professional networks to access resources, gain mentorship, and find support. Participation in women-focused business networks can provide valuable opportunities for learning, collaboration, and growth.
- Use stakeholder mapping and communication plans to ensure effective engagement with all stakeholders. Regular communication and active collaboration can build trust and ensure that the event meets the expectations of clients, suppliers, and other stakeholders.

- Proactively identify potential risks and develop mitigation strategies using risk registers and matrices. Having contingency plans can minimize disruptions and ensure the smooth execution of events.
- Implement KPIs and Balanced Scorecards to monitor project progress and measure outcomes. Continuous evaluation provides valuable insights into project performance and improvement areas, helping refine future events.

### 5.1 Future Research Directions

While this paper provides a comprehensive framework for enhancing project management practices among women entrepreneurs in event management, further research is needed to refine and expand this framework. Future research directions could include:

- Conduct empirical studies to validate the effectiveness of the proposed framework. This could involve collecting data from women entrepreneurs who have implemented the framework and analyzing the impact on their project outcomes.
- Explore the role of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and blockchain in event management. Research how these technologies can be integrated into the framework to enhance efficiency and effectiveness further.
- Investigate the applicability of the framework in different cultural and geographical contexts. Understanding women entrepreneurs' unique challenges and opportunities in various regions can help tailor the framework to specific needs.
- Conduct longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of the framework on women entrepreneurs' success and business growth. This can provide deeper insights into the sustainability and scalability of the framework.

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### Compliance with ethical standards

#### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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