

The Impact of Construction Project Managers’ Attributes on Project Success in Ogun State, Nigeria ^{1, 2}

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Abstract

Every construction project is unique and engulfed with various challenges impeding successful completion. Previous researchers underscored the relevant proactive project management attributes in effective project delivery. However, how these attributes affect cost and time is underdeveloped scholastically. This study focused on the impact of construction project managers attributes on cost and time as part of significant determinants of project success rate in Ogun state with a view to providing information that will enhance process of project delivery. The objectives of the study include Identification and assessment of the attributes of construction project managers on project delivery and evaluate the impact of construction project managers attributes on cost and time performances of building project in the study area. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaire using stratified and random sampling techniques to top management construction professionals in Ogun State. Forty-seven (47) retrieved questionnaire were analyzed using Relative Importance Index (RII) and ranking with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 24.0). The findings of the research revealed that significant managers management attributes that impact on cost and time of construction project basically include leadership ability, communication and administration skills. The study recommends that

¹ Editor's note: Second Editions are previously published papers that have continued relevance in today's project management world, or which were originally published in conference proceedings or in a language other than English. Original publication acknowledged; authors retain copyright. This paper was originally presented at the 1st International Conference, The Quantity Surveyor's Edge, Department of Quantity Surveying, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu, Nigeria, 25-26 June 2025. It is republished here with permission of the authors and conference organizers.

² How to cite this paper: Ebenezer, T. R., Ojo, S. M., Yusuf, S. O. (2026). The Impact of Construction Project Managers' Attributes on Project Success in Ogun State, Nigeria; Originally presented at the 1st International Conference, The Quantity Surveyor's Edge, Department of Quantity Surveying, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu, Nigeria, 25-26 June 2025; republished in the *PM World Journal*, Vol. XV, Issue VIII, August.

construction project managers must acquire and discharge these attributes as this will help to minimize cost and time overruns *ceteris-paribus* which will be of client's interest, restore client's confidence in construction project manager, reduce investment risks, and generally boost the viability of construction projects.

Keywords: *Construction, Project Managers, Project Success, Impact, Ogun State.*

1.0 Introduction

Construction is a process consisting of the building or assembling of products. Ofori (2000) defined construction industry development as a deliberate and managed process to improve the capacity and effectiveness of the construction industry to meet the national economic demand for building and civil engineering products, and to support sustained national economic and social development objectives. It includes all internal and external stakeholders who in some way or another promote the industry's policies, procedures, practices and culture. The construction industry is vital to the development of any nation and serves as major yardsticks for the measurement of economic growth which encompasses the physical infrastructures, such as buildings, roads, bridges among others (Agbataekwe, 2005; Dantata, 2008).

Construction project development involves numerous parties, various processes, different phases and stages of work and a great deal of input from construction project managers, to ensure successful projects conclusion. These multidisciplinary natures of the construction industry require a construction project manager using its attributes to lead its activities on site, for overall planning control and co-ordination of a project. Multidisciplinary approach in the sense that various professionals comprising the architects, Quantity surveyors, Engineers, Builders and artisans are involved in construction process each with different duties and expertise (Okuntade, 2014). The construction project manager with supervisory role should possess necessary attributes and commitment to work in collaboration with its primary role which is to deliver the project at the agreed time, cost and to the required quality.

According to Martyn *et al.* (2008) construction project managers exhibiting required attributes are in the unique position of being able to significantly influence and effectively promote construction industry development through their managerial skills and values at various levels. Construction Project managers depend on personal knowledge and attributes that inform them on how to lead in a continuously changing project environment (Bartram, 2005). They acquire various types of knowledge and skills through the experience they go through in their working lives (Edum *et al.*, 2000). However, according to William (2002), it appears little attention is paid to construction

project manager especially at the project, despite its tangible benefits such as early completion of project or lowering of cost otherwise, there would have been cases of time and cost overrun being experienced in Nigeria construction industry. Construction Project manager's commitment and attributes is needed to complete a construction project on time, and this concerted manager's attributes will help to control both cost, time and quality. This is tantamount to saying that the client's objectives can be achieved through a manager's effort that recognizes the interdependence of time, cost and quality (Martyn *et al.*, 2008). Hence this study focuses on the project manager attributes that contributes to effective project delivery in Ogun State. The objectives of the study include:

(i) Identify and assess the attributes of Construction project managers in Ogun state. (ii) To determine the Construction project managers attributes that has effect on cost performance of building projects in the study area. (iii) To determine the Construction project managers attributes that has effect on time performance of building projects in the study area.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Construction Project Manager Attributes

Dainty *et al.* (2001) and Cooke-Davis (2002) submitted that construction project managers attributes represent only one of many criteria upon which project performance is contingent. Crawford (2000) pointed out that the current state of the literature on project management (PM) attributes, with a few exceptions, is largely opinion based. Some of these exceptions might include articles like Hauschildt *et al.* (2000) where specific attribute of Construction Project Managers is measured and compared against variables of project management performance. Even though much of the work done in researching PM attributes lacks this empirical nature, the opinion-based and qualitative conclusions presented should not be discounted, serving as a strong basis for the systematic identification of key construction Project Manager attributes. Extant literature has provided many diverse and ever-changing descriptions and lists of attributes that reflect a successful construction project manager.

It is a difficult endeavor to create a comprehensive list of all the actions that a construction project manager must engage in to fulfill these responsibilities because his or her responsibilities are so fast. In the broadcast terms, the construction Project Manager is viewed as a direct representative of the firm's senior managers and is responsible for the overall success of the project. From the project team perspective, the Project Manager is expected to possess some level of technical competence regarding the project work (Smith, 2001) and at the same time possess the leadership skills needed to guide his or her diverse team of people (Turner *et al.*, 2005). Other responsibilities

include building the project team, planning and evaluating the work, interfacing with the client, and proper allocation of the firm's project resources (Bownekamp *et al.*, (1987). Bowenkamp *et al.*, (1987) and Einsiedel (1987) captured the insights of senior practitioners in the project management field regarding the traits they feel as most important to the development of PMs. Crawford (2000) and Petersen (1991) consolidated and synthesized these to draw meaningful conclusions from the varied sources that comprise the body of literature capturing construction Project Manager attributes. And the opinion-based, ranking techniques used by El-Saba (2001), Odusami (2002), and Posner (1987) capture the general consensus of a wide sample of practicing construction project managers on those important construction Project Manager attributes.

Some research has given leaders some insights into key attributes which help facilitate construction Project Manager success (Grantt *et al.*, 1997; Anderson & tucker, 1994) and other researcher has attempted to compile these attributes into a profile specifically designed to facilitate project manager selection (Petersen 1991). Several construction project managers attributes will affect the cost and time performance of a project, this includes the communication system, control mechanism, feedback capabilities, planning effort, troubleshooting, coordination effectiveness, decision making effectiveness, monitoring, project organization structure, safety and quality assurance program, control of subcontractors' works, and finally the overall managerial actions. Therefore, the construction project managers attributes are directly proportional to the project success level of a project in terms of cost and time.

3.0 Research Design

Ogun state being one of the six (6) states in southwestern Nigeria formed the study research area. The state was chosen because of its rising numbers of construction projects due to its closeness to Lagos state which is the commercial capital of Nigeria. The constituent of the study population is the construction professionals in Ogun state which include Architects, Engineers and Quantity Surveyors. The choice of these three (3) was based on the premise that they function mostly as construction project managers and as such could provide reliable information that increases the reliability of the outcome of this study. Data obtained for this study includes primary and secondary sources. Structured questionnaire was the tool for collection of primary data, while secondary data were obtained through extant literature from journals, textbooks and online related articles. The sampling Procedure used for distribution and retrieval of the questionnaire was simple random sampling technique. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section of the questionnaire comprises the background information of the respondents. This revealed vital information needed to substantiate the extent of involvement of the target population in construction project management.

The second section of the questionnaire addressed the objectives of the study. Objective 1: To identify and assess the attributes of construction project managers, was achieved by identifying twenty-five (25) project managers attributes from extant literature and the respondents were asked to rate the twenty-five (25) identified project managers’ attributes that are important to project success in the study area on a five-point Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1= Not Important, 2= Really Important, 3= Important, 4= More Important, 5= Most Important. Relative Important Index (RII) was used to rank the variables. Objective 2: To determine the Construction project managers’ attributes that has effect on cost performance of building projects in the study area.

The respondents were asked to rate as appropriate the twenty-five (25) identified project managers’ attributes that in their own opinion influence cost performance of building project on a five-point Likert scale. The ranking of the variables was achieved using Relative Important Index (RII). Similar approach was adopted for objective 3: To determine the Construction project managers’ attributes that has effect on time performance of building projects in the study area. Data processing was done with the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

The formula for RII is as stated below:

Relative Importance Index (RII) = Sum of weights ($w_1 + w_2 + w_3 + w_4 + w_5$) / ($A \times N$). The data analyzed was presented in tables. The conclusion was drawn through discussion of analyzed data.

4.0 Data Presentation, Analysis And Discussion

4.1 Questionnaire Administration

As indicated in table 4.1, fifty-four (54) questionnaire were distributed to the target population and forty-seven (47) were retrieved, which is enough to carry out analysis and deemed fit to be adequate based on previous studies.

Table 4.1 Questionnaire Respondents’ Rate

Administered	Retrieved	Percentage
54	47	87.04

Source: Authors’ Field Survey (2024)

4.2 Respondents' Background Information

Table 4.2 Profile of the Respondents

Background Characteristics		Frequency	%
Organization of Respondent	Architectural firm	22	46.81
	Civil/Structural engineering firm	7	14.89
	M & E services firm	1	2.13
	Quantity surveying firm	17	36.17
Respondents' profession	Architect	22	46.81
	Quantity Surveyor	17	36.17
	Engineer	8	17.02
Educational qualification	HND	16	34.04
	PGD	2	4.26
	B.Sc/B.Tech	18	38.30
	M.Sc/M.Tech	11	23.40
Professional membership	Graduate/Probationer	9	19.15
	Corporate	37	78.72
	Fellow	1	2.13
Professional affiliation	MNIQS	14	29.79
	MNIA	18	32.30
	MNSE	5	10.64
	FNIQS	1	2.13
	No response	9	19.15
Work experience (years)	1-5	12	25.53
	6-10	22	46.81
	11-15	7	14.89
	16-20	2	4.26
	Above 20	1	2.13
Work experience in Project managers capacity (years) 1-5	Nil	10	21.28
		10	21.28
	6-10	20	42.55
	11-15	7	14.89
Year of establishment of firms	1970-1979	2	4.26
	1980-1989	10	21.28
	1990-1999	26	55.32
	2000-2009	9	19.15
Gender	Male	31	66.00
	Female	16	34.00

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

Table 4.2 outlines the background information of the professionals considered for this work. The combinations of the multivariate combination of the demographic parameters increases the dependability of the analyzed data. Firms that are germane to construction were adequately considered and so are the professionals that often perform project management functions. They have adequate academic and professional qualifications with 20 of the 47 respondents who have at least 6years of experience in project management positions.

4.3 Identification and Assessment of Attributes of Construction Project Manager

Table 4.3: Identification of project managers' attributes

S/No	Attributes	RII	Rank
1	Leadership ability	0.9149	1 st
2	Communication skill	0.8851	2 nd
3	Administrative skill	0.8766	3 rd
4	Decision making skill	0.8766	3 rd
5	Ability to control	0.8764	5 th
6	Goal setting	0.8681	6 th
7	Analytical thinking	0.8681	6 th
8	Motivation skill	0.8596	8 th
9	Coordinating skill	0.8468	9 th
10	Technical competence	0.8468	9 th
11	Giving direction	0.8468	9 th
12	Organizing skill	0.8298	12 th
13	Coping ability	0.8298	12 th
14	Manage conflict	0.8255	14 th
15	Action planning	0.8255	14 th
16	Encouragement	0.8213	16 th
17	Giving positive ideas	0.8128	17 th
18	Risk management skill	0.8128	17 th
19	Team builder	0.8085	19 th
20	Monitoring skill	0.7957	20 th
21	Strategic planning	0.7872	21 st
22	Critical thinking	0.7830	22 nd
23	Managing change	0.7745	23 rd
24	Flexibility	0.7702	24 th
25	Trouble shooting skill	0.7319	25 th

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

Table 4.3 presents the assessment of attributes of construction project managers in achieving project success. In ranking the mean score, Crawford (2000) recommendation of mean score of ≥ 3.50 cut-off point (i.e. $RII \geq 0.700$) on a 5-point Likert scale was adopted. Likewise, Crawford (2000) regarded variables with $RII \leq 0.599$ to be insignificant variables, hence identified and analyzed attributes of $RII \geq 0.700$ cut-off point were deemed to have significant impact to project success. The most significant attribute is Leadership ability ($RII=0.9149$). Communication skill ranked 2nd, and administrative skills and decision-making skills ranked 3rd. The less significant attributes are managing change ($RII=0.7745$), Flexibility ($RII=0.7702$) and trouble-shooting skill ($RII=0.7319$) which ranked 23rd, 24th and 25th respectively. The relevance of Leadership ability to project success was supported by Hauschildt *et al.* (2000) that opined that one factor that would impact the success of a project would be the quality of management and leadership oversight provided by the project manager. Furthermore, Hauschildt *et al.* (2000) previously established that

the leadership styles of Construction project managers are vital in managing a project to achieve higher performance. This study also agreed with Odusami (2002) who in his study found that construction professionals rank leadership skill as one of the top four skills necessary for a construction project manager. This finding is also in line with the study of Crawford (2000) that submitted that leadership was the most mentioned construction project managers attribute among sixteen studies reviewed. However, this opinion is contrary to the research findings of Hauschildt *et al.* (2000) who surveyed supervisors of Project Managers and found that administrative skill was a significant factor in the most successful project managers. This they opine might be because of different location. This opinion also supported the research finding of William (2002) and Edum *et al.* (2000) concluded that managers of construction work need to adopt appropriate leadership styles in the management of projects to avoid unnecessary time and cost overruns.

4.4 Determination of the construction project manager's attributes that have effects on cost performance of building projects in the study area.

Table 4.4: Attributes that has effect on cost performance of building projects

S/No	ATTRIBUTES	RII	Rank
1	Communication skill	0.8638	1 st
2	Leadership ability	0.8511	2 nd
3	Analytical thinking	0.8426	3 rd
4	Decision making skill	0.8426	3 rd
5	Strategic planning	0.8383	5 th
6	Administrative skill	0.8383	5 th
7	Organizing skill	0.8298	7 th
8	Coordinating skill	0.8255	8 th
9	Risk management skill	0.8213	9 th
10	Monitoring skill	0.8213	9 th
11	Ability to control	0.8128	11 th
12	Coping ability	0.8128	11 th
13	Motivation skill	0.8085	13 th
14	Giving positive ideas	0.8085	13 th
15	Goal setting	0.8043	15 th
16	Technical competence	0.8043	15 th
17	Giving direction	0.8000	17 th
18	Managing change	0.7830	18 th
19	Flexibility	0.7787	19 th
20	Team builder	0.7702	20 th
21	Manage conflict	0.7660	21 st
22	Encouragement	0.7660	21 st
23	Trouble shooting skill	0.7617	23 rd
24	Critical thinking	0.7532	24 th
25	Action planning	0.7489	25 th

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

Table 4.4 showed that all the identified attributes were significant to affect cost performance of building project in the study area on a $RII \geq 0.700$ cut-off point. The most significant attribute is Communication Skill ($RII=0.8638$). Leadership ability ($RII=0.8511$) ranked second, and Analytical thinking ($RII=0.8426$) and Decision-making skill ($RII=0.8426$) jointly ranked third. The less significant attributes that affect cost performance of construction projects are Trouble shooting skill ($RII=0.7617$), Critical thinking ($RII=0.7532$), Action planning ($RII=0.7489$) which ranked 23rd, 24th and 25th respectively.

The relevance of communication skill on cost performance of building projects was supported by Hauschildt *et al.* (2000) who in their study discovered that effective communication is one of the factors related to Project Managers Success. This finding is also corroborated by Odusami (2002) who ranked communication skills as one of the top four skills perceived as significant to project success rate. This research also agrees with the findings of Crawford (2000), who revealed that communication is a frequently referenced skill in her review of 16 project management studies. This study also supported the study of Posner (1987) who found that communication skill was the most frequently cited skill in Project Managers that this skill helps them to communicate plans and priorities thereby getting quality and value for money invested in a project.

4.5 Determination of the construction project manager's attributes that has effect on time performance of building projects in the study area.

Table 4.5: Attributes that has effect on time performance of building projects

S/No	ATTRIBUTES	RII	Rank
1	Communication skill	0.8809	1 st
2	Leadership skill	0.8723	2 nd
3	Analytical thinking	0.8681	3 rd
4	Decision making skill	0.8596	4 th
5	Administrative skill	0.8553	5 th
6	Motivation skill	0.8553	5 th
7	Organizing skill	0.8553	5 th
8	Risk management skill	0.8511	8 th
9	Coordinating skill	0.8468	9 th
10	Technical competence	0.8383	10 th
11	Ability to control	0.8383	10 th
12	Strategic planning	0.8383	10 th
13	Monitoring skill	0.8383	10 th
14	Giving direction	0.8340	14 th
15	Giving positive ideas	0.8340	14 th
16	Goal setting	0.8255	16 th
17	Team builder	0.8170	17 th
18	Flexibility	0.8170	17 th
19	Critical thinking	0.8043	19 th

20	Encouragement	0.8000	20 th
21	Manage conflict	0.8000	20 st
22	Coping ability	0.7957	22 nd
23	Action planning	0.7787	23 rd
24	Managing change	0.7745	24 th
25	Trouble shooting skill	0.7617	25 th

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

Table 4.5 showed that all the identified attributes were significant to affect performance of the time performance of the building project in the study area on a $RII \geq 0.700$ cut-off point. The most significant attribute is Communication Skill ($RII=0.8809$). Leadership Ability ($RII=0.8723$) ranked second, and Analytical thinking ($RII=0.8681$) and Decision-making skill ($RII=0.8596$) ranked third and fourth respectively. The less significant attribute that affect time performance of construction project are Action planning ($RII=0.7787$), Managing change ($RII=0.7745$) and Trouble-shooting skill ($RII=0.7617$) which ranked 23rd, 24th and 25th respectively.

The relevance of communication skill on time performance of building projects was in line with the study of Dissanayaka *et al.* (1999) who remarked that communications are highly correlated with the time performance. Similarly, Hauschildt *et al.* (2000) who in their study discovered that effective communication is one of the factors related to Project Managers Success. Also, the study of Odusami (2002) ranked communication skills as one of the top four skills perceived as necessary. This research also agrees with the findings of Crawford (2000), who revealed that communication is a frequently referenced skill in her review of 16 project management studies.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

It can be deduced from the in-depth analysis of the data that construction project managers attributes have significant impact on construction project success. Construction project success is susceptible to project managers' attributes. Hence, lack of leadership ability by construction project managers on construction projects will impact negatively on project success in terms of cost and time. Effective project management has a great impact on the productivity of construction site workers. Good communication skills, leadership ability and analytical thinking by project managers highly contributes to the cost performance of building project. Project managers' attributes span through ensuring that the cost of a project is still with the budgeted cost. Communication skills are the most significant attributes that have an impact on the ability of project managers to control the time performance of building projects. Leadership ability is one

of the vital attributes used by construction managers for proper co-existence of team members which leads to the time performance of building projects.

5.2 Recommendations

Emanating from the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made to improve construction project managers' attributes to project performance such as project cost and time in Ogun state. The project management institute should train project managers more in leadership and communication skills. Construction project managers should embark on further studies to acquire the necessary knowledge which will help them to improve their performance. The effectiveness of Construction project managers attribute should be introduced to improve the final contract sum as well as original project duration. Construction project managers must always work in an environment characterized by commitment to work. Construction project managers should be able to lead the activities on site to achieve the set goals.

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