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Project Management Practices and Performance of Construction Projects: A Case of Kigali Golf club and Kigali Arena Stadium Projects under Supervision of Rwanda Housing Authority

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Abstract

This research examined project management practices and performance in Rwanda's construction industry, with a focus on the Kigali Golf Club and Kigali ARENA projects. It assessed the impact of monitoring and evaluation practices, project risk management, and project leadership skills on performance. The study employs a mixed-method approach, collecting data from 166 respondents across various departments using questionnaires and interviews. The findings emphasize the significance of project monitoring and evaluation (mean score of 4.63), project risk management (mean score of 4.415), and project leadership skills (mean score of 4.63) in contributing to construction project performance. Overall, effective project management practices, including monitoring, evaluation, risk management, and leadership skills, are crucial for success in Rwanda's construction industry.

Keywords: *Project management, Practices, Performance, Construction projects, Rwanda*

1.0 Introduction

According to Hartman and Ashrafi (2012), project management applies to technical related competences most business organization use to achieve project success or in achievement of project goals. For business undertaking short term projects, the management of projects requires careful control to ensure resource management within specific time at cost effectiveness for the acceptable level of performance and customer relations.

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According to Ahadzie (2017), the project management practices involve supportive tools to support project management be more efficiency at low cost of achievement and satisfying customer needs. To make better project, proper project design, plan and budgeting is expected and this leads to organization or industrial performance. Thus, this is the task of project team managers with help of project team members. The project performance is the task of management which undertakes controls of project management. To achieve this, the accountability role, skills related performance and timelines must be taken into consideration to ensure project execution. construction projects requires technical expertise with skills related abilities.

In africa, project management practices remain a critical issue in all construction industries as they are under utilization which affect industrial performance. The probles arise from lack of skills and scientific capabilities of planning, designing and implementing activities of enhancing project lifecycle process (Aibinu & Jagboro, 2012). The use of project management practices significantly enhances project performance in developing countries and is currently operating at an optimal level of practice. These countries employ technical experts who are responsible for planning and executing the necessary project designs to achieve optimal project performance. However, the success of these endeavors is contingent on the availability of capital, materials, and human resources (Clough, Sears & Sears, 2015).

According to Ghaleb (2014), to achieve a good project performance, the project tools like monitoring and evaluation were sees as important aspects used within organization in achieving project performance. Therefore, the monitoring staff skills are encouraged to ensure collective actions of project management processes. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation is undertaken based on project planning within construction industry. The project management in construction industry is successful in terms of growth and development as well as satisfactory. In developing countries most project in the field of construction industry fail due to low experience of project designer and managers and this make more difficult to achieve and complete projects undertaken by counterparts (Adnan, 2019).

To ensure the success of the project, the desired achievement in timely, cost effectiveness, quality, safety and sustainability of objectives is the main aspects. Therefore, more efforts for project players in the construction industry are put in front in many countries including Rwanda and risks management within construction industry would result in project performance (RPPA LAW , 2017). Projects failure result from disputes among project team members and policy makers, lack of clear decision for unanticipated site for construction industry, inappropriate weather related issues. The contractors fail to coordinate work at effective and timely manner and delay in exchange of information to review the project (PMI, 2018).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Construction projects in developing countries, like Rwanda, often fail due to issues such as inadequate cooperation among project practitioners, poor management, resulting in low productivity and subpar quality. The lack of skilled project professionals capable of bringing innovation and ensuring customer satisfaction further compounds the problem. In both public and private sectors, project performance suffers due to poor strategic planning, ineffective team responsibilities, difficulties in implementation, and problems related to project timelines, cost control, quality, and material management. (Ahadzie, 2017). This persistent issue has led to a reliance on foreign entities with better resources and financial commitment for construction projects, ultimately contributing to the collapse of local construction industries. Furthermore, the

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absence of a solid plan at the project's outset poses significant risks to its success, including inadequate scope definition, inaccurate budget estimates, and forecasting issues. (PMBOK, 2013). Specifically in Rwanda, construction projects face various technical and non-technical challenges, including limited funding, improper resource allocation, a shortage of skilled experts, and governance problems (Ministry of Finance and Economic planning , 2014). To address these issues, the study aims to assess the existing project management practices and their impact on project performance. The study sought to address the challenges and issues faced in implementing construction projects in Rwanda, with a focus on project management practices, aiming to provide insights for improvement and ultimately ensure successful project delivery.

1.2 Research Objective

The study aimed to assess the project management practices and performance of construction project in Rwanda, case of Kigali Golf Club and Kigali Arena Stadium under supervision of Rwanda Housing Authority.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Project management practices

Bauer (2015), a project is the group of tasks oriented activity and performed within specific period of time to meet the stated and set of objectives. A good project is set based on time programme and has life cycle from the start to the end. To make a project more successful, budget estimate is important and this reflects on multiple resources which are scarce and shared among different individuals.

Akarakiri (2016), define a project as system through which construction industry or other project institution dynamically undertakes for bringing changes from one stage to the other of organization life cycle. By considering the generic project, institutions project status may change ideas of projects feasibility by undertaking field survey, possibility for execution and completion strategies. Thus, most of projects are far more complicated for achievement due to limited capital access.

Project management practices applied to the way forward within project construction industry to accomplish the stated goals and objectives. This requires knowledge or idea of project team members in terms of techniques, methods or process. To ensure appropriate project performance, project management practices need to be more effective with desired outcome or execution of the project (Project Management Institute, 2014).

Monitoring and Evaluation

FHI (2014), monitoring within the productive organization involves the routine tasks of collecting information, analysis of information so as to assess the project or work progress based on known principles and standards. Monitoring is one of the project management practices consisting of collecting information with more efforts to allow project managers and owners make decision on ongoing project activities.

Clough, Sears and Sears (2015), the information collected with productive industry are basis of measuring the progress based achievement with basis of organizational objectives. Thus monitoring tool brings the feedback for organization progress and both project team members and beneficiaries are responsible for making the right decision.

The evaluation is one of the project management practices consisting of identifying and bringing reflection on the effects brought by management and determines effectiveness of results. Within construction industry, evaluation measures systematically the efficiency and effectiveness of project management and its relevance for sustainability for a project. However, project skilled personnel need to be empowered for assessing organization conducts especially in management perspective (Ahmed, Azhar, Castillo & Kappagantula, 2019).

Monitoring and evaluation determines strength within productive business organization with basis of human resources and capacity. Monitoring and evaluation techniques help organization towards improvement in the overall capabilities for efficiency and effectiveness of project management. Thus companies, industries check progress based on stated objectives and plans. With application of monitoring and evaluation, adjustments become more necessary to address unforeseen challenges (Tabish & Jha, 2011).

Monitoring and evaluation practices in project management are increasingly applied in most productive business organization and are more important as key management tool for audit purpose. Institution, organization or industry applying monitoring and evaluation become more effective for achievement in terms of time limit, cost effectiveness and quality (Bauer, 2015).

Risk Management

Risks may be seen in case of customer association, in case of identifying project requirements, contract agreements or during business practice expertise. Making the right decision, taking strategies, application of management information system and proper control can lead to risks management in both public and private industries (Barrett, 2012)

Project risk management is the task of all team members having responsibility to achieve organization performance. The management of risks requires careful planning and if the management applies all managerial practices, there is no doubt the organization risks was reduce which bring about a desired outcome (Aibinu & Jagboro, 2012).

Smith, (2016), risks management starts from first phase if identification, assessment, prevention and monitoring. To identify risks requires assessing all types of risks and organization managers need to recognize all conditions in which risks may arise to establish preventive measures. The identification of risks is the basis of risks analysis and control to ensure effectiveness of project management.

Project Leadership Skills

The project management practice is determined by leadership skills which is the ability to use acquired knowledge and competencies to accomplish project work. In order words, organizational employees engage in trainings facilities to be more productive or to achieve work performance within the organization (Osedo, 2017). Leadership skills are learned from past experience and present a significant impact on organization performance. Leaders inspire trust and organization members are collectively engage in production based on standards set out by management. Leadership skills also applied to competences of managers used to make employees know what to do throughout organization performance (Bryde, 2018)

2.1.2 Performance of construction project

Project failure mostly is due to dispute arising among project team members. The project performance requires proper cooperation and communication among project team members. Clear

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standards and principles governing organization present significant impact towards project performance. In construction industry, the performance is determined by cost effectiveness, timely achievement of objectives and quality assurance (Project Management Institute, 2008).

Gido, Clement and James (2013), the construction industry is more complex in its nature as it provides more output to the country and to its beneficiaries. Indeed, it is determined by more contractors, consultants, stakeholders, regulators and policy makers. The success of this industry has brought about a considerable increase in national income and gross domestic Product (GDP).

Project cost performance

Project management Body of Knowledge (2018), the project cost performance is measured in terms of financial resources needed for project completion on time basis. The project cost performance starts from planning phase of the project and most project fail due to poor cost estimate. Construction projects as it incurs more costs, project managers are assigned to manage costs of the project effectively so as to achieve a desired outcome.

Shao (2016), the cost performance is determined by earned value resulting from management technique of organization which is achieved through resources management, planning and other technical applications. Earned Value Management (EVM) applies to the system of integrating costs, schedule, and technics and risks management in productive business organization. Therefore, this determines project plan and deviation made for achievement. The deviation may result from inappropriate budget during planning phase.

Kerzner, (2019), budgeted cost for work schedule is applied in the time phase of the budget plan of the organization and is estimated between the negotiated contract plus the estimated cost of authorized but less management reserves within specific period of time. However, the BCWS is determined during the open work packages.

Project Time Schedule

PMI (2018), a good project need to be completed on timely basis as per planned at the startup phase. Therefore, the summary statement is presented in details and project schedule is presented in the form of graphic using milestone charts, bar charts and project schedule network diagrams. The project time performance is measured, compared and analyzed based on actual start and finished date in the form of percentages and duration of the project work.

The performance is also assessed by use of techniques like Earned Value Management (EVM), schedule variances (SV) and schedule performance index (SPI). All these techniques are useful in management projects. In assessing the performance of project, the critical chain method seeks to compare amount remaining and amount needed for project completion data and thus provides the schedule status (Project Management Institute, 2018).

Stakeholder Participation

With stakeholders' participation, project development may be positive or negative depending on the way of participation to achieve the work performance. Within construction industry, fully participation may bring positive changes. The purpose of participation of stakeholders is that that they have stake in the organization and this has assisted managers to make the right decision due to collaboration in achieving the stated goals and objectives (Olander, 2017).

2.2 Empirical Review

The studies conducted by Schmid and Adams (2018), in assessing the project supervision and performance, the study revealed that effective supervision contribute to project success. In these cases, a project is well monitored and evaluated to assess progress. Thompson (2010), conducted a study to assess group project management tools and techniques. The general conclusion is that all these techniques they are used differently in project management. In this study, 19group of project management tools and techniques normally used differently to enhance business performance. To ensure the success of construction industry, data collection, financial support, communication is important aspects of achieving a desired project performance.

A study done by United Nation Relief and Works Agency (2017) in Kenya, showed that project managers normally encounter problems of achieving the performance of construction projects. The mostly highlighted problem includes ineffective time schedule, costs and quality assurance. In addition, customers' demands, lack of materials, poor infrastructure facilities, poor and delay in decision making all these constrain the performance of construction projects.

Another study done by Al-Momani (2010), in Australia State to determine the relationship between cost, time and quality of project performance revealed that 161 construct projects were completed based on cost effectiveness, timelines and quality assurance. A study conducted by Aibinu and Jagboro (2012), revealed that the successful construction industry requires managerial skills more specifically in project design, time and implementation process. As this industry based on aims and objectives to be achieved, managers are committed to determine project timelines based on project financial resources.

3.0 Methodology

The study assessed project management practices and performance in Rwanda's construction industry, focusing on the Kigali Golf Club and Kigali ARENA projects. The study employed a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The total target population was 284, and data collection involved a sample of 166 respondents selected from management, engineering, procurement, and finance departments. The researcher used stratified random sampling techniques to select respondents from the total target population. Quantitative data were collected via questionnaires, while qualitative insights were obtained through interviews. The collected data were analyzed through the Statistic Package for Social Science version 20 (SPSS).

4.0 Findings and Discussion

Research findings collected from Kigali Golf Club and Kigali Arena Stadium under supervision of Rwanda Housing Authority of different selected departments covered project management practices and performance of construction projects. Therefore, the information collected are presented based on research objectives.

Table 1: Contribution of monitoring and evaluation practices to performance of construction projects

Variables	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
Project monitoring and evaluation	111	52	0	3	0	4.63
Project risks management	80	78	0	8	0	4.38
Project skills related trainings	142	21	0	3	0	4.81
Stakeholders participation	74	87	0	5	0	4.38
Right decision	39	124	0	3	0	4.19

In this study, researcher was interested in knowing whether project monitoring and evaluation has led to the construction project performance in two selected projects (Kigali golf club and Kigali Arena project). Table 1 above provides information related to how monitoring and evaluation contribute in achieving the construction project performance. As presented, majority of respondents having the mean of 4.63 strongly agreed that project monitoring and evaluation is relevant in achieving the construction project performance. This was also agreed by other respondents represented by the mean of 4.38 among the surveyed respondent's. As indicated, the mean of agreement and disagreement is almost equivalent to 5 and this indicates the extent level of agreement of monitoring and evaluation to influence construction project performance. The research findings while assessing whether project risks management is helpful in construction project performance, revealed that project risks management is among the basic aspects of achieving construction project performance. However, the mean of confirmation is 4.38 which imply the high level of agreement. The research findings presented in table 1 when assessing how the project skills related trainings is important in construction project performance, the results showed that it is really important to have skilled people and empowering employees through trainings to achieve the construction project performance. This was indeed agreed the mean of 4.81. Therefore the project skilled and trainings related offered to employees are of great important to affect the construction project performance.

As presented when assessing how stakeholders participation contribute to the construction project performance, the research findings showed that their active participation more specifically in decision making, project design and planning process, this is important in achieving the construction project performance. In regard, the mean of agreement is 4.38 which imply that respondents agreed on this aspect as important in two selected projects. The research findings as indicated in table 1 also showed that having the right decision making at Kigali golf club and Kigali Arena projects remain another important aspect towards construction project performance. Strongly confirmed at the mean level of 4.415.

The overall conclusion is that the construction project performance in Kigali golf club and Kigali Arena is determined by the extent application of project monitoring and evaluation, project risks management, project skills related trainings, stakeholders participation and extent level of having the right decision as clearly indicated by surveyed respondents.

Table 2: The extent to which project risks management contribute to the performance of construction projects

Variables	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
Project risks assessment	139	21	0	6	0	4.76
Project risks evaluation	115	51	0	0	0	4.69
Participation in decision making	34	130	0	2	0	4.180
Project partners	71	91	0	4	0	4.379
Project funds and clear policies	88	75	0	3	0	4.493
Project risks management	37	135	0	4	0	4.415

Source: (Primary Data, 2023)

To assess the second objective related the extent to which project risks management contribute to the construction project performance, the research findings showed that project risks assessment is important in construction project performance as indicated by in table 2 above, The extent level of mean for those who agreed is 4.76 which implies that project risks management influence the performance of construction project. As indicated, in two selected projects, research findings showed that the project risks evaluation is important aspect of project risks management as strongly agreed at the mean of 4.69. However, participation in decision making also remain important in project risks management and this is strongly agreed at the mean level of 4.180 which is more significant.

The research findings showed that having the construction project partners in two selected project under the study is of great importance in achieving construction project performance throughout their role in project risks management, decision making and project support services. This was confirmed by surveyed respondents at the mean level of 4.379. The research findings in two selected projects undertaken by researcher showed that project funds and clear policies are important aspects for project risks management to achieve construction project performance at Kigali Golf club and at Kigali Arena. This was strong confirmed by majority of respondents at the mean of 4.493.

As indicated in research findings, the project risks management itself remains an important to achieve the construction project performance as majority of respondents having the mean of 4.415 agreed. The overall conclusion based on research findings is that the application of project risks assessment, project risks evaluation , participation in decision making, having project partners, having project funds and policies as well as conducting project risks management in two selected projects remain important factors in achieving the construction project performance.

Data from interviewer to support the quantitative data as showed in table 2 with mean of 4.76 showed that project risks management influence the performance of construction project.

However, the project managers and site engineers who were interviewed on both projects “also argued that project management practices used in achieving construction project performance include Monitoring and evaluation, Risks management, Project leadership skills and stakeholders participation. Thus with all these practices, the performance of construction project is achieved. This was confirmed by management of construction

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project of two selected projects under supervision of RHA”. The information provided support the idea of Clough, Sears and Sears (2005), who argued that monitoring and evaluation in productive industry are basis of measuring the progress based achievement with basis of organizational objectives.

Table 3: The extent to which project leadership skills contribute to the performance of construction projects

Variables	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
Project leadership skills	86	80	0	0	0	4.51
Project hired skills and experienced engineers	58	105	0	3	0	4.31
Project market survey	84	82	0	0	0	4.50

Source: (Primary Data, 2023)

Table 3 shows the aspects of project leadership skills contribute to the performance of construction projects at Kigali golf club and Kigali Arena. As indicated above, research findings revealed that the project leadership skills itself contributes to the construction project performance at the extent mean level of 4.51. As highlighted in table 3, research findings shows that in two selected projects (Kigali golf club and Kigali Arena) having the hired skilled and experienced engineer’s remains important in achieving the construction project performance. This was strongly confirmed by most of respondents. Therefore, the mean indicating the level of agreement represents 4.31. Table 3 shows that the project market survey was also highlighted by research participants as important aspects to achieve the construction project performance. This was strongly agreed by most of respondents of Kigali golf club and Kigali Arena project. However the mean for this agreement represents 4.50.

The Project managers and site engineers who were interviewed on both projects highly indicated, *“The management of two projects revealed that the management involved all team members in construction project to set and establish strategies of achieving a desired performance. These strategies comprises establishing proper design of the project work, good organization structure, establishing leadership roles and involving all project members in common decision making which enable performance and archiving required goals of project”.*

Discussion

The study explored themes related to the research objectives, which were aimed at examining how monitoring and evaluation practices, project risk management, and project leadership skills impact the performance of construction projects at Kigali Golf Club and Kigali Arena.

Regarding the role of monitoring and evaluation practices in project performance, the research findings clearly demonstrated their significant impact on the success of these construction projects. Participants strongly concurred that project monitoring and evaluation played a central role in achieving project performance, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.63 on a 1 to 5 scale. Similarly, the study emphasized the importance of effective project risk management in achieving successful

outcomes in construction projects. Participants agreed that a thorough assessment and management of risks contributed to the successful execution of the Kigali Golf Club and Kigali Arena projects, as indicated by a mean score of 4.415. The research also highlighted the substantial influence of project leadership skills on construction project performance. Participants strongly agreed that the presence of skilled and experienced project leaders played a vital role in ensuring project success, with a mean score of 4.51.

The study also unveiled the importance of stakeholders' participation, clear policies, and adequate funding as significant factors that influenced project performance. Respondents acknowledged that involving stakeholders in decision-making and collaborating with partners played a crucial role in mitigating project risks and achieving successful project outcomes, as reflected in mean scores ranging from 4.180 to 4.493.

To sum up, the research findings underscored the importance of project monitoring, risk management, and leadership abilities in attaining success in construction projects. The study highlighted the need for hiring proficient project engineers, conducting thorough market research, and maintaining strong project leadership as essential elements for ensuring the effective execution of projects

Generally, the study offered valuable knowledge concerning the factors influencing the performance of construction projects at Kigali Golf Club and Kigali Arena. These insights can be applied to improve project management practices and decision-making, ultimately raising the success rate of construction projects in the area.

5.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the research affirms the critical role of project management in achieving construction project success. Effective project management, encompassing elements like monitoring, risk assessment, stakeholder involvement, and adhering to budget and schedule, directly influences project performance. The study highlighted the importance of these practices and external factors like monitoring, risk management, leadership, and stakeholder participation. It offers valuable insights for enhancing project management in Rwanda's construction industry to improve project success.

6.0 Recommendations

Based on the problems identified in the area of this research project, several recommendations are extended to address the challenges faced in project management within the construction industry.

The Kigali Golf Club's management must establish precise and well-defined project goals. The management should take a participatory approach to ensure project success, motivating team members to actively participate in decision-making, exchange ideas, and work together to design the required material support. To improve the overall performance of construction projects, management should also make investments in the hiring of qualified project team members and in providing them with training facilities. It is imperative to allocate adequate funds to enable the targeted project appraisal in order to avoid project stoppage or suspension owing to insufficient funds. Robust risk management techniques are crucial for improving construction project performance, as demonstrated in the management of the Kigali Arena project. It is strongly advised to put in place appropriate project monitoring and evaluation procedures and to give the project team access to training resources. Involving stakeholders in the planning and execution of a project can also yield insightful ideas and valuable insights that improve project performance. A thorough

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and organized work program schedule is necessary to prevent actions that can compromise other important project components.

This research project suggests that the government prioritize project risk management and protection. To do this, projects must be awarded, permitted, and evaluated. The work program and its sequencing must also be carefully monitored, as must the budgetary allocation in order to avoid needless demolitions, work that must be redone, and project suspension due to insufficient funding, all of which can impair project performance. The government should create and expand strategic guidelines for project performance in the construction industry in partnership with project decision-makers and partners. It is important to promote and put into practice strict policies for project safety and risk management.

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About the Authors

Richard Gatsinzi is an experienced Senior Quantity Surveyor with a Master's degree in Business Administration. He has a strong track record of delivering results in the construction industry, offering expertise in various areas like cost minimization, project planning, and contract administration. Richard has successfully managed diverse projects, including high-end commercial infrastructure and residential developments. He is a registered member of the Rwanda Institute of Quantity Surveyors and holds a Bachelor's degree in Quantity Surveying and Construction Management, along with an MBA in Project Management. He is currently working as a Senior PQS & TE at Gasabo 3D Design Ltd and is dedicated to delivering sustainable, cost-effective projects with a focus on quality and budget adherence. His research interests encompass project management and leadership.

Dr Mercyline W. Kamande holds a PhD in Economics with expertise in Public Sector Economics and Econometrics. She is a Senior Lecturer at Mount Kenya University and is the Founder, Executive Director, and Lead Consultant at Impact Evaluation Research for Development. Her experience primarily lies in impact evaluation research, particularly in the realm of public policy issues. She has published work related to the impact of ICTs in agriculture and clean production technology in the manufacturing sector. Dr. Kamande's focus is on enhancing project design to achieve intended objectives by building capacity among project personnel through coaching and mentorship. She emphasizes the importance of involving organizations responsible for the work in project evaluations and aims to promote research transparency through a Learning-by-Doing approach in training research and incorporating coaching and mentorship for research and publication.

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