

# Problems Affecting Public Projects Execution and Control in Southwest Nigeria

\*Oyewale Julius Ojo<sup>1</sup> and Akinloye Lawal<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** The study examined problems affecting public projects execution and control in southwest Nigeria. This was with a view to determining the extent to which public projects deliverables and objectives met stakeholders expectations. The study covered 104 projects under construction in States and Federal Universities in southwest Nigeria. The research instrument used was questionnaire. It elicited information on the issues such as problems affecting public projects execution and control and factors responsible for the achievement of the goals and objectives outlined in the baseline project plan. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. The results indicated among others that, there is difference between the original contract approved value and total value released for the project (4.87), project taking more time than estimated time (4.83), difference in the decisions of the project manager and project sponsor during project execution (4.80) and maintainability of the project quality standards as stated in the quality management plan (2.29) was low. The study concluded that any contractor, executed a project of poor quality should be sanctioned by withdrawing his certificate of registration.

**Index Terms – Problems, public projects, execution, control, stakeholders.**



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The life of a project can be referred to as the project management phases which consists of project initiation, planning, execution, control and closing. A project is a set of activities with a defined start point and a defined end state, which pursues a defined goal and uses a defined set of resources [1]. Projects may be classified into two: These are: private and public projects. Private projects may be owned by individuals, clubs, religious organizations and so on while public projects may be owned by the local, state or federal government.

Whether a project is private or public owned, it is certain that such a project would be executed, monitored and controlled. The purpose of project execution and control is to develop the product or service that the project has commissioned to deliver [2]. Project execution is the third phase in project management phases. Also, it is the longest phase of the project management life cycle and consumes the largest resources. If a good project plan is developed, properly monitored and controlled during execution, it is not only for such a project to be successful but also achieve the

In Nigeria, the attitudes of most citizenry to public properties is below average, projects inclusive. That was the reason in March 2012, the Presidential Project Assessment Committee (PPAC) was set up to look into the cases of abandoned projects in Nigeria [3]. The terms of reference among others include: taking inventory of all ongoing federal projects and determine whether the contracts were in compliance with due process; determining the status and assessing the level of execution of each project, including the amount spent and the amount outstanding; determining the constraints militating against the execution of each project and making recommendations to accelerate its completion [3].

When a report of public project is released or announced in terms of cost by the sponsors, the quality of such deliverable would not commensurate with the cost. Where the quality matches the project baseline plan, the cost would be outrageous. However, as project specific tasks are performed during project execution and control; cost, scope, schedule and quality (CSSQ) will need to be managed according to the processes established during project planning [2].

In project management, the deliverables should meet the objectives and goals outlined in the baseline project plan. With the presence, functions and responsibilities of the project team, most of the public projects deliverables are of poor qualities. Some projects were abandoned and the contractors absconded when an appreciable, sum of money had been released to them [4]. The problems that affect the quality of public projects emanate from project execution. The need to

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- Oyewale Julius Ojo is currently a lecturer in the Department of Project Management Technology, The Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria. E-mail: oyewalejuliuss@gmail.com
  - Akinloye Lawal is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Project Management Technology, The Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria. E-mail: akinlawal2@yahoo.com

goals and objectives of the project.

investigate problems affecting the execution, monitoring and control of public projects as well as recommending appropriate actions justified the study.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in southwest Nigeria; comprising Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti States. The whole of the area is located within the region known as lowland humid tropical rainforest. It is characterized by wet and dry seasons [5].

The scope of this study was limited to public buildings in states and federal universities in southwest Nigeria. There were about 155 buildings under construction in the study area. The restriction to public projects was due to the fact that public projects are built with the public funds. Also, individuals have interests in personal owned projects and take care of their projects than public projects.

For the purpose of this study, purposive sampling method was used from the tertiary institutions projects. Primary data was obtained using structured and unstructured questionnaires, interviews and site visits.

One hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires were administered to the project managers/project supervisors who had experience in the problems affecting public projects supervision. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire was based on the use of rating scale to elicit information on the problems affecting public projects execution, monitoring and control, and a total of one hundred and four (104) questionnaires were returned and found useful which amounts to a return rate of 86.7%. Interviews were conducted to complement the questionnaires administered to the respondents. Also, site visits were carried out to physically observe the projects' progress. The questionnaire was subjected to content validity. The data collected were analysed with the use of simple descriptive statistics. Perceived factors affecting the execution and control of public projects and factors responsible, for the achievement of the goals and objectives outlined in the project baseline plan were measured on 5 point rating scale with 1-very low, 2-low, 3-moderate, 4-high and 5- very high.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents professional characteristics of the respondents' such as highest educational qualification and work experience. The data from the table shows that respondents with bachelor's degree rank highest with 58.7% followed by Higher National Diploma holders with 30.8%, Masters' degree holders with 6.7% while the remaining 3.8% are City and Guilds (FTC) holders. As indicated, all the respondents are professionals from the field of construction, technology and civil engineering. Therefore, this provides a good foundation for project supervision. Further observation of the table revealed that all the respondents (100%) have

worked for more than five years in the construction firms under study, this indicates that they are well experienced in the construction industry.

**Table 1**  
**PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Variables	Frequency	%
Highest Qualification		
*C & G	4	3.8
HND	32	30.8
B.Sc./B.Tech.	61	58.7
M.Sc./M.Tech.	7	6.7
<b>Total</b>	104	100.0
Years of work experience in years		
0-5	-	-
6-10	11	10.6
11-15	32	30.8
16-20	56	53.8
Above 21	5	4.8
<b>Total</b>	104	100.0

\*City & Guilds of London Institute.

Table 2 shows the perceived factors affecting public projects execution and control. The mean values of the respondents vary from 4.87 to 1.87. Thus, all the respondents have different perception of the significance of the factors affecting public projects execution and control. As revealed by the table, the dominant factors affecting the execution and control of public projects are: Difference between the original contract approved value and total value released for the project (4.87) and project taking more time than estimated time (4.83). This is followed by Difference in the decisions of the project manager and project sponsor during project execution (4.80) and Project team members feel challenged about their work (4.79). Also, control and manage costs established in the project budget (4.63) and Reviewing of project materials (4.22) are rated highly. On the other hand, the remaining factors are rated low and very low. The factors affects the execution are: Project achieved the quality standards defined in the quality management plan (2.29). Conducting regular project team meetings (2.06), Project plan components being maintained on a regular basis (1.91) and Project team members satisfied with the way the project is being managed (1.87). All the perceived factors affect the execution and control of public projects. These agree with various findings that there is insufficient planning for public projects, inadequate budgetary provision to sustain them, add

to the cost of executing, causing frequent reviews on the original contract terms and inadequate utilization of monies budgeted for projects every year [6,7,8,9,10].

**TABLE 2**  
**PROBLEMS AFFECTING PUBLIC PROJECTS EXECUTION AND CONTROL**

Problems	Mean	Std. Dev.
Difference between the original contract approved value and total value released for the project.	4.87	.343
Project taking more time than estimated time	4.83	.450
Difference in the decisions of the project manager and project sponsor during project execution	4.80	.490
Project team members feel challenged about their work.	4.79	.552
Control and manage costs established in the project budget	4.63	.751
Reviewing of project materials	4.22	.557
Project achieved the quality standards defined in the quality management plan	2.29	.618
Conducting regular project team meetings	2.06	.834
Project plan components being maintained on a regular basis	1.91	.397
Project team members satisfied with the way the project is being managed	1.87	.669

Table 3 presents the perceived factors responsible for the achievement of the goals and objectives outlined in the baseline project plan. The mean values of the respondents vary from 4.74 to 2.29. Thus, all the respondents have different perception of the significance of the factors responsible for the achievement of the goals and objectives outlined in the baseline project plan of the public projects. As shown in the Table, factors responsible for the achievement are as follows: changes to project plan are successfully managed during project execution (4.74), Project sponsors satisfied with deliverables provided by the project team (4.72), the project plan contained all the required components as

listed in the goals and objectives of the project (4.69) were highly rated. The project execution meet the objectives and goals outlined in the project plan (2.52) was moderately rated while maintainability of the project quality standards as stated in the quality management plan (2.29) was rated lowly. Lack of quality products manufactured locally for the construction industry also affects the execution of contracts [6].

**TABLE 3**  
**FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OUTLINED IN THE BASELINE PROJECT PLAN**

Factors	Mean	Std. Dev.
Changes to project plan are successfully managed during project execution	4.74	.521
Project sponsors satisfied with deliverables provided by the project team	4.72	.689
The project plan contained all the required components as listed in the goals and objectives of the projects	4.69	.523
The project execution meet the objectives and goals outlined in the project plan	2.52	.502
Maintainability of the project quality standards as stated in the quality management plan	2.29	.664

**4. CONCLUSION**

Project execution is the third phase of the project management phases. Project execution is necessary to making sure that project deliverables and project goals and objectives meet stakeholders expectations. Project plans worth nothing without an impeccable project execution [11].

In Nigeria government officials compromise by colluding with the contractors. In that situation, government officials representing the project sponsors are unable to clamp down on contractors when they fail to live up to their contractual obligations. Also, in annual budgets many projects are listed every year without execution of such or with little to show on the ground.

With the establishment of so many anti corruption agencies, these agencies have not lived up to expectations. Therefore, the authors recommended that any project executed by any contractor below the standard required or not

meeting the goals and objectives of the project, such a contractor should be sanctioned by withdrawing his certificate of registration.

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