

The Role of Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Performance in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja-Nigeria, 2017-2021

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Abstract

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Exercise is a critical phase of any project that is deliberately designed to fruition. Often time, it is the report from the M&E that clearly indicates the success or otherwise of the implementation of any project. The role of M&E in the development trajectory of any nation cannot be overlooked, especially in project performance. This paper examined “The Role of Monitoring and Evaluation on Project Performance in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja-Nigeria (2017-2021)”. The objective of the paper is to critically assess the instrument of M&E in project implemented by the Federal Capital Development Authority. The Study adopted Contingency theoretical analytical framework. In addition the paper discussed the imperativeness of M&E as a major indicator that cannot be over-emphasised when it comes getting appropriate value for development project. The paper argued that M&E have ensured that road projects are completed within stipulated time frame in FCT as carried out by FCDA. Thus, the paper concluded with recommendations among which are: the institutionalisation of Monitoring and Evaluation in FCDA as well as in all other public sectors in the Nigerian economy to fastrack development, Government officials should be properly trained on the indices of Monitoring and Evaluation and adequate professional staffing with the critical knowledge of how Monitoring and Evaluation can impact project performance.

Keywords: Monitoring, Evaluation, Project, Performance, Development

Date of Submission: 02-12-2022

Date of Acceptance: 14-12-2022

I. Introduction

Arguably, ignoring the roles and effects that monitoring and evaluation would bring to project performance is to the detriment of such venture that bears negative impact on the project (Akanbi, et al., 2018). Hence, project performance of most public projects suffer from delay in completion or fail to meet the specific details set goals in spite the huge amount of money invested (Afomachukwu, 2021; Odile and James, 2020).

When it comes to public projects, we face issues of poor performance that are mostly related to poor monitoring and evaluation practices to improve performance of projects (Odile and James, 2020). Nevertheless, Monitoring and Evaluation, according to the World Bank (2012) are supposed to be built-in as an integral part of any project. Monitoring and evaluation give public sector managers information on progress toward achieving stated targets and goals, and provide substantial evidence as the basis for any necessary mid-course corrections in policies, programmes, or projects (Akanbi, et al., 2018). Monitoring and Evaluation involve a systematic deployment of carefully thought out strategy with the use of planning, skills, and information management that would assist in taking decision on the level of project performance (Afomachukwu, 2021; Odile and James, 2020; Onifade, et al., 2017).

As argued by Akanbi, et al., (2018) Monitoring and Evaluation are supposed to be part of government systems, use as mechanism feedback component with respect to outcomes and consequences of government project performance. In this wise, monitoring and evaluation would give support to decision makers in ensuring project performance on road project are implemented in the most appropriate time (Akanbi, et al., 2018). Absence of Monitoring and Evaluation of road project performance for example would lead to failure in project performance. This is attributed to the rate at which for instance road projects are retrogressive in a developing economy like Nigeria (Afomachukwu, 2021; Nwachukwu, 2008). Monitoring and Evaluation necessitate projects performance by facilitating accountability and transparency in management team use of resources and achievement of target mission and goals (Odile and James, 2020).

Afomachukwu (2021), Onifade, et al., (2017) observed that Monitoring and Evaluation in project performance system has a component of project performance strategic input which gives control over the major variables that defines the elements of the control pillar of project which includes scope, quality, resources, time and cost is very significant. The thrust of the paper therefore is to review the role of monitoring and evaluation in project performance in the Abuja Municipal Area Council.

Sequel to the 1988 Public Service Reform in Nigeria, Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS) was introduced as a common department in all Federal Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies with the aim of professionalising project implementation from conception to actualisation. However, in view of the importance of M&E, the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board, a Federal Government agency, in compliance with the directives of the reform, but in giving the objective some concrete effects, adopted a different nomenclature and created a Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Department instead. This was amplify the importance of M&E in project execution.

Theoretical Framework

A theory is an assumption or system of assumptions, accepted principles and rules based on limited information or knowledge, devised to analyse, predict or otherwise explain the nature or behaviour of phenomenon. For the purpose of this study, the Contingency theory has been adopted as theoretical framework. This theory was first introduced in 1920s by American philosopher, mathematician and psychologist; Edwin Guthrie. However, it got its popularity through the work of Fred Fiedler, a psychologist from Austria (Ogeto and Thonga, 2020 cited Afomachukwu, 2021). Contingency theory has five basic assumption; i) there is no ideal organization structure that suits all environment, ii) an organization might need to adopt different approach to deal with different issues, iii) when deciding on a course of action an organization management must consider several variables such as internal and external environment as well as attitudes and values of the society the organization operates, iv) an organization management must develop a highly efficient competency of being able to quickly diagnose a problems and come up with the most appropriate solution and, v) an organization must be extremely flexible so as to be able to adopt to unexpected environmental changes (Tangpong et al 2019 cited Afomachukwu, 2021).

Contingency theory is about management that is concerns in taking decision which best suit the right action on the basis of event outside its environment. Also the theory, states that a close temporal relationship between a stimuli and a response is the only necessary condition for an association between the two to be established. The theory further states that there is no optimal way to organize firm resources in order to achieve consistently excellent performance (Akinleye and Kolawole 2020). Nevertheless, the basic assumption of the theory is that destabilization from any cause in one activity can result in collapse of order in another positively or negatively. Contingency is a mass, or a series of things in contact or in proximity - a state of being contiguous. This theory explains the reason behind the monitoring and evaluation and project performance. For this study, monitoring and evaluation are the specific flexibility and recovery rate that are expected to impact on project performance of road construction sector. Monitoring and Evaluation is identified as the most important flexible capacity to track progress of project and locate challenge therein, while project performance is having value for money-cost effectiveness, timeliness of project, standard in quality and meeting scope of project. However, it must be noted, that contingency theory due to its flexibility would provide the feedback mechanism to ensure Monitoring and Evaluation as well as project performance.

Conceptualizing Monitoring and Evaluation

Like in any social and management sciences, subject has assumed a plethora of definitions. Attempt to defining it cannot be confined to one particular perspective. Monitoring and Evaluation is one of the buzzword of our time. Monitoring and Evaluation is a carefully outlined activity to carried out to ensure information is gathered, analysed on a project for the purposed of ascertaining it level of completion. That's why international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank group and others international bodies alongside several scholars have provided definition on the concept of Monitoring and Evaluation. Akanbi, et al., (2018) see Monitoring and Evaluation as the systematic and objective means of gathering information on a project. And this they said comes as examination concerning the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of activities in the light of specified objectives of a project.

Monitoring and Evaluation, therefore is a system that is key component in the value chain of arriving at the goal of project. They added that with Monitoring and Evaluation certain information would be gathered that would enhance success of project through control, scope, quality resources, time and cost running (Odileand James, 2020).For example, Monitoring and Evaluation according to Nuguti, (2009) cited in Afomachukwu, (2021) has to do with applied function that is a fundamental part of project management that

involvesreflectionandcommunicationtosupportefficientandeffectiveprojectimplementationthroughinformed

/evidencebaseddecisionmaking. Monitoring and Evaluation applied as a function, is a fundamental part of project management that involves reflection and communication to support efficient and effective project implementation through informed/evidence based decision making (Nuguti,2009 cited in Afomachukwu, 2021).

Similarly, Armstrong and Baron (2013) view Monitoring and Evaluation as a system that aims at determining the fulfillment of project objectives, measurement of the project's efficiency, effectiveness, significance and impact, as well as incorporate the learning of lessons in the decision-making process. Thus, Monitoring and Evaluation cannot be overemphasized, as it ensures a systematic comprehension of a project.

Project Performance

Project performance is relatively considered as the measuring the overall outcome or goal achievement of a project deliverables. This includes both financial and non financial areas of the project life cycle (Afomachukwu, 2021; Onifade, et al., 2017). In this regards, Ezeagba, (2017) noted that project performance has to do with project success and it focused on the simplified criteria or standards for measuring project deliverables. Equally, Onifade, et al., (2017), observed that project performance cut across factors that showcase the successful completion of a project. He added further that at this point the utility, gratification and expected outcome about the project is now deliverables.

Relevance of Monitoring and Evaluation

Interestingly, what constitute the relevance of Monitoring and Evaluation has been well dissected by scholars which they pointed to includes accountability, support to management function, identification of problems, suggesting possible solution, improving and providing quality data and information to includes as follows:

Accountability: Engaging in Monitoring and Evaluation activities bring about the alignment to accountability and its activities tend to ensure that projects achieve both upward and downward as well as the horizontal accountability demands (Afomachukwu, 2021). This aspect of accountability that comes with monitoring and evaluation according to Cheng,et al, (2007) is provided for high level of scrutiny and judgment made against clear norms and standards established for a range of performance.

Support to management function: Supporting evidence-based decision making function in organization is aided by Monitoring and Evaluation (Catherine, et al 2021).

MonitoringandEvaluationprovidesgreatsupporttothemanagementfunctionandcircumscribes the whole of the management, operating systems as well as the culture of an organization (Cook,2006 cited in Afomachukwu, 2021).

Identification of problems: Another great relevance of Monitoring and Evaluation is identifying different outcomes in different context and potential of a project. Even as the application of the various processes and activities of Monitoring and Evaluation to ensure errors corrected, project are delivered in accordance to specification, and timely.

Suggesting possible solution: In addition monitoring provides solution to identified problems and remedies their causes in project. From side to side Monitoring and Evaluation guarantee general quality of a project as regards to the impact it creates, value added to beneficiaries, effectiveness and efficiency of its implementation as well as sustainability (Afomachukwu, 2021).

Improving and providing quality data and information: Correspondingly, the necessary information that would greatly aid further decision on a project comes with Monitoring and Evaluation. The improving and providing quality data and information comes swiftly with Monitoring and Evaluation.

Fundamentals of Project Performance

The opinion of scholars on the measurement of project performance in the context of impact of Monitoring and Evaluation showed that the studies can be group into two based on the sources of information about project performance, the group includes the 'objective approach' and the subjective approach' group. As noted by Chang et al (2021) cited in Afomachukwu, (2021) the objective approach group are those that obtained project performance information from verifiable sources (example, secondary data), while studies in the subjective group obtained project performance information by asking stakeholders in the construction industry to provide their perception/opinion as regards the past or future performance of their projects (Jiang et al, 2021 cited Afomachukwu, (2021). In the empirical review of this study, all the studies relied on the subjective means (that is the perception/opinion of the respondent under investigation) in measuring project performance. This study is therefore not an exception, not all performance indicators of project performance can be measures using the objective approach, for example, client satisfaction can only be best measured using subjective approach (Ezeagba, 2017). Additionally, most stakeholders in the road construction industry are more

willing to give a subjective evaluation of their projects as it's allows them to provide a holistic measure of their project performance (Jiang et al, 2021; Chang, et al, 2021 cited in Afomachukwu, 2021). In view of the nature of this study, project performance fundamental dimensions exposted by Amoah and Pretorius (2019) are used. These are project cost, project scope, project quality and they are fundamental constraints. The fundamentals are used to measure the performance of a project (Amoah and Pretorius 2019). The focus of this study is, therefore, on the selected and most widely used indicators in the road construction industry and project.

Project Cost: this covers all expenses committed for the completion of the project including the preparatory costs, cost of design survey, labour, materials and equipment cost during the road construction project. Project cost is usually measured by finding the difference between actual project expenditure and estimated cost at the beginning of the project.

Project Time: this is also known as project duration which refers to estimated amount of time within which the project is expected to be completed, as timelines in project completion defines whether the project is completed within the estimated time or not. Every activity in the road construction industry is time bound and any delay in completing the project means losses from the increase in overhead, materials and labour cost.

Project Scope: this is defined as the work that needs to be carried out to create the required product with the necessary functions and features. Project scope contains the main inputs and outputs of the road construction work, including the activities and tasks to be executed with deadlines and deliverables to achieve the desired objectives.

Project Quality: this is the degree to which the outcome of a project meets the client/customers expectation and satisfaction (Abas et al, 2020).

Empirical Studies

In a related study, Abase et al, (2020) evaluated the practice of Monitoring and Evaluation in implementing public construction projects in Nigeria. The study view monitoring and evaluation based on an integrated performance evaluation framework model specifically tailored for the construction industry in Abuja Nigeria. Findings showed that the construction professional adopt the best practice of monitoring and evaluation in projects. Similarly, Onifade, et al., (2017) investigate the effect of monitoring and evaluation on project management techniques on road construction. The study's aim was to establish the success of Monitoring and Evaluation inroad construction projects in Nigeria using Julius Berger Nigeria Plc as a case study. The study employed primary information for the research that was sourced through the use of structured questionnaire gathered from 95 respondents, and personal observation and interviews in the study area. However, the findings from the study revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that Monitoring and Evaluation is vital to road construction success in Nigeria. In assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation, Ezeagba, (2017) examined the level of monitoring and evaluation and how efficient and effective it is within the construction sector in Nigeria. The study's population is 120 selected from the road project between 2012 - 2015. Primary data were collected from a stratified sample of 20 road construction contractors through the use of structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics (standard deviation, percentage and mean score) were used to analyse the quantitative data collected. Findings showed that the overall mean for effective monitoring and evaluation was 3.72, which falls within the high level, meaning that the overall level of efficiency of monitoring and evaluation in the road construction was at the high level.

Methodology of the Study

The study employed mixed method research design that combines qualitative and quantitative data collection. The quantitative data will be collected using carefully drafted closed ended questionnaires, while the qualitative will be collected using text books, journal, Newspapers report and government publication. The characteristics of the population are known and the respondents who possess the needed information are clearly determined. The population selected for the study will be administered questionnaire and oral interview to provide every detail about the impact of monitoring and evaluation on project performance in FCT Abuja. Thus, a sample of 75% respondents was selected, only 50% completed and returned their questionnaires hence they constitute that sample size population. However, a logical and objective analysis of relevant question bothering on each research questions was used to generate answer to the research question.

The simple percentage formula:

$$\frac{n}{N} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Where: n = sample size

N = size of the population

100= standard (percentage)

The chi – square formula

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(FO - FE)^2}{F}$$

Where O = observed frequency

E = expected frequency

The X^2 value from the formula is compared with the value of tabulated X^2 for a given significance level and degree of freedom. The level of significance of the use of Chi-square is at 0.05 (5%).

THE DECISION RULE

If the computed X^2 is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance obtained from the Chi-square table, then the null hypothesis (H_0) will be rejected and vice-versa.

DATA ANALYSIS

Test of Hypothesis

H_{01} : Monitoring and evaluation have actually impacted project performance of FCT Abuja

H_{02} : Monitoring and evaluation have no significant impact on project performance in FCT, Abuja.

Table 1

Table 1: Do you think a robust monitoring and evaluation is carried out at the inception, and doing all projects in FCT?

Option	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strong's disagree	Total
Response	2	3	1	25	20	50
Percentage	4%	6%	2%	50%	40%	100%

Source: field work, 2022.

The above table shows that 2 respondents strongly agree with the question and is represented by 4% 3 respondents agree and are 6% respondents were undecided and is represents by 50% while 20 respondents that is 40% strongly disagree. It can be deduced from the above table that the highest percentage of the respondents disagrees with the statement.

Respondent's in the interview section on the above question:

“Respondents were of the opinions that at the inception of the road project, proper arrangement for monitoring and evaluation officer werenot inadequate. This they belief hinder monitoring of project at the inception and during the project execution”

To test this below hypothesis (H_{01}) in table question 1 will be used.

H_{01} : Monitoring and evaluation monitoring and evaluation have actually impacted road project performance of FCDA in AMAC

Question: Do you think a robust monitoring and evaluation is carried out at the inception, and during all Road projects?						
Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Response	2	3	2	25	20	50
Percentage	4%	6%	4%	50%	40%	100

Variable	O	E	o-e	(o-e) ²	E(o-e) ²
Strongly agree	2	10	-10	100	22.5
Agree	3	10	-8	64	10.0
Undecided	3	10	-7	49	4.9
Disagree	25	10	10	100	10.0
Strongly disagree	20	10	15	225	22.5
Total	50				53.8

From the value, $x^2 c = 53.8$, x at 0.05 with df=4.95 9.28

DECISION RULE:

Accept H_{01} : if calculated x^2 is greeter that table calculated x^2 .

From the above analysis, the calculated $x^2 c 53.8$ is greater than the actual value $x^2 T=9.28$, we therefore accept hypothesis (H_{01}) which states that the highest percentage of the respondents disagrees with the statement.

Corroborating the opinions of respondent interview *“Respondents were of the opinion that at the inception of the road project proper arrangement for Monitoring and Evaluation officers was inadequate. This they belief hinders monitoring and evaluation of project at the inception and during the project execution”*

To test this below hypothesis (H_{02}) table 2 question will be used.

H_{02} : Monitoring and Evaluation have no significant impact on project performance in FCT Abuja.

Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Response	25	18	5	2	0	50
Percentage	50%	36%	10%	4%	0	100%

Source: field work 2022

Variable	O	E	o-e	(o-e) ²	(o-e) ²
Strongly agree	25	10	15	225	22.5
Agree	18	10	8	64	6.4
Undecided	5	10	-5	25	2.5
Disagree	2	10	-8	64	6.4
Strongly disagree	0	10	-10	100	10.0
Total	50				47.8

From the value $\chi^2 c = 47.8$, $\chi^2 T$ at 0.05 with df= 4 is 9.28

DECISION RULE

Accept H_{02} : if calculated χ^2 is greater that table calculated χ^2 .

From the above table analysis the calculated $\chi^2 c = 47.8$ and is greater than the value $\chi^2 T = 9.49$, we therefore accept hypothesis (H_{02}) which states that Therefore Monitoring and Evaluation have ensured project performance.

This is also in corroboration with *opinion from” interviewees were very apt on the how monitoring and evaluation can ensure the project performance. This they alludes comes from the benefits of Monitoring and evaluation in bringing about success of project timely”*

II. Findings

The study examines the role of Monitoring and Evaluation on project performance in Federal Capital Territory Abuja-Nigeria. Based on the analysis, the result revealed that project monitoring and evaluation has significant impact on project performance in Federal Capital Territory. The Chi square test carried out on the survey data-calculated was significantly greater than the t-critical. It was concluded that, Monitoring and Evaluation positively impacted project performance. The findings of this research are in line with the study of Nuguti, (2009), who posit that monitoring and evaluation has to do with applied function that is a fundamental part of project management that involves reflection and communication to support efficient and effective project implementation through informed/evidence based decision making. Based on the straight forward Chi square test carried out on the survey data, t-calculated was significantly greater than the t-critical which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis. The Chi square result shows that monitoring and evaluation is significant in project performance and completion in Federal Capital Territory Abuja implying that, an increase in monitoring and evaluation of project will cause an increase in project performance. In other words, monitoring and evaluation of project is significantly linked to increase in project performance. Several reasons may be responsible for this significant effect. The findings of this study are also in harmony with the works of Afomachukwu, (2021); Onifade, et al., (2017) where they observed that Monitoring and Evaluation in project performance system as a component of project performance strategic input which gives control over the major variables that defines the elements of the control pillar of project which includes scope, quality, resources, time and cost is very significant. Based on the analysis, the findings were as follows:

1. Monitoring and Evaluation have actually impacted project performance of FCT Abuja
2. Monitoring and Evaluation have significant impact on project performance in FCT Abuja

III. Conclusion/Recommendations

This study examined the role of monitoring and evaluation on project performance in Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The study empirically showed that monitoring and evaluation had a significant impact on project performance. Therefore, Monitoring and evaluation represent a systematic gathering of information to assist in knowing the level of project activity. And it is also an important management tools to track progress and facilitate decision making. For instance, it helps government authority like the FCT, Abuja to track the implementation of many of its projects especially roads and infrastructural project to a logical conclusion. At the same track its achievements through feasible and reliable feedback information that assist in timely decision making. Nevertheless, private sector organizations are also using, monitoring and evaluation to checkmate level of their project awareness so as to have concrete information meant towards decision-making. Meanwhile, Monitoring and Evaluation have also discovered that with Monitoring and Evaluation every level of projects and its plans open for analyses. Therefore,we conclude that monitoring and evaluations significantly impacts project performance, and positively ensure projects are completed.

IV. Recommendations

Arising from the findings above, the following recommendations are made:

1. The institutionalization of monitoring and evaluation in FCDA as well as ensuring an existence of an monitoring and evaluation department having adequate staffing with the critical knowledge of how monitoring and evaluation can impact project performance.
2. The management of the Federal Capital Development Authority should continuously ensure to invest efficiently and effective in monitoring and evaluation.
3. FCDA must also ensure the prompt usage of feedback information as gathered in monitoring and evaluation.

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Dr. Yusuf Lawal. "The Role of Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Performance in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja-Nigeria, 2017-2021." *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 24(12), 2022, pp. 50-56.