



## EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECT MANAGEMENT: EVALUATING ITS IMPACTS ON SUCCESSFUL PROJECT DELIVERY

### *Annotation:*

*This study, in a qualitative form, examined effective leadership in construction project management, evaluating its potency in successful project delivery. Through the review of various scholarly papers, it is noted that successful completion of construction projects is largely dependent on effective leadership in project management. Numerous concepts were reviewed in the course of the work which include: effective leadership, construction project management, successful project delivery, appropriate leadership style for successful project delivery in construction projects among others. This study further mentioned appropriate leadership styles for construction project management to include: democratic leadership, autocratic leadership, classes of transformational leadership (innovative leadership, innovative leadership, participatory leadership among others). The study concluded that effective leadership in construction project management is crucial for successful project delivery. One of the recommendations of the study is that project managers should ensure that they and their teams engage in continuous professional development which involves staying updated with the latest advancements in construction technologies, project management methodologies and leadership practices.*

### *Keywords:*

*Leadership, Effective Leadership, Construction, Project, Project Management, Project Delivery.*

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### **Introduction**

The successful completion of construction projects is largely dependent on effective leadership in project management. The construction industry is a multidimensional and intricate sector that involves a large number of stakeholders, strict deadlines, and significant financial commitments. Therefore, the role of leadership is not merely supervisory but is integral to navigating these complexities and ensuring that projects are completed on time, within budget, and to the required quality standards (Javed et al., 2020). In this situation, the leadership's duties include managing risk, coordinating diverse teams, and creating a cooperative atmosphere that helps the project reach its objectives.

By their very nature, construction projects provide special difficulties that call for strong leadership to solve. The industry's dynamic environment, characterized by frequent changes in project scope, unforeseen site conditions, and varying stakeholder expectations, demands a leadership style that is



both adaptive and resilient (Toor & Ofori, 2008). Construction project managers need to be highly adept at foreseeing problems, acting quickly on information, and keeping a clear vision in the face of project execution chaos. One of the key factors influencing a project's success is its capacity for effective leadership under duress.

The impact of strong leadership on team performance and project outcomes highlights the significance of this skill in construction project management. Research has shown that leadership styles directly influence the motivation and productivity of construction teams (Zou et al., 2017). For example, there is a correlation between increased levels of team engagement and project success and transformational leadership, which places an emphasis on inspiring and motivating team members. On the other hand, ineffective leadership can result in poor quality, cost overruns, and delays in the project, all of which could threaten its success.

Furthermore, strategy planning, resource allocation, and risk management are all included in effective leadership in construction project management, which goes beyond personnel management. Leaders must develop comprehensive project plans that align with organizational goals and stakeholder expectations while also being adaptable to changes and uncertainties (Yang et al., 2011). Leaders that are effective are able to strike a balance between the managerial and technical elements of project management, making sure that every aspect of the project is working together for a successful completion.

Furthermore, the cultivation of a safety culture in construction projects is contingent upon the presence of strong leadership. Construction work is high-risk, so managers need to put safety first and make sure strict safety procedures are followed. Leadership commitment to safety has been shown to significantly reduce the incidence of accidents and injuries on construction sites, contributing to overall project success (Lingard et al., 2012). This part of leadership is essential for preserving employee morale and productivity in addition to compliance and ethical considerations.

Ultimately, the dynamic nature of the construction sector, driven by technological breakthroughs and growing sustainability requirements, underscores the increased necessity for proficient leadership. Leaders must stay abreast of technological innovations, such as Building Information Modeling (BIM) and sustainable construction practices, integrating these into project management strategies to enhance efficiency and environmental performance (Chen et al., 2019). In a world where things are changing quickly, the capacity to spearhead such changes is crucial to the competitiveness and profitability of building projects.

### **Concept of Effective Leadership**

Leadership is vital to our everyday lives because it may be used to create positive experiences and situations around us. To enhance morale and improve industry outcomes, effective leaders in the construction sector don't always need to hold managerial positions. Instead, they should be able to use their leadership skills to inspire their team members and employees to follow their example. Possessing these skills can increase one's value as an employee, team member, and collaborator for the business. A skilled negotiator is also a skilled leader, as the former requires the latter to have a firm grasp of their objectives and be able to convey them to the latter. Effective leadership can also be defined as the ability to guide, inspire, and influence team members and employees to achieve common goals and drive the success of the industry or organisation (Lawal and Ekefre, 2022).

Effective leadership also requires a variety of skills, including the ability to motivate and empower subordinates, think strategically, communicate well, and have emotional intelligence. Effective leaders are not only adaptable, moral, and capable of making decisions that can be defended, but they can also foster a friendly and productive work environment. Effective leaders foster trust, improve team performance, and guarantee the long-term growth and development of their company by exhibiting these traits.



Moreover, it is asserted that the process of uniting individuals and directing them towards a single objective constitutes good leadership. Effective leadership is the ability of a leader to realise the goals of the industry and create a work environment where employees may significantly contribute to the goals of their employers. A leader must have a wide range of personal attributes in addition to professional skills in order to motivate, sway, and convert others to their viewpoint regarding the industry. These attributes include decision-making, interpersonal relations, communication, and strategic planning.

According to Jeremiah, Atiku and Villet (2023), effective leadership is about executing the company's vision, or redefining and improving it, in some cases, and setting the tone and the culture for that particular organisation. No successful organisation could have progressed to its current state without effective leadership. Effective leadership is almost always one of the most significant and essential drivers of innovation, growth, and advancement.

### **Concept of construction project management**

Construction project management is the coordination of all facets of a building project, from the pre-construction phase to the completed structure. It involves the management of people and resources to control the scope, cost, quality, and time of a construction project throughout the project's life cycle. In contrast, there are several phases involved in construction project management, including design, planning, procurement, execution, commissioning, and completion. Planning, directing, and supervising a project from start to finish is another definition of construction project management. In the field, a construction project manager is the individual or organisation in charge of coordinating, planning, budgeting, and supervising the project from beginning to end. Furthermore, they examine project ideas in order to appraise timetables and goals, cash flow requirements, project protocols, resource demands, and equipment, labour, and resource requirements at different project stages.

Furthermore, since it typically involves a wider range of constraints to take into account that are unique to the design and build of construction projects, construction project management is also defined as the managing of resources over the course of a project through various tools and methodologies to control scope, cost, time, quality, and many other factors. Throughout the course of a project, construction project management can collaborate with a wide range of other disciplines, including engineering, architecture, public works, and city planning. Moreover, construction project management is a complex discipline that requires addressing many important concerns, including cost control, scheduling, procurement, and risk assessment, as the project managers interact with all team members involved in a construction project, from architects to owners to contractors (Schieg, 2006).

Construction project management encompasses all project components from inception to completion and is applicable to projects of different sizes. It is the process of organising, supervising, and planning construction projects. As mentioned by Serpella, Ferrada, Howard and Rubio (2014), construction project management requires knowledge and information that successful construction project involves risk and the implementation of management initiatives. Since a construction plan serves as the foundation for the project's budget and schedule, it is an essential role in construction project management. If one appreciates design, watching a project come to fruition from start to finish, and the idea of working in collaboration with builders, designers, and clients throughout the building lifecycle process, then construction project management can be fulfilling (Jackson, 2020). Furthermore, the sector of construction project management is complex and requires a great degree of coordination, precision, and knowledge.

### **Concept of Successful Project Delivery**

Project delivery is the entire journey of a project, from the initial client kickoff to the final handover. Successful project delivery is a skill that takes time and experience to develop (Paine, 2023). Meredith and Zwikael (2019) explained that successful project delivery involves the project manager's performance in achieving the project plan. The project manager must have great leadership qualities



and the capacity to inspire and involve the project participants in order to deliver the project successfully. But because project management calls for a variety of abilities, know-how, and resources, it's a vital competency that helps an organisation accomplish its aims and objectives.

To keep a firm viable, project delivery must be successful. Another way to describe it is as a project that achieves its objectives and produces valuable results for the customer. Project managers should also be able to identify team members' areas of strength and develop training programmes that will enable each member to realise their full potential and complete projects successfully. According to Shanthi, Domenic, Jaffer and Alamelu (2023), the most crucial components for a project's effective completion are communication, resources (people, money, and time), and a project plan. Project delivery typically involves five stages: the initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closing stages (Meredith, Shafer & Mantel (2017).

In order to ensure a successful project delivery, the project manager must establish clear communication channels with team members and clients, create a comprehensive project plan, control project risks, and maintain client satisfaction. Since project delivery necessitates meticulous preparation and execution, it can be defined as the entire process of starting and finishing a project. Projects that satisfy business needs, are completed and maintained on time, stay under budget, and produce the anticipated business value and return on investment are all considered to have been delivered successfully.

### **Appropriate Leadership Style / Behavior for Successful Project Delivery in Construction Projects**

The following characteristics and leadership philosophies are suitable for construction projects in order to ensure successful project delivery:

**Democratic leadership:** Since they usually do effectively when a project or projects demand input from multiple professions or specialists, this leadership style encourages staff members to provide their insight into the decision being made. They acquire information from multiple sources while still making the final decision.

**Autocratic leadership:** Under this type of leadership, the leaders establish the guidelines, plan the construction project's course of action, and choose the protocol and best practices.

**Transformational leadership:** With this kind of leadership approach, managers strive to guide employees' mindfulness by enunciating a vision that escalates employees' consciousness and consideration for the significance of organizational values, goals, and performances. Transformational leaders encourages and supports their staff to accomplish project objectives in the construction sector (Khan, Rehmat, Butt, Farooqi, Asim, 2020). In the construction sector, this style of leadership functions best when staff members are motivated and supportive of the organization's objectives. A transformational leader thinks outside of the box, and always puts every project as a top priority, in the same vein, endearing his/her employees to be in the same page with him or her. One of the key features of a transformational leader is excellent communication, in which the project manager devises the use of several effective communication channels to communicate and also, creates a positive working relationships with his/her employees. Transformational leadership incorporates innovative leadership, participatory leadership, utilization of ICT, utilization of cashless policy, effective communication and consultation of experts.

➤ **Innovative leadership:** This is the practice of managing people and construction projects with inventiveness and originality is known as innovative leadership. Productivity is frequently inspired by innovative leaders in novel and unconventional ways, which enhances the successful completion of building projects. Innovation leadership in project management combines various leadership styles to influence and motivate employees to generate creative ideas for project completion (Alharbi, 2021).



- **Participatory leadership:** This type of leadership involves the leader considering the viewpoints of all members of the project team and actively including staff members in collaborative decision-making. Participatory leaders tend to focus on the growth and well-being of subordinates, which can be attributed to their sensitivity to subordinate needs. As a result of their interpersonal relationship with their subordinates, leaders influence an increase in employee loyalty (Khassawneh and Elrehail, 2022). In construction project management, this leadership style enhances productivity as employees will likewise, be more interested in the progress and efficient delivery of their project.
- **ICT utilisation:** ICT use is essential for project managers and team members alike because it enhances many aspects of successful project delivery, including efficient communication, timely and accurate information processing, news dissemination, increased productivity, and improved financial operations.
- **Cashless policy:** This strategy lowers the danger of theft, fraud, and many other issues in the construction business by allowing payments to be made by credit card or electronic device transactions. With this payment method, financial transactions are completed without the use of coins or banknotes (Okechukwu & Chukwudi 2016).
- **Knowledge sharing:** This type of leadership enhances effective communication and mutual understanding between the leader and the members of the construction industry project team by sharing information and knowledge.
- **Expert consultation:** When making critical decisions, one of a project manager's most crucial responsibilities is to contact experts. Nonetheless, professional consultations can play a crucial role in the development process and in building projects. Locating knowledgeable specialists with the experience and expertise to offer insightful advice is crucial for a project manager to implement in order to ensure the successful completion of the project (Stella, 2022).

### Some Leadership Skills for Successful Project Delivery in Construction Projects

The following are a few leadership competencies needed to complete construction projects successfully:

**Communication skill and successful project delivery:** Communication is one of the most essential roles in successful project management. The project manager cannot do without this skill because it helps in sharing information with project team members to achieve successful project delivery. However, as project managers spend most of their time coordinating efforts and communicating, communication is the most crucial component of project management. When a project manager has solid communication and listening skills, they are empowered to lead more successful projects (Giri, 2019). According to Alexander (2015), as these communication skills lead to effective leadership abilities for successful project delivery, a good project leader should be able to inspire project team members and be consistent and courteous. They should also be trustworthy, transparent, fair, confident, and able to lead by example. Irrespective of the fact that there are a few variations, it is to note that for a successful project execution the manager ensure that his communication is:

- ✓ Clear
- ✓ Concise
- ✓ Concrete
- ✓ Correct
- ✓ Coherent
- ✓ Complete





Effective communication skills help the manager to receive and convey information, ideas and messages on project management in ways that are powerful and appropriate to the specific project. Five basic communication skills include:

- ✓ written communication.
- ✓ oral communication.
- ✓ non-verbal and visual communication.
- ✓ active listening.
- ✓ contextual communication.

No matter the situation the manager needs to exhibit the above basic communication skills for a successful project delivery.

***Decision-making skill and communication delivery:*** Making decisions is the process of fixing an issue and coming up with a plan of action after weighing the options. Nonetheless, decision-making requires communication. A decision is more successful and well-informed when team members and leaders communicate with each other during the decision-making process. Additionally, it fosters creativity by providing a forum for team members to share their own thoughts (Giri, 2019). Successful project delivery can be facilitated by effective communication, which can also help with decision-making. Leaders that communicate well are better able to encourage their team members, influence contractors, and establish confidence and trust with their partners. Leaders and team members may operate more productively and efficiently when they have the instruments of communication and decision-making, which improves performance and project delivery. Decision-making skills cannot be overemphasized as it denotes all of the skills one needs to make an informed, rational decision. It is quite obvious that someone with good decision-making skills at work can assess all the facts, understand the company's current state and goal state, and choose the best course of action. Decision-making skills include:

- ✓ Problem-solving.
- ✓ Leadership.
- ✓ Reasoning.
- ✓ Intuition.
- ✓ Teamwork.
- ✓ Emotional Intelligence.
- ✓ Creativity.
- ✓ Time management.

***Team management skill and successful project delivery:*** Understanding that the effective completion of a project depends on the team's combined efforts is crucial for project managers. However, team managers are crucial to the organising, carrying out, supervising, and managing of project operations since they are responsible for fostering a collaborative and encouraging work environment in the construction industry. Project managers need to be proficient in team management because they need to be able to recognise each team member's strengths and shortcomings and distribute duties appropriately. The construction business relies heavily on team management as the cornerstone upon which it builds its success. The team manager, also known as the project manager, is in charge of the project and has the main duty of leading the team and following procedures to guarantee the project's successful completion. The following team management skills are paramount for effective and successful project execution and delivery. It means the team leader should:



- ✓ Communicate openly and transparently.
- ✓ Set clear team goals.
- ✓ Provide feedback regularly.
- ✓ Delegate tasks.
- ✓ Manage time.
- ✓ Settle team issues.
- ✓ Hire effectively and efficiently.
- ✓ Create a positive team culture.

### **Impacts of Effective Leadership on Successful Project Delivery in Construction Projects**

One important factor that determines whether building projects are successful is effective leadership. Construction projects are dynamic and complicated, requiring great leadership to manage obstacles, assemble different teams, and guarantee that projects are completed on schedule, within budget, and to the necessary quality standards. Effective leadership has the following effects on the timely and successful completion of construction projects:

**Enhanced Communication and Coordination:** Clear and open communication among project stakeholders is facilitated by effective leadership, and it is crucial in construction projects that involve a number of stakeholders, such as suppliers, subcontractors, contractors, and clients. Effective leaders ensure that all stakeholders are informed and in agreement with the project's objectives and advancement by promoting frequent and transparent communication. This reduces misunderstandings and conflicts, which can otherwise lead to project delays and cost overruns (Yang, Huang, & Wu, 2011).

**Improved Team Motivation and Productivity:** In construction projects, inspiring and motivating teams with leadership can greatly increase production. Leaders who are aware of and responsive to their team members' needs and goals have the power to uplift spirits and foster a sense of accountability and ownership. Higher levels of involvement and productivity follow, which help projects be completed on schedule and successfully (Tabassi, Ramli, & Bakar, 2012).

**Effective Problem-Solving and Decision-Making:** Construction projects frequently run into unanticipated difficulties and roadblocks. Proficient in both problem-solving and decision-making, effective leaders are able to promptly handle challenges as they emerge. Their ability to make informed and timely decisions helps to minimise disruptions and keep the project on track (Jiang, Klein, & Chen, 2001). Effective leaders are able to manage complex situations and mitigate risks by using their knowledge and judgement, which guarantees the project's success and continuity.

**Strategic Planning and Execution:** In both strategic planning and the implementation of building projects, leaders are essential. They are in charge of establishing precise goals, specifying the parameters of the project, and creating detailed plans that detail the actions required to meet the project's objectives. Proficient leaders guarantee that these strategies are painstakingly carried out, regularly reviewed, and modified as necessary to account for modifications in project circumstances or stakeholder demands (Toor & Ofori, 2008).

**Enhanced Stakeholder Management:** Diverse stakeholders with varying interests and expectations must be involved in and cooperative with construction projects. Building consensus, resolving conflicts, and negotiating these relationships are all part of effective leadership. Stakeholder commitment and support are essential for the success of a project, and leaders who can successfully engage stakeholders and address their concerns are more likely to secure these things (Aaltonen & Sivonen, 2009).



**Cultivating a Culture of Safety:** When it comes to construction projects, safety is the top priority. It is possible to drastically lower the number of accidents and injuries at work by emphasising safety and encouraging attention and adherence to safety procedures. In addition to safeguarding employees' health, this also avoids expensive project delays and the legal ramifications of workplace mishaps (Lingard, Cooke, & Blismas, 2012).

### Conclusion

Effective leadership in construction project management is crucial for successful project delivery. The complex, multifaceted nature of the construction industry requires leaders to navigate stringent timelines, financial constraints, and diverse stakeholder expectations. Robust leadership must anticipate issues, make swift decisions, and maintain a clear vision amidst dynamic challenges. Leadership directly impacts team performance and project outcomes, with transformational leadership linked to greater engagement and success. Effective leaders also ensure safety, strategic planning, and adapt to technological and sustainability advancements, vital for project success.

### Recommendations

1. Project managers should ensure that they and their teams engage in continuous professional development. This involves staying updated with the latest advancements in construction technologies, project management methodologies, and leadership practices.
2. Project managers should cultivate a collaborative and inclusive work environment where all team members feel valued and empowered to contribute. This includes promoting open communication, encouraging teamwork, and recognizing individual contributions. By fostering a culture of mutual respect and collaboration, project managers can enhance team cohesion, boost morale, and increase overall productivity.
3. Project managers should develop and implement comprehensive risk management strategies to identify, assess, and mitigate potential risks throughout the project lifecycle. This involves conducting regular risk assessments, maintaining a risk register, and establishing contingency plans.

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