



INFLUENCE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON PROJECT PERFORMANCE OF OIL FIRMS IN SOUTH SUDAN; A CASE OF NILE PETROLEUM CORPORATION

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ABSTRACT

Project and project management has been around for a very long time. Moreover, project management constitute primarily about organizing and controlling the introduction of the desired change with the aim of achieving higher performance. The main objective of this study was to establish the influence of project management practices on the performance of oil firms' in South Sudan; a case of Nile Petroleum Corporation. The specific objectives of the study were guided by three variables namely; project integration, project monitoring and project execution. Pinto's Model of Project Management theory and the General System Theory were used to underpin the study. The target population for the study was 108 employees of Nile Petroleum Corporation. A sample size of 85 employees was obtained using Coolican Formula. Structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data. Reliability of the tool was determined by testing the coefficient Cronbach's by use of SPSS Software version 24. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in percentages, mean, standard deviation. The study used inferential statistics to test the hypotheses. The study revealed project integration with $p=0.509$ did not have a statistically significant influence on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan. Secondly, project execution with $p=0.011$ showed significantly influence on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan. Finally, project monitoring with $p=0.000$ showed significantly influence on project performance of oil firms in South. The study recommended oil firms in South Sudan deploy project execution and project monitoring practices as they have a significant influence on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan.

Key Words: Project Integration, Project Monitoring, Project Execution, Project Performance

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INTRODUCTION

As an organization strives to search for new and better means of being relevant to the competitive market, need for every functional area within the organizations to operate in line with the set objectives. Therefore, project management practice by extension is considered to be a management function that constitute management of specific project that encompassess of the knowledge, skills and activities, as well as the tools and techniques, to bring about desired outcome. Therefore, due to the existing dynamics that have contributed to high levels of competitiveness experienced in the sector have expressed levels of superiority especially in the deployment of project management technique that have enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in their business processes (Shwalbe,2011).

Projectmanagement practice has created a new level of thought in which scholars and academicians have emphasized on the need for modern organization to adapt increasing focus on the execution of various tasks such as development of new products and process of re-organization by way of projects (Pinto,2010; Rocah & Albergarias,2012). Project management discipline has many components, Larson and Gray (2011) argues project management practices can be catergorized into three key management approaches that us the taditional project management (TPM) approach, adaptive project management (APM) and extreme project management(XPM). They did insist that, upon application of the three key approaches, it is worth considering the project integration managemen, executing project management and monitoring and evaluation practices which determines performance. Pinto et al., (2010) argued that an organization or an entity which applies the project management thinking techniques tend to have a positive chance of experiencing better results than those which do not.

In the study on the impact of project management methodolgies on project success oil and gas industry in the Kingdom, Bharain.Abdulla, Alhashimi, and Hamdan, (2019) assessed the

various different methodologies used along with their strengths and weaknesses. Further, they noted that the oil and gas industry in the Kingdom of Bahrain converted the arising business and technological opportunities into projects in order to grow ad achieve strategic goals. However, the project success for the oil industry and stakeholder and hence, achieving project success is an obession for the entity.

The significance of project management practice cannot be over emphasized. Aftab, Sarwar, Sarwar and Amin (2016) examined the significance of project management practice as a performance indicators on project success in the construction industry of Punjab, Pakistan. Evidently, the study noted projects of construction companies often experience poor performance in terms of cost overruns quality defects and time. The reason for poor performance majorly attributed by lack of proper strategic planning skills, improper monitoring and evaluation techniques and leadership practices. The possible reponse to the poor performance that is considered to be most beneficial was to ensure that project team leaders and project managers in construction organization should adjust their focus on the key components that consist project management thinking that helps in the project success.

Many studies on projct practices have been undertaken globally.Haron, et al., (2017) examined a study of project management practices and its effect on project success in Malaysian construction industry. However, it was well established that project management practice has greatly contributed to the rapid economic development which has increased the demand for construction infrastructure and facilities globally. As a matter of fact, the sustainable development and globalization are the new 'Zeitgeist' of the 21st century. In order to implement project success and meet the functional aim of the projects within their lifetime, an effeicient projct mangement thinking technique is needed. The aim of the study was to establish the critical success factors (CSFs) and the extent of use

of project management practice techniques which affects performance especially during the implementation stage. Nguyen, Phan, and Matsui, (2018) established that need for contribution of quality project management practices to sustainability performance of Vietnamese Firms. Their focus was to establish an existing relationship between quality project management practices and sustainability performance as well as the moderating effects on quality management implementation timeline, type of industry and firm size on this relationship. It was evident that existence of quality project management practices that significantly have a positive impact on sustainability; top management support for quality management, design for quality, quality data and reporting, and continuous improvement. As a matter of fact, these factors are considered to be critical quality management factors that significantly contribute to sustainability goals.

In a study on Ethiopian construction project management maturity model determination in relation to project management practice and project success. Hailemarkos (2020) found although the construction industry was booming, effective practice of effective project delivery in time, cost and quality remained a challenge. As a matter of fact project success comes through the application of knowledge-based, critically essentials factors. The industry's effectiveness is dictated by the level of project management knowledge built in each company. Ofori, (2014) conducted an exploratory study of project management practices and level of competence of projects in Ghana. The emphasis was that project outcomes in Ghana have been adjudged to be poor as a result of how projects are managed, the form of project management takes, and the project management approaches used. As a matter of fact, based emphasis on the fact that low project management practices has been known to be a contributory factor to how projects have been managed in Ghana (Ofori,2014). The author further used a sample of 200 managers upon administration of a

competence scores that was used to determine organizational project management competency levels. The findings suggested that Ghanaian managers did possess varying degrees of project integration, human resource, communication, quality, risk and scope management competencies.

The findings of a study on influence of project management practice on completion of National Government Constituency Development Fund Projects in Kenya; a case of Educational projects in Mwingi West Constituency, Kitui County by Musyoka, 2020. used four objectives namely; to determine how scope management influences the completion of NG-CDF project in Mwingi West Constituency; to examine how stakeholder participation influences completion of NG-CDF projects in Mwingi West Constituency; to establish how monitoring and evaluation influences completion of NG-CDF projects in Mwingi West Constituency and to examine how risk management influences completion of NG-CDF projects in Mwingi West Constituency found a positive association between scope management, stakeholder's participation, monitoring and evaluation and risk management on completion of NG-CDF projects.

Within the IGAD region, anecdotal evidence shows firms have extensively been employing the project management practice approaches to implement their new undertakings (Omenye, 2013). Evidently, it shows that close to 80 percent of the top executives have tend to believe that project management thinking is the core competence in assisting the organization achieve and sustain competitiveness. The fact that the organization is committed to embracing the project management commitments can constitute to better results in the long run (Shawlbw, 2011; Oliomogbe & Smith, 2013). To ensure that the organization is able to achieve its objective in the end and by extension stay relevant in the market, it is worthwhile to adapt the project management thinking approach, which is of benefit in the end.

Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study was to examine the influence of project management practices on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan with a focus of Nile Petroleum Corporation. The specific objectives were;

- To establish the influence of project integration on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan.
- To determine the influence of project execution on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan.
- To examine the influence of project monitoring on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan.

The study was guided by the following research hypothesis;

- H01: Project Integration has no significant influence on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan.
- H02: Project Execution has no significant influence on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan.
- H03: Project Monitoring has no significant influence on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was guided by Pinto's Model of Project Management and General System Theory

Pinto's Model of Project Management

Pinto (1986) developed the critical success factor (CSFs) model that aimed at giving information in regards to the existing stages in enhancing project performance. Evidently, the need of ensuring that efficient execution of project performance, need for sustainability is critical in every stage of project regardless of the size or type of the project that is to be undertaken. It is well noted, that project performance of a project is determined by the sustainability in most cases, which clearly depicts its relevance aimed at achieving the required goals and target within time, cost and quality constraints. Therefore, a project management practice is a clear

description on certain aspects that determines project success that is aimed at achieving goal and target within time, cost and quality constraints. As such, the performance of the project cannot be known to be sustainable in a scenario where it fails to deliver cost, performance, time or scope intended by the project team/manager. As such, evaluating project considerations on all stages in quite critical in enhancing performance.

To manage projects effectively, Pinto (1986) provided 10 critical factors aimed to aid in meeting project goals. The model first emphasizes on project mission, which aims at providing clear definition of goals and direction of the project. Management team must breakdown the goals of the project into simple terms with clear definition for its team members. In addition, top management support provides necessary resources and authority of power to spearhead the projects to meet sustainability. The third stage focuses on project scheduling or plans, which involved providing a detailed specification of each team member's role and actions in meeting project goals.

Moreover, the model requires project management team to have client consultation that addresses regular communication and consultation with all parties involved in the project. Communication is essential in determining the sustainability of each project as it allows members to share the roles and discuss challenges that may arise during project implementation. Knowledge and skillful personnel is required in the team and this is only possible through effective recruitment, selection and training of project team members. The sixth factor focuses on technical tasks. Pinto (1986) indicated that some tasks during project implementation might require information systems (IS), technology and expertise to be completed.

In addition, the seventh factor addresses the act of selling the final project to the intended user through client acceptance basis. Most projects tend to fail when their intended users are not effectively identified. Monitoring and feedback provide timely supervision and comprehensive control of

information in each stage of project management to enhance sustainability. Communication factor provides appropriate network and necessary data for all key team members. The last factor is trouble shooting which require project management team to have contingency plans in dealing with the unknowns in each stage of project development.

This theory is very important to this study since it emphasizes ten critical factors that project management team and project managers must identify, analyze and implement to enhance project sustainability. Majority of projects tend to fail at the initial stage due to poor planning, environmental scanning as well as lack of clear definition of project goals. Project performance is effective when all the project constraints are met through effective successful factors as explained by Pinto (1986). This theory anchored all the three objectives of this study.

General System Theory

The General System Theory identifies the existence of certain system that is properly coordinated to achieve a certain goal objective (Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), 2004). In this theory, the system is subdivided into a collection of part of system. Usually, all pieces go together, and while it can indeed, function if one part is taken out, then the functionality is considered impaired and system itself has to change (Baridi & Polese, 2010). Usually, the parts are organized and tend to interact with each other will give a clear definition of the properties of the system. The behavior of the system is by extension independent of the properties of the elements noted as the holistic approach to understanding phenomena (Mele, 2013).

In line with Skyttner (2005), emphasizes on the existence of several tenets and subsequent important implication associated with the application of the GST Theory to the field of project management systems. First, the overview concept is that it is an open system, that offers the surrounding environment by following a set determinants and explanation of its behavior and

controlling its fortunes will depend on the environment. Therefore, the project management control system should be in a position of meeting the needs of the environment so at enhance performance.

Secondly, the GST viewpoint when applied in project management tend to affirm that the project system tend to exhibit a certain behavior. In that, the project should always a set goal objective that need to be achieved which is directly or indirectly communicated to the members. It is indeed the duty of the management to constantly keep in track that the objectives for the project are clearly understood through the enculturation of the project mission and vision. Normally, the members of the project must be made to appreciate that a goal is not something but rather ascribed to them in the process of studying and carrying out the project as a system (Skyttner, 2005).

The third principal of the general system theory is the actual notion of a system that is considered a set of shared relationship subsystems, in which they are known to be structural components such as information, authority or delegation. The rest can take a form of cultural and behavioral like motivating factors and build the right values. The management practices tend to play a critical role in ensuring that these components are in play and they contribute towards the sustainability of the project (Skyttner, 2005).

The Fourth principal is that the system possess of constant process in which the need for taking inputs and transforming them into output. Normally, the project organizations usually has an input, which are instead converted into output. Therefore, for project managers, it is their soul responsibility to ensure that they possess a clear understanding on the situation to get the right inputs, which leads to the designing of good sustainable management and control (Skyttner, 2005).

The Firth concept is the need for feedback, which is considered very significant in having a clear project management system. Usually, getting proper

feedback constitute to the achievement of desired purpose. The feedback loops include the first error control feedback and forward control. The error control feedback constitute to a system which utilizes set of information that are obtained from small errors to take remedial actions, whereas the forward control constitute to the anticipatory of outcomes by taking corrective measures that are in line with the system (Measham & Lumbasi,2013).

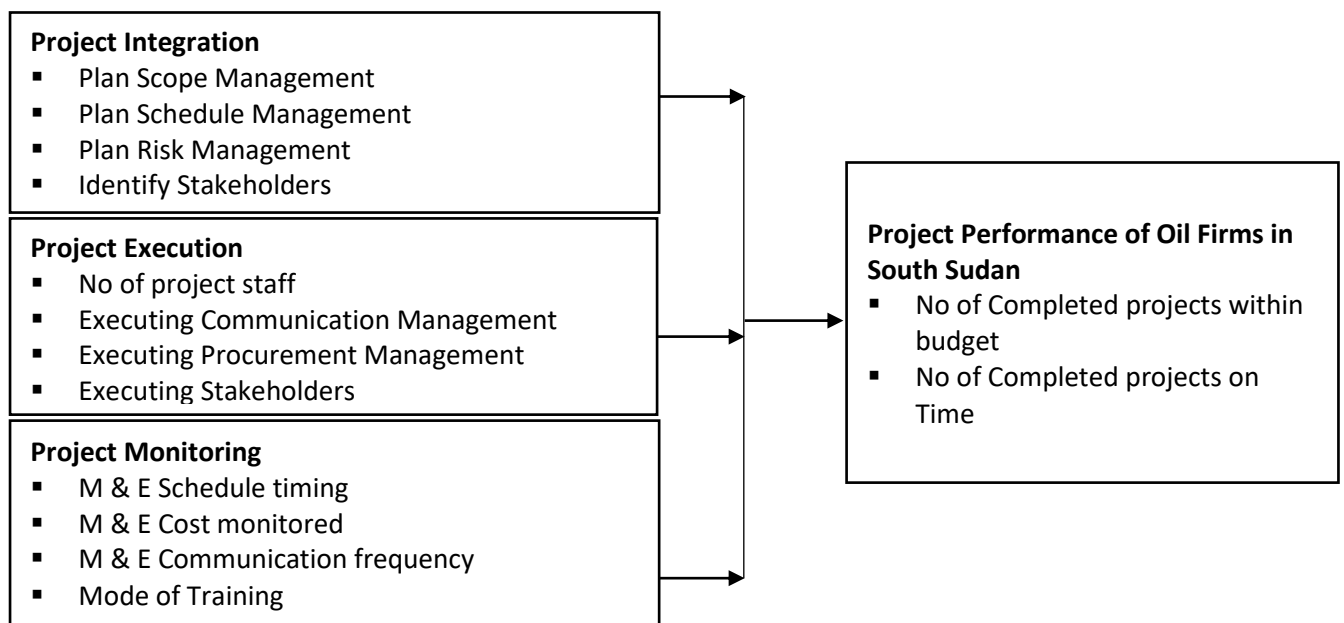
The sixth concept is the ability of a system to achieve the state of dynamic equilibrium or improved state. Usually, the state is not similar to the first state from which the initially started. The key aspect in designing a control system is the ongoing improvements unlike maintenance of status quo. This must keep scanning their environment and work on the way to operate to maximize their potential to survive for a long period (Barise & Palise, 2010). The concept of equifinal known to be the final concept in which the project management performance seeks to possess a kind

of a designer from acquiring into the better way of conducting things. The concept tend to possess effects from the same event brings the attention of the designer to look for possible ways within the system to get a change that will constitute an impact in achieving the goals of the organization. Therefore, the project manager should remain at a very high alert in the bid of acquisition of new strategies and methods tend to be of significant in achieving the desired objective.

This theory is significant to this study as it a picture of the vital components which are in association with a project. In order for a project to improve its performance need for incorporating in association with environment, purposeful behavior, feedback, inputs and outputs process, interrelation of subsystems and equifinal. The management does play a vital role in embracing project system. This theory underpinned all the three objectives of this study.

Conceptual Framework

The study was based on the conceptual framework present in figure 1 below;



Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Source: Author (2022)

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted both quantitative and descriptive research design. Actually, the adoption of quantitative design was greatly attributed by the need for observation and possible interviewing of the staff members working at Nile Petroleum Corporation who are greatly linked by project management thinking capabilities. Moreover, the necessity for administering descriptive research design is of significance in trying to gain in-depth info associated with project management thinking. However, it is worth noting that the researcher was in a position of having sufficient knowledge associated with the influence of project management thinking on the performance of oil firms in South Sudan and its beneficiaries. The target population in this study constituted all the stakeholders at Nile Petroleum Cooperation which consisted 108 employees comprised of senior officer, middle level management, supervisors staff and operational staffs fully employed by Nile Petroleum Corporation. Coolican (2014) which was of significance in establishing the specific number, which represented the target population, calculated the study sample size using the formula was 85. The researcher administered primary data collection tool since he was a stakeholder at Nile Petroleum Corporation. Moreover, the use of survey questionnaires was effective to all the respondents that was selected for the study to obtain primary data and information on the variables on study. The questionnaire consisted of structured questions that were closed and open ended. Data processing and analysis is important in deducing findings in a study. Quantitative data from the questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS version 21 to determine the frequencies and percentages of certain responses. The influence between independent variables (project management thinking) and dependent variables which is performance of oil firms in the study was measured through multiple regression analysis in order to find out influence on each other. The regression model was of the form;

$$STS = \beta_0 + \beta_1PI + \beta_2PP + \beta_3PE + \beta_4PMC + \epsilon$$

Where, STS = Success of turnaround strategy

β_0 = Constant

β_i = Regression coefficients relating to the PMLC processes

PI = Project integration

PM = Project monitoring

PE = Project execution

P = Performance

ϵ = Error term

The regression coefficients computed indicated the magnitude or strength of effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Presentation of results for both the descriptive and inferential statistics will be through tables and figures.

FINDINGS

Project Integration

The study aimed to establish the influence of project integration on project performance using a 5 – point Likert scale where 5 – Strongly Agree (SA), 4 – Agree (A), 3 – Neutral (N), 2 – Disagree (D), and 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD). The results in Table 1 showed that the responses had a composite mean of 4.08 > 3.0 set benchmark. The finding implied that respondents agreed with various items regarding the influence of project integration on the project performance of Oil Firms. About the statement under scope management as the first indicator of project integration, 65% of the respondents agreed that plan scope management “reduces the chances of the project and performance failure” with a mean of 4.04. About 64% of the respondents agreed that plan scope management “is a major factor that enhances monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of project performance” with a mean of 3.99. In addition, 63% agreed that plan scope management “is key in providing a roadmap on how to ensure the performance of Oil Firms” with a mean of 3.92. Though a few of the respondents disagreed with these items provided under plan scope management, the findings, however, imply that

project integration influences the performance of a project, particularly those in oil industries.

Table 1 also demonstrated that approximately 54% of the respondents agreed with the plan schedule management statement “it bridges the time gap as it defines the project timeframe” with a mean of 4.06. 51 percent of the respondents agreed that plan schedule management “ensures project standardization via policies and procedures

documentation that improves performance” with a mean of 4.08. Other 51% of the respondents also agreed that plan schedule management “aims at ensuring that the project is completed on time” with a mean of 4.14. Though a few of the respondents disagreed with these statements, the majority, however, agreed that plan schedule management is part of project integration that influences the project performance of oil firms.

Table 1: Project Integration and Performance Level of Agreement Outcome

Statement	Outcome (F, %)					Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	N	D	SD		
Plan scope management							
It is key in providing a roadmap on how to ensure the performance of oil firms	18(18)	65(63)	17(17)	-	3(3)	3.92	0.776
It’s a major factor that enhances M&E of performance	21(20)	66(64)	12(12)	2(2)	2(2)	3.99	0.760
It reduces the chances of project and performance failure	22(21)	67(65)	11(11)	2(2)	1(1)	4.04	0.699
Plan schedule management							
It bridges the time gap as it defines the project timeframe	29(28)	56(54)	14(14)	3(3)	1(1)	4.06	0.790
It ensures project standardization via policies and procedures documentation	32(31)	52(51)	15(15)	3(3)	1(1)	4.08	0.813
It aims at ensuring that the project is complete on time	34(33)	52(51)	15(15)	1(1)	1(1)	4.14	0.768
Plan risk management							
It is a key area of consideration to mitigate unforeseen risks	31(30)	54(52)	14(14)	4(4)	-	4.09	0.768
Enhances confidence in the execution of tasks to improve performance	31(30)	59(57)	11(11)	2(2)	-	4.16	0.683
Provides a backup plan to ensure continuity in the event of a breakdown	39(38)	50(49)	12(12)	2(2)	-	4.22	0.727
Composite Mean						4.08	

*Percent are in Brackets; F – Frequency

Finally, as indicated in table 1 of the study, 57% of the respondents agreed with a statement under plan risk management that “it enhances confidence in the execution of tasks to improve performance with a mean of 4.16. About 52% agreed that plan risk management “is a key area of consideration to mitigate unforeseen risks” with a mean of 4.09. In addition, 49% agreed that plan risk management “provides back-up plan to ensure continuity of a project in the event of a breakdown” with a mean of 4.22. Therefore, a high mean and frequency results suggest that respondents agreed that plan

risk management is a component of project integration that influences project performance.

Project Execution

The study further sought to establish the influence of project execution on project performance using a 5 – point Likert scale where 5 – Strongly Agree (SA), 4 – Agree (A), 3 – Neutral (N), 2 – Disagree (D), and 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD). The results as shown in Table 2 indicated a composite mean of 3.97 > 3.0. This suggested that respondents agreed with different items given on the influence of project

execution on the project performance of oil firms. Under executing human resource management (HRM) indicator statements, the results show that 63% of the respondents agreed, "Qualified and competent personnel are the pillars of project success" with a mean of 4.07. About 58% of the respondents agreed, "HRM is a core component in realizing the project success" with a mean of 4.01. Additionally, 55% also agreed That "HRM determines the sustainability of project performance" with a mean of 3.94. While the study also reported a level of disagreement from a minority of the respondents, findings imply that project execution is very important. It may be

significant in designing HRM practices that are linked to project execution practice, thus, influences the project performance.

About communication management statements as an indicator of project execution, 64% of the respondents agreed, "it manages a diverse cultural workforce in harmony to ensure motivation" with a mean of 4.01. 60% agreed, "It provides a platform to explore a technology that enhances project performance" with a mean of 3.95. Additionally, as reported in Table 2, 55% agreed, "it provides exposure to information relevant for project sustainability" with a mean of 4.04.

Table 2: Project Execution and Performance Level of Agreement Outcome

Statement	Outcome (F, %)					Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	N	D	SD		
Executing HRM							
HRM is a core component in realizing project success.	23(23)	60(58)	18(18)	2(2)	-	4.01	0.693
Qualified and competent personnel are the pillars of project success	25(24)	65(63)	9(9)	3(3)	1(1)	4.07	0.731
HRM determines the sustainability of project performance	24(23)	57(55)	15(15)	6(6)	1(1)	3.94	0.838
Communication management							
It provides a platform to explore a technology that enhances project performance.	21(20)	62(60)	15(15)	4(4)	1(1)	3.95	0.772
It manages a diverse cultural workforce in harmony to ensure motivation.	22(21)	66(64)	10(10)	4(4)	1(1)	4.01	0.747
Provides exposure to information relevant for project sustainability	27(26)	57(55)	17(17)	-	2(2)	4.04	0.779
Procurement management							
It is key in acquiring quality items for project success.	18(18)	62(60)	20(19)	2(2)	1(1)	3.91	0.729
Its policies ensure quality assurance is adhered to when dealing with project suppliers.	16(16)	70(68)	16(16)	1(1)	-	3.98	0.594
Properly managing all procurement activities saves money, time, and resources.	25(24)	65(63)	10(10)	3(3)	-	4.08	0.670
Stakeholder management							
Provides expertise that increases the feasibility of the project's success.	23(22)	60(58)	15(15)	5(5)	-	3.97	0.751
Creates positive relationships that trigger pump-in resources to support the project's success.	15(15)	61(59)	19(18)	7(7)	1(1)	3.80	0.809
It promotes public confidence and the reputation needed for the project's success.							
Composite Mean	26(25)	49(48)	17(17)	7(7)	4(4)	3.83	1.011
						3.97	

*Percent are in Brackets; F – Frequency

The findings showed that there is a good level of agreement that project execution influences project performance. The study also provided different items under procurement management as part of project execution. Table 2 outcome showed that around 68% of the respondents agreed, "Its policies ensure that quality assurance is adhered to when dealing with project suppliers" with a mean of 3.98. Further, 63% agreed, "properly managing all procurement activities saves money, time, and resources" with a mean of 4.08. Likewise, 60% agreed, "it is a key in acquiring quality items for project success" with a mean of 3.91. The findings implied that there exists a general feeling that if procurement management is done properly as part of project execution, it influences the project performance of oil companies.

Similarly, under stakeholder management items as an indicator of project execution, 59% of the respondents agreed, "it creates a positive relationship that triggers pump-in resources to support project success" with a mean of 3.80 as provided. Around 58% agreed, "It provides the expertise that increases the feasibility of project success" with a mean of 3.97. In addition, 48% agreed, "it promotes public confidence and reputation needed for the project success" with a mean of 3.83. This finding suggests that as an indicator of project execution, the majority of the respondents agree that stakeholder management is integral for the project performance of oil firms.

Project Monitoring

Similarly, the examination examined the influence of project monitoring on project performance using a 5 – point Likert scale where 5 – Strongly Agree (SA), 4 – Agree (A), 3 – Neutral (N), 2 – Disagree (D), and 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD). Findings were shown in Table 3 of the study. The outcome revealed a composite mean of 3.87 > 3.0 suggesting that respondents agreed with various project monitoring items and their influence on project performance. In detail, under M&E scope items, 59% of the respondents agreed, "it provides a basis

upon which a project can be analyzed to improve feasibility" with a mean of 3.93. 54% agreed, "M&E scope act as a tool for mitigating project risks to improve performance" with a mean of 3.85. In addition, approximately 52% of the majority agreed, "it helps in assessing the success and performance of the project" with a mean of 3.65. The results infer that there is a general good feeling (agreement) among the respondents that M&E scope as an indicator of project monitoring influences project performance.

Consequently, the study provided additional M&E schedule items as an indicator of project monitoring. The results showed that 57% of the respondents agreed, "It enables scheduling of activities and resources to ensure project crashing and reduced duration" with a mean of 3.92. Roughly, 55% agreed that "it is effective in formulating plans and strategies necessary for project review" with a mean of 3.84. Finally, under M&E scheduling, another 55% of the respondents agreed, "it ensures tracking progress toward common indicators across related projects" with a mean of 3.89. Therefore, in general, the findings denote that majority of the respondents agreed that M&E scheduling through project monitoring influences project performance.

Regarding the items related to M&E cost as an indicator of project monitoring, the results demonstrated that 62% of the respondents agreed with the statement that "it monitors any negative financial deviation and corrects the errors back to the standards" with a mean of 3.88. Close to 57% of the respondents also agreed with the statement "it provides a cost-effective plan to enable the project to operate within the set budget" with a mean of 3.92. Lastly, 54% also agreed, "it ensures resource wastages are reduced significantly to improve performance" with a mean of 3.94. Based on the respondents' level of agreement as displayed in Table 3, the findings suggest that respondents agreed that project monitoring influences the project performance of oil companies.

Table 3: Project Monitoring and Performance Level of Agreement Outcome

Statement	Outcome (F, %)					Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	N	D	SD		
M&E scope							
It provides a basis upon which a project can be analysed to improve feasibility.	18(18)	61(59)	23(22)	1(1)	-	3.93	0.661
It helps in assessing the success and performance of the project.	29(28)	53(52)	16(16)	5(5)	-	3.65	0.607
M&E scope act as a tool for mitigating project risks to improve performance.	21(20)	56(54)	18(18)	6(6)	2(2)	3.85	0.879
M&E schedule							
It is effective in formulating plans and strategies necessary for project review.	19(18)	57(55)	21(20)	4(4)	2(2)	3.84	0.837
It enables scheduling of activities and resources to ensure project crashing and reduced duration.	22(21)	59(57)	16(16)	4(4)	2(2)	3.92	0.837
It ensures tracking progress toward common indicators across related projects.	22(21)	57(55)	17(17)	5(5)	2(2)	3.89	0.862
M&E cost							
It provides a cost-effective plan to enable the project to operate within the set budget.	23(22)	59(57)	13(13)	8(8)	-	3.92	0.808
It monitors any negative financial deviation and corrects the errors back to the standards.	19(18)	64(62)	13(13)	3(3)	4(4)	3.88	0.878
It ensures resource wastages are reduced significantly to improve performance.	21(20)	56(54)	17(17)	5(5)	4(4)	3.94	0.767
Composite Mean						3.87	

*Percent are in Brackets; F – Frequency

Inferential Statistics Results

The section presented the findings on correlation and regression analysis.

Correlation Analysis

As shown in Table 4, the results show a weak insignificant correlation (r) between project integration and project performance of oil companies ($r = 0.087$, $p = 0.385 > 0.05$). The finding

implied that there exists a weak linear relationship between the two variables of the study. About the second objective of the study, project execution, the findings indicate a perfect positive and moderate significant correlation between project execution and project performance of oil companies ($r = 0.422$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This finding suggests that there exists a perfect positive linear correlation between the study variables.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis Outcome

Variables		Project performance	Project integration	Project execution	Project monitoring
Project performance	Pearson correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	103			
Project integration	Pearson correlation	0.087	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.385			
	N	103	103		
Project execution	Pearson correlation	0.422**	0.255**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.009		
	N	103	103	103	
Project monitoring	Pearson correlation	0.572**	0.170	0.423**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.086	0.000	
	N	103	103	103	103

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 and 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Lastly, the study outcome demonstrates a perfect positive and strong significant correlation between project monitoring and project performance of oil companies ($r = 0.572$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). The result suggests a perfect positive linear correlation between the study variables. Therefore, of the three independent variables of the study (Table 4), findings showed a strong and linear correlation between project monitoring and project performance followed by project execution. Project integration has the lowest and weakest positive correlation coefficients.

Regression Analysis

The multiple regression output included a model summary, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and

regression coefficient. As indicated in Table 5, the study established an R of 0.608 inferring a significantly positive and strong linear correlation between project integration, execution, and monitoring and project performance of oil companies. The study also reported an R-Square of 0.369 (which was derived from 11.480/31.097 as shown under Sum of Squares in the ANOVA. Therefore, the R^2 of 0.369 show project integration, execution, and monitoring elucidate 35.0% variability in the project performance of oil companies. This suggests that around 65% of another variability in the project performance could be influenced by other project management practices not explained in the current study.

Table 5: Model Summary Outcome

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
1	0.608 ^a	0.369	0.350	0.44514	1.449

a. Predictors: (Constant), Project integration, Project execution, Project monitoring

b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

In addition, Table 5 of the study results showed an overall ANOVA model, which projects the overall influence of project management practices (project integration, execution, and monitoring) on the project performance of oil companies. The degree of freedom (df) or F (3, 99) and the significance

level of $0.000 < 0.05$ are shown. Additionally, and F – Statistics of 19.913 (which was derived from Mean Square 3.827/0.198) is reported. The reported findings show that there is sustainable strong evidence that the regression model fits the study in testing the proposed hypothesis.

Table 6: ANOVA Output Outcome

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	11.480	3	3.827	19.313	0.000 ^b
Residual	19.617	99	0.198		
Total	31.097	102			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Project integration, Project execution, Project monitoring

b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

Table 6 also indicated the overall multiple regression coefficients of the study. The established outcome shows that both project execution and project monitoring have positive regression coefficients at a 0.05 significance level. However, project integration had a negative regression coefficient, not within the 0.05 significance level. Generally, the findings show that there exists an inverse relationship between project integration and project performance of Oil Companies ($B =$

$-0.065, p = 0.509 > 0.05$). About project execution, the study reports a weak but significant positive relationship between project execution and project performance of Oil Companies ($B = 0.287, p = 0.011 < 0.05$). Finally, the results demonstrated a strong and significant positive relationship between project monitoring and project performance of Oil Companies ($B = 0.484, p = 0.000 < 0.05$).

Table 7: Overall Multiple Regression Coefficients Outcome

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.134	0.513		2.212	0.029
Project integration	-0.065	0.099	-0.055	-0.663	0.509
Project execution	0.287	0.111	0.232	2.577	0.011
Project monitoring	0.484	0.089	0.483	5.467	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance of Oil Companies

The study proposed a multiple regression model equation as shown:

$$Y = 1.134 - 0.065X_1 + 0.287X_2 + 0.484X_3$$

As depicted in the established equation, the study established a strong and significantly positive influence of project monitoring on project performance. This point to the fact as to the increased focus of project monitoring over the years including establishing monitoring scope, Monitoring schedule, and monitoring cost. In addition, there exists a significant positive influence of project execution on the project performance of Oil Companies. However, the study established an insignificant influence of project integration on project performance. The findings point to the need for project management practices to provide more

emphasis on integration as an important element of project performance.

Additionally, taking project integration (X_1), project execution (X_2), and project monitoring (X_3) at zero, the study reports that the project performance of Oil Companies will be 1.134. Accordingly, significant changes or increases in the implementation of project execution and project monitoring practices would results in improved project performance of Oil Companies by 0.287 and 0.484 respectively. However, a unit increase in project integration practices would result in reduced project performance by 0.065. Generally, project monitoring had the greatest and significant influence on project performance followed by project execution. Project integration came last as it has an inverse influence on the project performance of Oil Firms.

DISCUSSIONS

Project Integration

Project Integration offers a clear description on the components that extract performance of the project thus translation of information into a common object model. The study sought to establish the influence of project integration on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan. Based of descriptive findings of the study, the results revealed that respondents agreed that project integration enhanced project performance of oil firms in South Sudan. The study also performed correlation analysis between project integration and project performance of oil firms in South Sudan. The results established that there is a positive correlation between project integration and performance of oil firms in South Sudan. Indeed, this was attributed to plan scope management, plan scheduling, calculation of risk, and stakeholders' identification.

Project Execution

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of project execution on performance of oil firms in South Sudan. Further, the firm through the specific project managers should focus on implementation technique that gives an overview of the progress of the project. Based on the descriptive findings, the study established that on overall, the respondents agreed the project execution tends to improve the project performance of oil firms. Additionally, the study indicated that there was a positive correlation between project execution and performance of oil firms in South Sudan.

Project Monitoring

Project monitoring is the process that involves keeping track of all projects related metrics that constitute of team performance and task duration. This study sought to examine the influence project monitoring on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan; a case of Nile Petroleum Corporation.

Based on the descriptive findings of the study, the results revealed that respondents agreed that project monitoring determines the performance of oil firms in South Sudan.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that project integration does not have a significant influence on project performance of oil firms in South Sudan. The firm should incorporate plan scope management, plan schedule management, plan risk management and stakeholder identification, which constitute to the overall performance of the firm. On the hand, attributes of project execution, which includes the number of project staff members, executing communication management and executing procurement management, which by extension has a statistically significant influence on performance. Finally, project monitoring which involves having a proper scheduling timing, cost monitoring, communication frequency and mode of training does enhance the performance of oil firms in South Sudan.

Based on the above findings, the researcher recommended the following;

Project Integration should be considered because it provides coordination and synchronization throughout the project lifecycle although it does not have a significant influence on performance of oil firms in South Sudan. That is because based on descriptive statistics derived in this study it ensures the running smoothly of a project, creation of a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Project Execution does improve the chances of achieving the desired result, which is the overall goal for the oil firms. Actually, it gains fresh perspectives on the project, and what business strategy that needs to be applied. Project Monitoring offers an overview of improved level of transparency that is ensures that resources are utilized efficiently helps organization to learn from the mistakes and improves decision-making.

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