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Research Paper

# Communication Skills and Timely Delivery of NGO Projects in Lagos State: A Study of Female Project Managers

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**Abstract**

The timely delivery of projects is a critical factor in the success of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), particularly in dynamic environments like Lagos State, Nigeria. However, many NGOs face challenges in meeting project deadlines because of ineffective communication among project managers. This study specifically focuses on female project managers because they have been shown to bring unique perspectives to project management, yet their role in the timely delivery of NGO projects has been underexplored. This study examined the influence of female project managers' communication skills on the timely delivery of NGO projects in the Alimosho Local Government Area of Lagos State. Adopting a survey research design, the study targeted female project managers at NGOs, with a sample size of 57, of which 49 valid responses were used for analysis. The study employed a questionnaire as the primary research instrument, and the reliability of the instrument was assessed using a test-retest method, while content and face validity were used to measure its validity. A simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The results revealed a significant positive relationship between female project managers' communication skills and timely delivery of NGO projects ($R^2$ = .590, p-value = .000). The findings highlight the critical role of communication skills in ensuring the success of NGO projects. Based on these results, it is recommended that NGOs in Lagos State prioritize the development and enhancement of communication skills in female project managers through targeted training programs, enabling them to navigate project complexities, foster collaboration, and ultimately achieve more timely and impactful project outcomes that contribute to sustainable social change within their communities.

**Keywords** *Project, Project manager, Female project manager, Timely delivery of project*

## INTRODUCTION

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play an indispensable role in addressing the complex social, economic, and environmental challenges faced by communities worldwide. Their efforts, ranging from poverty alleviation and health care provision to environmental conservation, significantly impact the lives of millions. However, the success of these initiatives depends heavily on the timely delivery of projects. Delays can disrupt resource allocation, hinder the realization of intended benefits and damage public trust (Albtoush et al., 2022; Ofori, 2020). Efficient project timelines ensure that NGOs optimize resources, deliver aid when needed, and maintain momentum for sustainable change (Gowan & Mathieu, 2015; Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016).

In recent years, the increasing representation of women in leadership roles across NGO sectors has brought about a transformative shift, especially in project management (Alqahtani, 2019; Chatterjee & Bhowal, 2022). Female leaders are recognized for their ability to foster inclusive environments, enhance collaboration, and effectively manage diverse teams. Communication, often highlighted as a critical skill in leadership, is particularly emphasized in the success of project management, where clear articulation of goals, effective stakeholder engagement, and team alignment are pivotal (Baccarini, 1999; Acker & Astley, 2009; Markovic et al., 2013). Research indicates that female leaders frequently excel in active listening, open dialog, and collaborative decision-making—qualities linked to improved project outcomes (Gitau, 2015; Lamprou & Vagiona, 2018; Anindo, 2021).

While communication is undeniably crucial, the unique challenges of managing projects in Lagos, Nigeria, complicate the scope of leadership effectiveness. Lagos, with a population exceeding 21 million, is characterized by a high level of urbanization, strained infrastructure, and dynamic socio-political conditions (Worldometer, 2024; Buyani, 2015). Limited funding access, infrastructural inadequacies, and bureaucratic inefficiencies often impede project timelines (Silva et al., 2016; Alan et al., 2017; Kariuki, 2015). Furthermore, the city's diversity introduces complexities in stakeholder engagement, requiring leaders to navigate cultural nuances and manage divergent expectations while ensuring alignment with project objectives (Tahir, 2019; Lawal & Hammed, 2023). These contextual challenges require nuanced strategies and adaptive management skills.

The rise of female project managers among Lagos NGOs highlights a shift toward greater gender diversity in leadership. Studies have suggested that female project managers may have inherent strengths in fostering trust, building relationships, and maintaining transparency—qualities critical to overcoming Lagos' project landscape (Alshammari, 2020; Jing et al., 2022; Amade et al., 2015). However, the existing literature largely overlooks how female project managers navigate these contextual barriers, particularly in developing countries where resources are constrained and organizational processes are often inefficient (Subramanian et al., 2016; Markovic et al., 2013).

A critical gap exists in the understanding of the interplay between communication skills and other factors influencing project timelines in Lagos NGOs. While communication has been extensively linked to project success across industries, such as construction and oil and gas, limited research addresses its relative weight compared to factors like resource availability and organizational capacity in NGO settings (Anindo, 2021; Alqahtani, 2019). Additionally, the existing body of knowledge does not adequately explore the lived experiences of female leaders in navigating the specific socio-political and logistical challenges of Lagos (Buyani, 2015; Tahir, 2019; Gitau, 2015).

This study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the relationship between female project managers' communication skills—encompassing reading, listening, writing, and speaking—and the timely delivery of projects in Lagos NGOs. The primary research question seeks to determine the extent to which these skills influence project timelines while also considering contextual variables such as resource constraints and organizational dynamics. This inquiry contributes to a deeper understanding of leadership effectiveness in NGOs operating within the unique and challenging context of Lagos. By identifying how female project managers leverage their communication strengths and adapt to their environment, the findings provide actionable insights for enhancing capacity-building initiatives and promoting leadership development tailored to the NGO sector in developing regions.

## LITERATURE REVIEW
### Female NGO Project Managers

The landscape of leadership within the NGO sector is undergoing a significant transformation, with a growing number of women taking on project management roles (Ashton-Jones & Bryant, 2020). This trend reflects a broader move toward gender diversity in leadership positions across various sectors. Research suggests that female leaders bring distinct strengths to the table, potentially contributing to enhanced project success in NGOs (Smith et al., 2019).

One of the key strengths associated with female leadership is its emphasis on effective communication (Acker & Astley, 2009). This skillset manifest in several ways, including the ability to clearly articulate project goals and objectives to all stakeholders. Clear communication fosters a shared understanding of project expectations, minimizes confusion, and ensures that everyone is

on the same page (Baccarini, 1999). Additionally, female leaders often excel at fostering collaborative team environments through open communication channels and active listening (Eagly & Carli, 2003). This collaborative approach can lead to more comprehensive project plans that incorporate diverse perspectives and a higher level of team buy-in, ultimately improving project execution.

Furthermore, female leaders tend to exhibit a participative decision-making style, value team members' input, and encourage their participation in problem-solving (Smith et al., 2019). This inclusive style can lead to more creative and well-rounded solutions, fostering a sense of ownership among team members, and boosting team morale. Additionally, previous research suggests that female leaders excel at building relationships (Smith et al., 2019). This strength can be particularly valuable in the NGO context, where collaboration with diverse stakeholders is essential for project success. Strong relationships with donors, beneficiaries, and local communities facilitate resource acquisition, ensure program alignment with community needs, and foster a supportive environment for project implementation.

However, while the growing number of female project managers within the NGO sector has been a positive development, acknowledging the limitations of existing research. A significant portion of the research on female leadership in NGOs focuses on developed economies or overlooks the unique challenges faced by female leaders in developing countries like Nigeria (Smith et al., 2019). The context of Lagos, Nigeria, presents a complex environment for project management characterized by resource constraints, a dynamic socio-political landscape, and diverse stakeholder needs (Oladapo, 2012; Ogunleye, 2018). Understanding how female project managers navigate these complexities and leverage their strengths to achieve timely project delivery within the Lagos context requires further exploration. Research that examines the experiences and effectiveness of female project managers in Lagos NGOs can provide valuable insights for capacity-building initiatives and leadership development programs tailored to the specific needs of this context.

By delving deeper into the experiences of female project managers in Lagos, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of the various factors influencing their leadership styles and project delivery outcomes. This contextualized research can pave the way for more effective support systems and leadership development programs that empower female project managers within the Lagos NGO sector to achieve impactful and sustainable social change.

**Communication Skills in Project Management**

Communication is a fundamental pillar of effective project management, underpinning successful project execution and timely delivery (Baccarini, 1999). This encompasses a multifaceted skillset that project managers must master to navigate the complexities of project implementation. One crucial aspect of communication is clearly articulating project goals, objectives, and deliverables to all stakeholders (Akhtar, 2008; Alshammari, 2020). This ensures that everyone involved in the project, from team members to sponsors and beneficiaries, has a shared understanding of the project's purpose, desired outcomes, and key milestones. Clear communication minimizes confusion and misalignment, which prevents team members from working toward different objectives or overlooking critical deliverables.

Furthermore, effective communication fosters positive relationships with stakeholders, which include project sponsors, funding agencies, and beneficiaries themselves (Alshammari, 2020). Project managers should keep stakeholders informed of progress throughout the project lifecycle. This involves providing regular updates on achievements, challenges encountered and any necessary adjustments to the project plan. By consistently communicating with stakeholders, project managers can manage expectations, address concerns promptly, and foster a sense of trust and collaboration.

Another critical facet of communication is its ability to promote collaboration within project teams (Anindo, 2021). Project managers should establish clear communication channels that allow team members to readily share information, ask questions, and provide feedback. This fosters an environment of open communication where diverse perspectives are valued and team members are empowered to contribute their expertise. Effective communication also ensures that everyone is aware of project deadlines, task dependencies, and any changes to the project plan. This allows for coordinated efforts, minimizes misunderstandings, and ultimately leads to a more efficient and engaged project team.

The impact of strong communication skills on project performance is demonstrably positive. Badewi (2016) highlighted how clear and consistent communication reduces misunderstandings between team members and stakeholders, leading to fewer rework and project delays. Furthermore, effective communication fosters a more engaged project team in which members feel informed, valued, and motivated to contribute to project success. This collaborative environment fosters creative problem-solving and a sense of ownership, ultimately leading to improved project outcomes. In conclusion, communication is a cornerstone of effective project management. By mastering the art of clear communication, project managers can ensure that everyone involved in the project is aligned, stakeholders remain engaged, and the project team works collaboratively to achieve timely project delivery and successful outcomes.

## Timely Project Delivery: The Lifeline of Social Impact in NGOs

For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), timely project delivery is not merely a project management metric; it serves as the lifeline for achieving their core mission of social impact. Delays in project completion can trigger a cascade of negative consequences, jeopardizing the well-being of the very communities that NGOs strive to serve (Albtoush et al., 2022).

One of the most critical repercussions of delayed projects is the direct impact on beneficiaries. NGO interventions, whether providing health care services, educational programs, or disaster relief assistance, are often time-sensitive. Delayed project completion can mean vital support reaches beneficiaries well past the critical window when it could have had the greatest impact. For instance, delayed construction of a new clean water well in a drought-stricken community can have severe consequences for public health. Similarly, delays in delivering educational programs can disrupt children's learning and lead them to lose academic performance (Anindo, 2021). Furthermore, project delays can erode public trust in NGOs. Donors, volunteers, and communities served by NGOs expect efficient and accountable use of resources. Delays raise questions about the organization's competence and commitment to its mission. This loss of trust can make it difficult for NGOs to secure future funding, hindering their ability to continue their vital work (Badewi, 2016).

Timely project delivery also ensures efficient utilization of resources. When projects are completed on schedule, resources, such as funding, personnel, and equipment, are not tied up unnecessarily. This allows NGOs to allocate resources effectively to new initiatives while maximizing their reach and impact. Furthermore, timely completion builds momentum for positive change. Successful project outcomes motivate staff, inspire beneficiaries, and attract new supporters, creating a virtuous cycle that fuels further social impact (Asfaw et al., 2017). In conclusion, timely project delivery is not only a desired outcome for NGOs; it is an essential pillar for achieving their social impact goals. By prioritizing on-time completion, NGOs ensure that their interventions reach those in need when it matters most, maintain public trust, utilize resources efficiently, and sustain a positive trajectory of social change within the communities they serve.

**Theoretical Review**

The complex landscape of project management within Lagos NGOs necessitates the exploration of theoretical frameworks that illuminate the relationship between communication skills and project delivery timelines. This study draws primarily on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which emphasizes the reciprocal nature of interactions and the role of trust in fostering effective communication and collaboration. This framework is particularly relevant to understanding the dynamics between female project managers and their teams in the context of NGOs in Lagos State.

*Social Exchange Theory*

Social Exchange Theory posits that interactions are governed by reciprocal relationships that strive for mutual benefit (Blau, 1964). In the context of female project managers, the theory underscores how effective communication fosters trust, cooperation, and a sense of shared purpose within teams. Female leaders often exhibit collaborative communication styles that emphasize active listening, empathy, and inclusivity. These qualities are essential in high-stake environments, such as Lagos NGOs, where resource constraints and logistical challenges can create significant pressures on project timelines.

Effective communication, as advocated by the Social Exchange Theory, can reduce misunderstandings and foster a positive team environment in which members are motivated to contribute toward achieving project objectives. For instance, female project managers may use active listening techniques to address team concerns and encourage an open exchange of ideas, fostering a work culture in which team members feel valued and empowered (Belbin, 2011). This empowerment leads to improved team cohesion, which in turn positively influences project execution efficiency and the ability to meet deadlines (Lamprou & Vagiona, 2018).

In Lagos, where many projects face challenges related to inadequate infrastructure, resource shortages, and bureaucratic delays, effective communication can mitigate potential bottlenecks. Social Exchange Theory highlights the role of female project managers in building trust-based relationships within teams. By fostering collaboration and addressing concerns proactively, female leaders can ensure smoother project execution, thereby increasing the likelihood of timely project delivery (Acker & Astley, 2009). Moreover, these leaders play a crucial role in managing the expectations of stakeholders, ensuring that everyone involved in the project is aligned toward achieving common goals, and reducing potential delays that might arise due to miscommunication.

The findings from this theoretical lens suggest that communication skills, particularly those that enhance trust and reciprocity among team members, are central to ensuring the successful and timely delivery of NGO projects. As female project managers often emphasize interpersonal communication, their ability to foster these dynamics can have a significant impact on project execution efficiency, even in the face of Lagos's complex sociopolitical environment (Anindo, 2021).

By focusing on Social Exchange Theory, this study highlights the essential role of communication in project management, emphasizing how female project managers' communication skills contribute to building trust and cooperation within teams. These dynamics directly influence the timely delivery of projects, particularly in resource-constrained and challenging environments like Lagos NGOs.

**Empirical Review**

The effectiveness of female project managers in NGOs has attracted limited research attention, particularly in developing countries. Existing studies often focus on developed economies or neglect the unique challenges that female leaders face in such contexts (Smith et al., 2019). This

oversight leaves a significant gap in the understanding of how female leadership influences project management in resource-constrained and socio-politically complex settings like Lagos, Nigeria.

Smith et al. (2019) explored leadership diversity in nonprofit organizations, identifying collaborative leadership styles and relationship-building as hallmark traits of female leaders. These qualities enhance team cohesion, stakeholder engagement, and project success. Similarly, Eagly and Carli (2003) found that female leaders' participative decision-making and transparent communication can lead to more comprehensive project planning and execution. However, these findings are predominantly drawn from developed economies where resources and institutional support are more robust, limiting their applicability to Lagos NGOs.

Recent studies have begun to expand this discourse. For instance, Ahmad and Gao (2022) investigated gender and leadership styles in non-profit organizations in sub-Saharan Africa, revealing that female leaders' empathy and conflict resolution skills were crucial for managing stakeholder relations and adapting to resource constraints. Additionally, Agwu and Kalu (2021) examined project management in Nigerian NGOs, emphasizing the pivotal role of communication in mitigating project delays and managing socio-political complexities. These findings suggest that communication skills are integral for navigating the challenging operational environments of developing countries.

Baccarini (1999) highlighted the importance of effective communication in fostering collaboration, managing expectations, and minimizing misunderstandings in project execution. Morris et al. (2017) expanded this discussion by emphasizing the role of communication in stakeholder management and emphasized that informed stakeholders foster a supportive environment for project completion. Although these studies provide foundational insights, their broader applicability to the unique context of Lagos NGOs remains limited. Lagos presents specific challenges, such as resource scarcity, infrastructural deficits, and bureaucratic hurdles, which necessitate tailored research.

Oladapo (2012) provided a seminal exploration of resource constraints in Lagos project management, highlighting the significant delays caused by funding shortages and limited access to skilled personnel. Ogunleye (2018) further examined the socio-political landscape, illustrating the need for project managers to navigate bureaucratic inefficiencies and align stakeholder expectations. However, these studies fail to explicitly link these contextual challenges to the communication strategies employed by female leaders, leaving an important gap in understanding the mechanisms through which communication influences project delivery timelines. More recent research has attempted to bridge these gaps. Obi and Okeke (2023) examined gendered communication practices in Nigerian NGOs and found that female leaders' collaborative communication styles contributed to improved project coordination and reduced conflicts. Similarly, Suleiman et al. (2022) studied leadership in Lagos NGOs and revealed that female project managers who prioritized clarity and empathy in their communication effectively mitigated delays arising from stakeholder disputes and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Although these studies offer valuable insights, they lack a focused analysis of how communication impacts project delivery timelines.

Critically, the existing literature has failed to address the intersectionality of gender, communication, and context in project management. For instance, previous studies have generalized the challenges of project management in developing countries without accounting for the compounded difficulties faced by female project managers because of societal biases and gender expectations (Ely et al., 2011). Moreover, while communication is widely acknowledged as a critical skill, few studies have provided empirical evidence on its comparative weight against other influencing factors, such as resource availability and stakeholder dynamics, particularly in Lagos NGOs.

This comprehensive review underscores the multifaceted nature of project management in Lagos. While communication skills are undoubtedly vital, they operate within a broader matrix of factors, including socio-political dynamics, resource constraints, and stakeholder expectations. The scarcity of studies exploring the specific contributions of female project managers' communication skills to project delivery timelines highlights a significant research gap.

Based on the previous studies' result and the current critical issue, this study addresses this gap by empirically investigating the relationship between female project managers' communication skills and project delivery timelines within Lagos NGOs. By employing regression analysis, the study will account for other influential factors, providing a nuanced understanding of communication's role in this context. The findings inform leadership development initiatives, enhance the capacity of female leaders, and optimize project management practices to deliver timely and impactful outcomes.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a survey research design to explore the relationship between female project managers' communication skills and project delivery timelines within Lagos NGOs. The research was conducted in the Alimosho Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos State, Nigeria, which was purposively chosen because it hosts the largest concentration of NGOs in the state.

### Research Population and Sampling

The study population consisted of 57 female project managers currently working in NGOs within Alimosho LGA, as confirmed by their respective HR departments. A census approach was adopted to ensure that all eligible participants were included in the study (Cooper & Schindler, 2018; Dudovskiy, 2022).

### Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The study's inclusion criteria consisted of female project managers with at least one year of project management experience who were currently employed in NGOs within the Alimosho Local Government Area (LGA). Conversely, the exclusion criteria encompassed female project managers who were unavailable during the data collection period, such as those on leave, as well as those who declined to participate.

### Data Collection

Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire based on a thorough review of existing literature. The instrument consisted of three main sections:
1. Demographic Information: Age, educational qualifications, and years of project management experience.
2. Communication Skills: Measured using a 5-point Likert scale. Key communication metrics included clarity of communication, active listening ability, and ability to resolve conflicts.
3. Project Delivery Timelines: Measured according to experiences related to timeliness and adherence to project schedules.

The questionnaire was distributed in person to the 57 participants over 2 months, from July 10 to September 24, 2024. Follow-up visits were conducted to maximize the response rate and address any concerns raised by the participants.

**Questionnaire Table**

Table 1 outlines the key questionnaire items, categorized based on the specific metrics they assess.

**Table 1.** References for Questionnaire

| Metric | Question | References |
|---|---|---|
| **Clarity of Communication** | I communicate project goals to my team clearly. | Lamprou and Vagiona (2018) |
| | I provide clear instructions regarding project tasks to team members. | Anindo (2021) |
| **Active Listening** | I actively listen to team members' concerns. | Belbin (2011) |
| | I encourage team members to express their opinions. | Lamprou and Vagiona (2018) |
| **Conflict Resolution** | I effectively resolve conflicts within my team. | Gitau (2015) |
| | I proactively address team issues to avoid delays in project execution. | Eagly and Carli (2003) |
| **Project Delivery Timelines** | Projects that I manage are delivered on time. | Acker and Astley (2009) |
| | I meet project deadlines consistently. | Oladapo (2012) |
| | I manage project schedules effectively, ensuring minimal delays. | Alan et al. (2017) |

**Reliability and Validity**

To ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted with five female project managers from outside the Alimosho LGA. Feedback from the pilot test was used to refine the instrument for clarity and face validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of the instrument.

**Data Analysis**

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics software. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions, were used to summarize the demographic data. To test this study's hypothesis, regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of communication skills on project delivery timelines. Additional statistical analyses were conducted, with the details provided below.

1. Reliability Testing: Cronbach's alpha was used to confirm the internal consistency of the instrument.
2. Factor analysis: This section verifies the construct validity of the communication skills and project delivery timeline sections.
3. Regression Diagnostics: Multicollinearity tests (Variance Inflation Factor) and normality

checks (Shapiro-Wilk test) were conducted to validate the model.

**Research Framework**

The conceptual framework of the study, illustrated in Figure 1 below, outlines the proposed relationship between communication skills and project delivery timelines.
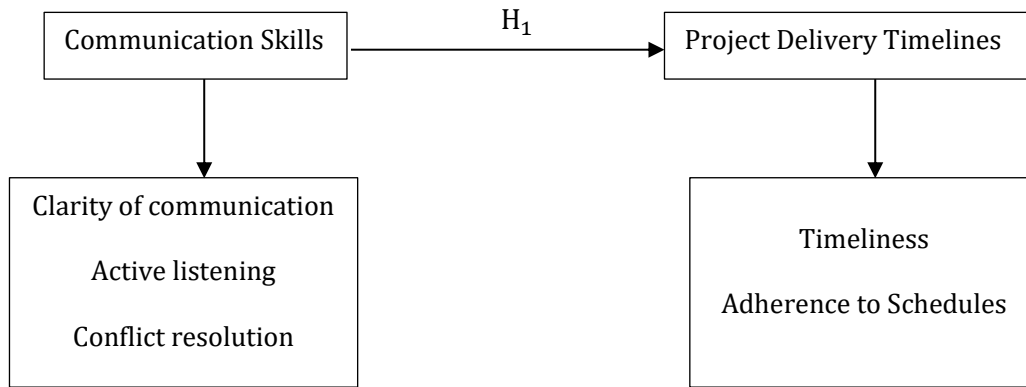


**Figure 1.** Research Framework

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This section provides a comprehensive analysis of the collected data, incorporating descriptive statistics, regression analysis, assumption testing, and comparisons with relevant literature. Tables are used to represent sociodemographic characteristics, assumptions, and regression results. A thorough discussion connects the findings to theories and recent literature, providing critical insights and novel contributions.

The sociodemographic characteristics of the 48 female project managers surveyed are summarized in Table 2. The table highlights key attributes, including age, educational qualifications, and years of experience, to provide the context for the regression analysis. According to Table 2, the majority of respondents were between 35 and 44 years old (45.8%) and had a bachelor's degree (70.8%). The average years of project management experience was 6.8 years, with most respondents (62.5%) having 5–10 years of experience.

**Table 2.** Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

| Variable | Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 25–34 years | 12 | 25.0 |
| **Age** | 35–44 years | 22 | 45.8 |
| | 45 years and above | 14 | 29.2 |
| **Education** | Bachelor's Degree | 34 | 70.8 |
| | Master's Degree or Higher | 14 | 29.2 |
| **Experience** | 5 years | 10 | 20.8 |
| | 5–10 years | 30 | 62.5 |

| Variable | Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Over 10 years, | 8 | 16.7 |

Source: Researchers (2024)

**Testing Assumptions**

Before regression analysis, normality, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity tests were conducted. The results are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Results of the Assumption Tests

| Test | Statistic/Result | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|
| **Normality** | Shapiro-Wilk (p = .092) | Residuals are normally distributed as |
| **Heteroscedasticity** | Breusch-Pagan (p = .067) | Homoscedasticity confirmed |
| **Multicollinearity** | VIF = 1.02 | No multicollinearity was detected |

Source: Researchers (2024)

These results validate the appropriateness of the regression model. The normality of residuals, homoscedasticity, and the absence of multicollinearity support the reliability of the findings.

**Regression Analysis**

The hypothesis under investigation posits that the communication skills of female project managers do not significantly affect the timely delivery of projects. To evaluate this claim, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted, and the results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Data Analysis Result

*Model Summary*

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R-squared value | Std. Error of Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .768a | .590 | .581 | .56449 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), FPMCS

*ANOVAa*

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 21.543 | 1 | 21.543 | 67.606 | .000b |
| | Residual | 14.977 | 47 | .319 | | |
| | Total | 36.519 | 48 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: TDP

b. Predictors: (Constant), FPMCS

*Coefficientsa*

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | (Constant) | .805 | .350 | | 2.302 | .026 |
| | FPMCS | .770 | .094 | .768 | 8.222 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: TDP

Source: Researchers (2024)

The model summary provides robust evidence of the relationship between female project managers' communication skills (FPMCS) and timely project delivery (TDP). The R value of.768 suggests a strong positive correlation, implying that as FPMCS improves, so does the punctuality of project completion. The R-squared value of.590 indicates that nearly 59% of the variance in TDP can be explained by FPMCS alone, which is a substantial figure. The Adjusted R Square, slightly lower at.581, accounts for the number of predictors and still supports the significant influence of FPMCS on TDP.

The ANOVA results further confirmed the model's validity. With an F value of 67.606 and a significance level of .000, the model's ability to predict TDP based on FPMCS was statistically significant. This is evidenced by the regression sum of squares (21.543), which is a measure of the variation explained by the model, compared with the residual sum of squares (14.977), which represents the unexplained variation.

The coefficient table reveals the extent of the impact of FPMCS on TDP. The unstandardized coefficient (B) for FPMCS is .770, indicating that an increase in FPMCS by one unit corresponds to a .770 unit increase in the timeliness of project delivery. The standardized coefficient ($\beta$) of .768 confirms the strength of this relationship. The significance of these coefficients is underscored by their respective t-values and p-values, with FPMCS showing a t-value of 8.222 and a p-value of .000, denoting a highly significant predictor of TDP.

Residual statistics provide insight into the predictive accuracy of the model. The predicted TDP values ranged from 2.0366 to 4.6532 with an average of 3.6041, indicating the model's consistency in predicting TDP. The residuals, which are the differences between the observed and predicted values, have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of .55858, suggesting that the model's predictions are generally close to the actual values with a low error variance.

The interpretation of the data suggests that female project managers' communication skills are a significant factor in project delivery. The statistical evidence provided by the R value, R Square, ANOVA, and coefficients all points to a strong and significant relationship between FPMCS and TDP, effectively rejecting the null hypothesis. The model demonstrates a high degree of predictive power, indicating that improving communication skills could be a key strategy for enhancing project delivery timelines.

**Discussion**

This study investigated the relationship between the communication skills of female project managers (FPMCS) and the timely delivery of projects (TDP) within Lagos NGOs. The null hypothesis proposes that communication skills have no significant effect on project delivery timelines. However, the data analysis presented in Table 4 overwhelmingly rejects this hypothesis, revealing a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between FPMCS and TDP.

The analysis highlights several key findings. The R value of .768 indicates a robust positive correlation, meaning that as the communication skills of female project managers improve, so too do project delivery timelines. In simpler terms, stronger communication skills are associated with a higher likelihood of completing projects on time. This finding aligns with existing research emphasizing the importance of communication in project management (Alshammari, 2020).

Effective communication fosters trust and collaboration within teams, ensures clarity of project goals and expectations, and facilitates efficient information sharing (Müller & Tömmel, 2022). By effectively communicating with team members, stakeholders, and beneficiaries, female project managers can navigate complexities, minimize misunderstandings, and ensure that everyone is aligned toward project deadlines.

Furthermore, the R-squared value of .590 signifies that nearly 59% of the variance in project delivery timelines can be explained by communication skills alone. This substantial figure suggests that communication skills play a significant role in influencing project delivery outcomes within Lagos NGOs. While other factors undoubtedly contribute to project timelines, such as resource availability and project complexity, the analysis underscores the critical influence that communication skills exert on timely project completion.

The ANOVA results further validate the model. The F value of 67.606 and its associated significance level of .000 confirm that the model, with FPMCS as the predictor variable, has a statistically significant ability to predict project delivery timelines. This implies that the model effectively explains the variations in TDP and highlights the strength of the relationship between communication skills and timely project delivery.

The coefficient table provides insights into the magnitude and significance of the relationship. The unstandardized coefficient (B) of .770 indicates that for every one-unit increase in FPMCS, there is a corresponding increase of .770 units in project delivery timeliness. The standardized coefficient ($\beta$) of .768 echoes this strong positive association. The statistical significance of these coefficients is further emphasized by their t-values and p-values. The highly significant p-value of .000 for FPMCS underscores its critical role as a predictor of project delivery timelines. Finally, the residual statistics provide valuable information about the model's predictive accuracy. The predicted values for TDP are consistent, with an average close to the actual mean. Additionally, the low standard deviation of the residuals suggests that the model's predictions are generally close to the observed values, indicating a low level of error variance. In essence, the model demonstrated a strong ability to predict project delivery timelines based on communication skills. The findings align with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that effective communication fosters reciprocal relationships and trust, which are critical for project goals. This study confirms that improved communication skills significantly enhance project delivery timelines, corroborating recent studies by Müller and Tömmel (2022) and Alshammari (2020). These scholars emphasized the role of communication in reducing misunderstandings, promoting team cohesion, and navigating complexities in project environments.

Moreover, the strong correlation between FPMCS and TDP reinforces theories of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995), highlighting that communication encompasses not only message delivery but also the ability to empathize and resolve conflicts within teams. The ANOVA results, with an F value of 67.606 (p < .001), substantiate the significance of these skills in the unique context of Lagos NGOs.

While previous studies have often focused on technical competencies, this study underscores the importance of soft skills, particularly communication, in project success. This study contributes to the literature by exploring the intersection of gender, communication and project management, addressing gaps in understanding the dynamics within the NGO sector in Lagos.

This study reveals that communication skills alone account for a substantial proportion (59%) of the variance in project delivery timelines, emphasizing their critical role. The study also highlights the challenges faced by female project managers in culturally complex settings and advocates for training programs tailored to their needs. These findings provide actionable insights for NGOs to improve project outcomes by prioritizing communication skill development.

In conclusion, the findings of this study comprehensively reject the null hypothesis. The data analysis provides robust evidence for a significant positive relationship between female project managers' communication skills and timely delivery of projects within Lagos NGOs. These findings highlight the crucial role that communication skills play in ensuring project success. By prioritizing the development and enhancement of communication skills through targeted training programs, Lagos NGOs can empower female project managers to navigate complexities, foster collaboration, and ultimately achieve timely project delivery, leading to more impactful and sustainable social change within the communities they serve.

It is important to acknowledge that this study focused solely on communication skills as a predictor of project delivery timelines. Future research could explore the interplay between communication skills and other contextual factors, such as resource constraints, project complexity and team dynamics, to gain a more holistic understanding of the factors influencing project success within Lagos NGOs.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This study examined the relationship between female project managers' communication skills (FPMCS) and timely delivery of projects (TDP) within Lagos NGOs. The primary objective was to explore how effective communication contributes to achieving project deadlines within the unique sociocultural and operational context of Lagos-based NGOs. This study focused on female project managers overseeing diverse projects, highlighting the role of communication in navigating challenges specific to this sector.

The statistical analysis strongly supports the hypothesis that communication skills positively impact project delivery timelines. The regression analysis revealed a significant positive correlation (R = .768, p < .001), with communication skills explaining 59% of the variance in project delivery timelines ($R^2$ = .59). This substantial figure underscores the importance of communication skills as a key predictor of project success. The data indicate that female project managers with strong communication skills are better equipped to ensure projects are completed on time, even in the complex environment of Lagos NGOs.

Key statistical findings include the strength and significance of the correlation between FPMCS and TDP, and the high variance in project timelines, which can be explained by communication skills. The results demonstrated that communication skills alone accounted for more than half of the factors influencing timely project completion. These findings highlight the critical role of communication in fostering collaboration, minimizing misunderstandings, and aligning project teams toward achieving shared goals.

This study contributes to the broader literature on the importance of communication in project management. This aligns with prior research, such as Baccarini (1999), which highlighted the role of communication in fostering trust, improving clarity, and ensuring efficient coordination among team members and stakeholders. Within the context of Lagos NGOs, where cultural diversity, limited resources, and unique operational challenges prevail, the findings highlight the significance of communication skills in overcoming these barriers to project success.

In conclusion, this study underscores the indispensable role of communication skills in enhancing project delivery timelines within Lagos NGOs. It recommends that NGOs prioritize the development of communication skills through targeted training programs for female project managers. Such initiatives could serve as a strategic approach to improving project outcomes and contributing to more impactful and sustainable social change within the communities that these organizations serve.

**Recommendations**

The findings of this study offer valuable insights for capacity-building initiatives within Lagos NGOs, particularly those focused on empowering female project managers. Here are some key recommendations based on the analysis:

1. Prioritizing Communication Skills Development
   NGOs should prioritize the development and enhancement of communication skills for female project managers. This can be achieved through targeted training programs that focus on various aspects of communication, such as clear and concise communication, active listening, conflict resolution, and effective stakeholder management.

2. Leadership Development Programs
   Leadership development programs can specifically be designed for female project managers at Lagos NGOs. These programs can incorporate communication skills training alongside other leadership skills, such as team building, delegation, and decision-making. By fostering a holistic skillset, these programs can empower female project managers to navigate complexities and lead their teams toward achieving project goals on time.

3. Mentorship and Peer Support
   Establishing mentorship programs or peer support networks can provide valuable support for female project managers. Mentorship can connect students with experienced leaders who can offer guidance on communication strategies and project management best practices in the Lagos context. Peer support networks can foster a sense of community and allow female project managers to share challenges, exchange ideas, and learn from each other's communication experiences.

By implementing these recommendations, Lagos NGOs can create an environment that fosters strong communication skills among female project managers. This can lead to improved project delivery timelines, ultimately resulting in a greater impact on the communities they serve.

## LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Although this study highlights the importance of communication skills in project management, communication is just one of many factors influencing project success. Future research should explore the interplay between communication and other contextual factors, such as resource constraints, project complexity, and team dynamics. These factors may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the elements that contribute to project success. Future studies could focus on the following directions:

1. Exploring the Role of Resources in Project Success: This study investigates how the availability of resources (financial, human, and technological) interacts with communication skills in influencing project delivery timelines.

2. Influence of team dynamics on communication: Examining how team dynamics, such as team size, diversity, and experience, interact with communication practices can yield insights into the conditions under which communication skills have the most significant impact on project success.

3. Cross-Cultural Communication: Given the diverse cultural landscape in Lagos, future research could explore how cross-cultural communication influences project management within NGOs, especially in terms of communication effectiveness and stakeholder management.

4. Comparative Studies Across Sectors: A comparison of communication skills and project delivery outcomes across different sectors (e.g., private, public, and non-governmental) could reveal sector-specific challenges and best practices in communication.

From a methodological perspective, future research could benefit from the following:

1. Longitudinal Studies: Conducting longitudinal studies that track the development of communication skills over time and their impact on long-term project success could provide deeper insights into the relationship between these variables.
2. Mixed-Methods Approaches: Incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, alongside quantitative surveys could provide a more nuanced understanding of how communication skills are perceived and practiced in different project environments.
3. Case Studies: In-depth case studies of specific NGOs can reveal detailed information about the communication practices that contribute to project success or failure, providing practical insights for other organizations.

In conclusion, further research into the factors influencing project success, with an emphasis on communication skills and contextual elements, will enhance our understanding of how to support female project managers in NGOs and improve project delivery outcomes.

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