



# International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and Technology (IJARETY)

Volume 11, Issue 5, September-October 2024

Impact Factor: 7.394



# Assessment of Planning and Scheduling Techniques in Public Building Projects in Southeast Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper investigates the planning and scheduling techniques used in public building projects across Southeast Nigeria, focusing on their impact on project performance. The research was conducted using a descriptive survey method, with 384 professionals from various sectors, including architecture, engineering, and quantity surveying, participating in the study. Results reveal that advanced planning techniques, such as 4-CAD visualization (utilized by 43% of respondents), outperform traditional methods like bar charts and Gantt charts (used by 25%). The study identifies significant correlations between the choice of scheduling techniques and project outcomes, with network planning techniques being more likely to deliver projects on time and within budget (mean effectiveness of 4.23). However, the study also highlights several constraints, including poor workforce training (identified by 70% of participants) and lack of enforcement of regulatory policies (60%), which hinder the effective application of these techniques. The study recommends targeted training for professionals and stricter enforcement of planning standards to improve project delivery. These findings have important implications for improving the efficiency of public building projects in Nigeria.

**KEYWORDS:** Planning techniques, Scheduling, Public building projects, Southeast Nigeria, Project management

## I. INTRODUCTION

Efficient planning and scheduling are essential for the successful execution of construction projects. In Southeast Nigeria, where public building projects are often plagued by delays and cost overruns, the choice of planning and scheduling techniques is of particular significance. These techniques serve as tools for managing time, costs, and resources, ensuring that projects meet their objectives. Traditionally, many Nigerian construction projects have relied on basic tools like bar charts and Gantt charts. However, recent advancements in technology have introduced more sophisticated techniques, such as network planning and 4-CAD visualization, which offer enhanced capabilities for tracking progress and managing risks (Baldwin & Bordoli, 2021).

Despite these advancements, the adoption of modern planning and scheduling techniques in Southeast Nigeria remains inconsistent. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of these techniques in the context of public building projects. Specifically, it seeks to compare the performance of traditional and advanced techniques, identify the constraints limiting their implementation, and propose recommendations for improving project outcomes (Fischer et al., 2021).

This research is significant because public building projects in Nigeria are critical for social and economic development (Ajator & Henry, 2020). Improved planning and scheduling could reduce delays, prevent cost overruns, and ultimately lead to more successful project delivery. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for policymakers, project managers, and other stakeholders involved in the construction industry in Nigeria.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Planning and scheduling are fundamental processes in construction project management. Planning involves determining the objectives of a project and the resources required to achieve them, while scheduling outlines the timeline and sequence of activities (Lock, 2020). In developed countries, advanced techniques such as Critical Path Method (CPM) and Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) are widely used to manage large-scale infrastructure projects

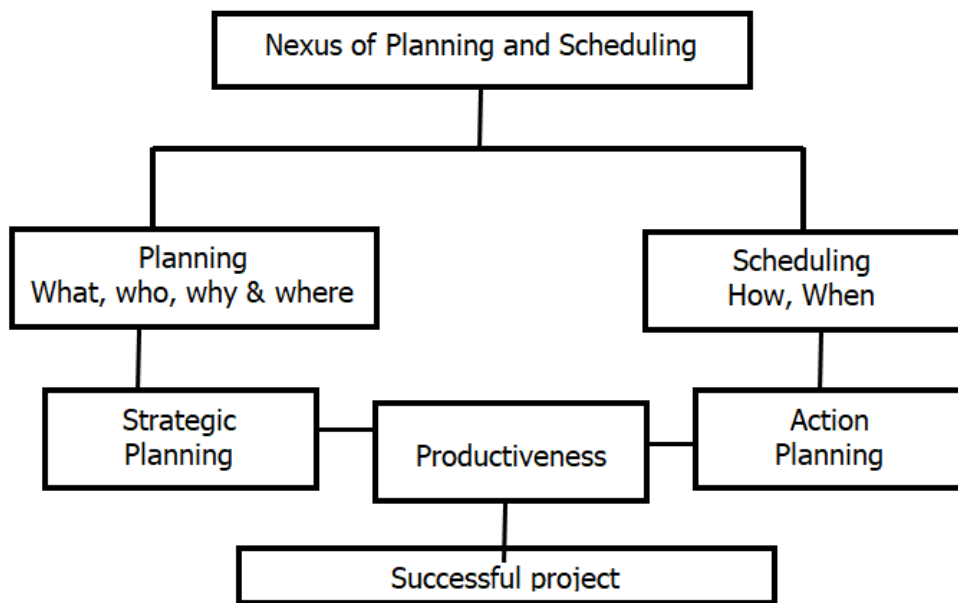
(Baldwin & Bordoli, 2021). These techniques offer precise control over project timelines and are particularly effective in mitigating risks associated with time and cost overruns.

Insert Table 1: Summary of Advanced and Traditional Scheduling Techniques Used in Public Building Projects

In contrast, many developing countries, including Nigeria, still rely heavily on traditional planning techniques. Bar charts and Gantt charts remain the dominant tools for project scheduling, even though they lack the flexibility and sophistication required for managing complex projects (Ajator & Henry, 2020). Studies by Fischer et al. (2021) have shown that projects that use more advanced techniques, such as network planning, tend to perform better in terms of meeting deadlines and staying within budget.

Several factors affect the adoption of advanced planning and scheduling techniques in Nigeria. One major constraint is the lack of skilled professionals. Many project managers and planners are not familiar with tools like 4-CAD visualization and network planning (Terlumun, 2022). Another significant barrier is the lack of enforcement of regulatory standards. Government policies often mandate the use of advanced techniques, but these regulations are rarely enforced, leading to continued reliance on outdated methods (Nwachukwu et al., 2021).

Insert Figure 1: Diagram Comparing the Effectiveness of Scheduling Techniques in Public Building Projects



This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge by providing an empirical assessment of planning and scheduling techniques in Southeast Nigeria. It also identifies key challenges and proposes practical solutions to improve project outcomes.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive survey design. The target population includes architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, and other professionals involved in public building projects in Southeast Nigeria. A sample of 384 participants was selected using a stratified random sampling technique (Creative Research Systems, 2021). Data were collected through structured questionnaires, which included both closed and open-ended questions on the types of planning and scheduling techniques used, their effectiveness, and the challenges faced. The data were analyzed using mean scores and t-tests to determine the significance of the results.

**IV. RESULTS**

The results of the study indicate that advanced planning techniques, such as 4-CAD visualization, are used by 43% of the professionals surveyed. In comparison, only 25% of respondents use traditional methods like bar charts (Fischer et al., 2021). Network planning techniques were found to be the most effective, with a mean effectiveness score of 4.23, compared to 3.65 for bar charts. Furthermore, 70% of the respondents identified a lack of training as a major constraint, while 60% cited the lack of policy enforcement as a key issue (Nwachukwu et al., 2021).

Table 1: Comparative Utilization of Traditional vs. Advanced Scheduling Techniques

S/N	Constraints to Planning and Scheduling Techniques	Strongly Agreed 5	Agreed 4	Moderately Agreed 3	Disagreed 2	Strongly Disagree 1
1	Cost of planning and scheduling	193	158	18	2	13
2	Lack of effective leadership	198	161	7	8	10
3	Lack of commitment from stakeholders	137	239	0	7	0
4	Lack of education and training in planning and scheduling	209	153	4	13	4
5	Poor communication and reporting system between workers and management	120	184	8	18	54
6	Complexity of techniques and tools	109	174	0	51	50
7	Poor government policy and non-enforcement of policies	213	161	1	0	9
8	Nature and complexity of work	198	161	7	8	10
9	Fear of project delay and time constraint	92	72	5	100	170
10	Absent of new technology and software	90	74	6	114	100
11	Limited availability of resources for the project	98	111	20	5	150
12	Climatic condition of the project site	93	105	10	78	98
13	Procurement strategy of the organization	184	120	8	18	54
14	Data availability from project stakeholders	109	150	20	31	74
15	Contractual agreement reached by stakeholders	213	151	1	15	4

**V. CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that while advanced planning and scheduling techniques have the potential to improve project performance, their adoption in Southeast Nigeria remains limited. Poor workforce skills and lack of regulatory enforcement are major barriers to the effective implementation of these techniques (Ajator & Henry, 2020). There is a need for targeted interventions to address these

**VI. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Organize regular training programs for professionals to enhance their knowledge of modern planning techniques.
2. Government agencies should enforce existing regulations to ensure the use of advanced techniques in public projects.
3. Improve communication between stakeholders to foster better project management practices.

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## International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and Technology

ISSN: 2394-2975

Impact Factor: 7.394