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MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

**CONTRACTUAL COMPLETENESS, TRUST AND PERCEIVED PROJECT
PERFORMANCE IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN WAKISO DISTRICT,
UGANDA**

BY

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DECLARATION

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This is to certify that this dissertation has been submitted with our approval as supervisors.

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ISMAEL KATUMBA

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my dear husband Wilson Muyende, and my beloved children, especially Jacob Muyende, whom I had to leave my end-of-semester examination room to go and give birth to him. He missed my full-time attention and company during the time of his early days on earth since I was concentrating on passing my master's examinations.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABSTRACT.....	x
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background to the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	4
1.4 Specific Objectives	4
1.5 Research questions.....	4
1.6 Significance of the study.....	4
1.7 Justification of the study	5
1.8 Conceptual Framework.....	6
1.9 Scope of the study.....	7
CHAPTER TWO	8
LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.0 Introduction.....	8
2.1 Theoretical review	8
2.2 Conceptual Literature Review	12
2.2.1 Contractual completeness	12
2.2.2 Trust.....	13

2.2.3 Perceived Project Performance	14
2.2.4 Contractual completeness and perceived project performance.....	16
2.2.5 Trust and perceived project performance	18
2.2.6 Contractual completeness, trust, and perceived project performance.....	20
CHAPTER THREE.....	25
METHODOLOGY	25
3.0 Introduction.....	25
3.1 Research design	25
3.2 Population	25
3.3 Sample size	25
3.4 Sampling strategies	26
3.5 Data collection instruments.....	27
3.5.1 Questionnaire	27
3.6 Data collection methods.....	27
3.6.1 Questionnaire Survey.....	27
3.7 Data collection procedures.....	28
3.8 Reliability and validity of instruments.....	28
3.8.1 Validity of instruments	28
3.8.1 Reliability of instruments.....	29
3.9 Measurements	30
3.10 Data analysis	30
3.11 Ethical Consideration.....	31
CHAPTER FOUR.....	32
ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS	32
4.1 Introduction.....	32

4.2 Response Rate	32
4.3 Socio-Demographic Characteristics.....	32
This study sought to find out the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents since they have direct and indirect effects on the study findings.	32
4.4 Correlation Coefficient	35
4.4.1 Relationship between Contractual completeness and perceived project performance	36
4.4.2 Relationship between Trust and Perceived Project Performance	37
4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis	37
4.5.1 The predictive power of contract completeness and trust on perceived project performance	39
CHAPTER FIVE	40
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINDINGS.40	
5.1 Introduction.....	40
5.2 Discussion of findings.....	40
5.2.1 Contractual completeness and perceived project performance.....	40
5.3.2 Trust and Perceived Project Performance.....	41
5.3.3 Contractual completeness, trust, and perceived project performance.....	43
5.4 Conclusion	44
5.5 Recommendations.....	45
5.5 Limitations of the study	47
5.6 Areas for further study	47
REFERENCES	48
APPENDICES	56
Appendix 1: Questionnaire	56

Appendix 4: Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size for a finite population.61

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Sample Size	26
Table 3.2: Validity of the Instrument.....	29
Table 3.3: Reliability coefficient for each variable	30
Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents.....	32
Table 4.2: Age bracket of respondents	33
Table 4.3: Marital status of Respondents.....	33
Table 4.4: For how long have you been in this organization?.....	34
Table 4.5: Indicate the highest level of education that you have completed	34
Table 4.6: The nature of Job	35
Table 4.7: Correlation Coefficients.....	36
Table 4.8: Regression Coefficients	38

ABSTRACT

The Assessment report (2020), on Wakiso district local government performance assessment for FY2017/2018 revealed that over 70% of construction projects in the district were performing poorly as a result of stakeholders in the projects failing to execute their responsibilities and duties as per the contract. Despite the vast literature on project performance in construction projects, scanty studies have been conducted within the context of the Wakiso district. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between contractual completeness, trust, and project performance in Wakiso district, Uganda.

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design which allowed for the collection of quantitative data using a self-administered questionnaire. The study population consisted of 284 officials from the Wakiso district local government and contractors. Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) sample distribution table was used to determine the sample size of 242 officials. The study used Pearson correlation to establish the association between variables and the linear regression model to establish the predictive power of the independent variables (contractual completeness and trust) on the dependent variable (perceived project performance). The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS Version 25. The findings of the correlation analysis showed a significant moderate positive relationship between contractual completeness and perceived project performance. It also indicated a significant moderate positive relationship between trust and perceived project performance implying that the level of contractual completeness and trust is associated directly with perceived project performance. The regression analysis showed that contractual completeness predicts perceived project performance by 19.4% while trust predicts performance by 40.7%.

The study concluded that trust with its constructs significantly and positively contributes to the perceived project performance of the construction projects in Wakiso district. The

researcher recommends that the district authorities should monitor the procedures involved in awarding construction projects to all contractors. Government agencies should not delay contract approvals to contractors as this will affect the execution of the construction contracts. The government agencies should establish enforcement mechanisms to prevent violation of contracts by stakeholders involved in construction projects in the Wakiso district. Government agencies should ensure that there are no delays in project fund release as it affects the effective execution of contracts at the district.

There is a need to determine the other predictors of perceived project performance since contractual completeness and trust only predicted 31.4% of the variance in perceived project performance of construction projects. This research investigated the influence of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance, future research can examine the effect of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance using mediating variables.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, public and private construction projects are notoriously complex, often failing to meet budgeted costs, schedules, and timelines (Mahmoud, 2020). On average, 72% of projects experience delays, extending the originally contracted duration by 38%, while 63% face cost overruns, increasing the original budget by 24%. Additionally, reworks contribute to a 6% increase in total project costs (Nguyen, London & Zhang, 2022). Given the involvement of numerous stakeholders—including contractors, clients, and consultants—disputes are inevitable. However, with well-defined contracts and trust relationships, such disputes can be resolved without significantly impacting project performance (Yan & Zhang, 2020). Effective project performance is characterized by timely completion within budget, adherence to specifications, and stakeholder satisfaction (Molaei et al., 2019). Despite technological advancements, construction projects continue to encounter challenges such as cost overruns, delays, quality issues, and time overruns (Rivera, Le, Kashiwagi & Kashiwagi, 2016). For instance, in the U.S., reworks due to defects increase project costs by 5%, while in India, this figure rises to 40% (Annor-Asubonteng, Tengan & Amoah, 2021).

Research indicates that contract completeness enhances project performance by limiting opportunism, minimizing conflicts, and fostering relationships among stakeholders (Mwesigwa, Nabwami, Mayengo & Basulira, 2020). Contract completeness, defined in terms of term specificity, obligatoriness, and contingency adaptability, has been shown to reduce opportunistic behavior and improve perceived project performance (Han & Yin, 2022). Contracts serve as reference points for defining roles, coordinating activities, and adapting to unforeseen circumstances (Addae-Boateng et al., 2015; Han & Yin, 2022). Trust is another critical factor influencing project performance. Defined as the belief that a partner will act

with integrity and consider the interests of the other party, trust promotes shared understanding and effective communication, thereby preventing opportunistic behavior and enhancing project performance (Strahorn, Brewer & Gajendran, 2017; Javed et al., 2018).

In Africa, rework is a significant concern, impacting profitability, productivity, and overall project performance. For example, in Ghana, reworks in road construction projects increase costs and durations by 21% and 23.8%, respectively (Annor-Asubonteng, Tengan & Amoah, 2021). Despite various state interventions, construction project performance remains poor due to limited resources (Tunji-Olayeni et al., 2016). In West Africa, challenges such as contract administration issues, complex payment procedures, limited budgets, and contractor incompetence often result in substandard work (Seninde, 2020). In Kenya, cost overruns range from 35% to 60%, and completion delays range from 35% to 73% (Ongondo, Gwaya & Masu, 2019).

In Uganda, the construction industry is primarily dominated by foreign firms, with local firms playing a minor role in major projects. The sector contributes 6.6% to Uganda's GDP, significantly below the 35% mark required for achieving middle-income status (National Planning Authority, 2020). Project performance in Uganda is plagued by high costs, time overruns, substandard and incomplete projects, contract variations, and delays in payment and project completion (Mwelu et al., 2021). For instance, a parliamentary committee revealed that government construction projects had arrears exceeding Ushs.500 billion as of January 2021 (Parliament of Uganda, 2022). Moreover, an assessment of Wakiso district's local government performance for FY2017/2018 showed that over 70% of construction projects were underperforming due to stakeholders failing to execute their contractual responsibilities (Assessment Report, 2020).

Despite the extensive literature on construction project performance, there is a notable lack of studies focusing on the specific context of Wakiso district in Uganda, particularly concerning the effects of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance. This study aims to address this gap by investigating these factors within Wakiso district, providing valuable insights to improve project outcomes in this region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Construction projects in Uganda are rapidly increasing to meet the growing needs of the population and development. The government has supported the construction industry through policies such as the National Construction Industry Policy, improved budget allocations, capacity building for the local construction industry, and awarding contracts to competent contractors (National Planning Authority, 2020). Despite this support, the performance of construction projects in Uganda remains poor. Issues include high costs, time overruns, substandard and unfinished projects, contract variations, and delays in payment and project completion (Mwelu et al., 2021; National Planning Authority, 2020). For example, cost overruns can reach up to 52% of the contract amount (Kibwami & Mwesige, 2021), and government construction projects had arrears exceeding Ushs.500 billion as of January 2021 (Parliament of Uganda, 2022). Additionally, an assessment report for Wakiso district in FY2017/2018 revealed that over 70% of construction projects were underperforming due to stakeholders failing to execute their contractual responsibilities (Assessment Report, 2020).

If these issues are not resolved, they will hinder national development strategies like Uganda Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan III (2020-2025), which have construction as a key pillar. Common factors affecting project performance include non-adherence to contractual agreements, adversarial relations among stakeholders, and budget shortfalls. Poor perceived project performance may be attributed to incomplete contracts and a lack of trust

among project partners. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance in construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda.

1.3 Purpose of the study

To examine the relationship between contractual completeness, trust, and project performance in Wakiso district, Uganda.

1.4 Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the relationship between contractual completeness and perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district.
- ii. To assess the relationship between trust and perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district.
- iii. To establish the combined outcome of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance in construction projects in Wakiso district.

1.5 Research questions

- i. What is the effect of contractual completeness on perceived project performance in construction projects in Wakiso district?
- ii. What is the effect of trust on perceived project performance in construction projects in the Wakiso district?
- iii. What is the combined outcome of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance in construction projects in Wakiso district?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings of the study are intended to serve as a resource for the following;

Policymakers: the study will provide insights to guide policymakers to develop and implement policies that improve project performance in public construction projects.

The study findings will also help local governments to devise strategies that could improve projects within their districts.

Project engineers: the study will provide information that is relevant to the local engineers in Uganda to effectively adhere to the contracts between them and the government for improved project performance in the construction industry.

Project managers: study findings may provide insights on the importance of building trust among the project players for improved project performance. Additionally, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge by examining the role of contractual completeness, trust, and perceived project performance in construction projects in Uganda while providing recommendations on how to improve public construction project performance.

1.7 Justification of the study

Despite numerous interventions aimed at improving the performance of construction projects in developing countries, the empirical evidence shows that project performance in Wakiso District remains poor (Muhwezi, Musiime & Onyutha, 2020). There is a lack of specific empirical studies focusing on the unique challenges and conditions of Wakiso, which this study seeks to address.

While there is substantial theoretical work on project performance and construction management, existing theories do not fully explain the persistent poor performance in Wakiso's public construction projects. This study will explore the theoretical inadequacies related to incomplete contracts, unclear contract terms, and stakeholder distrust, contributing new insights to the academic discourse on project performance in developing contexts.

Previous research has often relied on generic methodologies that may not capture the nuanced dynamics of Wakiso's public construction projects. This study will employ a tailored methodological approach to comprehensively investigate the specific factors—such as incomplete contracts, unclear contract terms, and stakeholder distrust—that hinder project

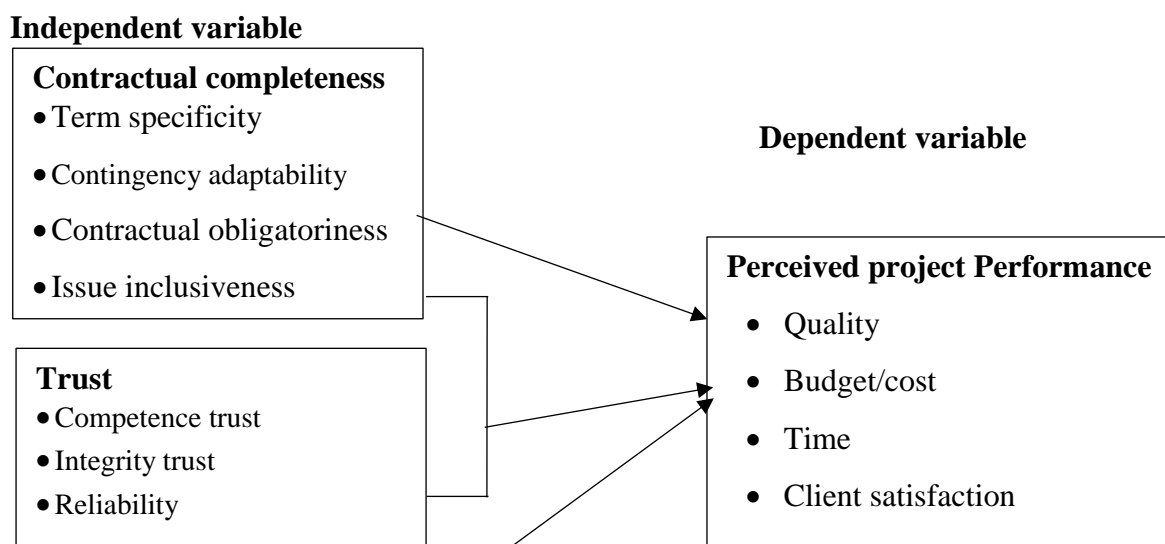
performance. By doing so, it aims to fill the methodological gap with more precise and contextually relevant data collection and analysis techniques.

By addressing these empirical, theoretical, and methodology gaps, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the factors affecting project performance in Wakiso District, ultimately contributing to more effective interventions and policy recommendations.

Project performance in construction projects especially in public projects has received a lot of attention from academic researchers and other practitioners for decades. However, even with a plethora of interventions to improve the performance of construction projects in developing countries, project performance in Wakiso remains poor (Muhwezi, Musiime & Onyutha, 2020). This study will address in-depth reasons for the negative trend; Wakiso District in Central Uganda will be the epicenter of the study highlighting factors such as incomplete contracts, unclear contract terms, and distrust among project stakeholders limiting the project performance in public construction projects. Hence, the study is timely.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Source: Adapted from Javed, Syed & Javed, (2018); Luo, (2002); Moradi & Kähkönen, (2022) and modified by the researcher.

Fig.1 above shows the relationship between contractual completeness and trust as independent variables and perceived project performance as the dependent variable. According to Luo, (2002), contractual completeness is conceptualized as term specificity, contingency adaptability, contractual obligatoriness, and issue inclusiveness that reduces opportunism behavior in construction projects hence improving perceived project performance. Javed, Syed & Javed, (2018) conceptualized trust in terms of competence, integrity, and reliability trust. According to Moradi and Kähkönen (2022), perceived project performance is measured in terms of quality, budget/cost, time, and client satisfaction.

1.9 Scope of the study

The scope of the study consists of geographical, time, and content scope as shown below.

Geographical scope

The study was carried out in Wakiso district, Uganda, because of is where most of the district's construction plans are drawn and implemented by all the stakeholders involved in a project. This was to ease data collection and provide reliable and relevant data.

Time scope

The study considered a period of 5 years (from 2019 to 2023) since most of the projects have stalled within this period. Five years was considered because it provides a substantial amount of data about contractual completeness, trust, and perceived project performance to analyze and identify trends, patterns, and changes that might occur over time.

Content scope

The study considered the concepts of contractual completeness, trust as the dependent variable, and perceived project performance as the independent variable.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This study investigated the relationships between contractual completeness Trust and perceived project performance in wakiso District, Uganda. This chapter is a review of theoretical, conceptual, hypothesis, summary of the literature reviewed, and the gap identified.

The researcher used secondary sources from textbooks, journals, research dissertations, government reports, and publications.

2.1 Theoretical review

The study was underpinned by the institutional theory put forward by North (1990).

2.1.1 The Institutional Theory

Institutional theory, as developed by Douglass North, provides a framework for understanding the role of institutions in shaping the behaviour and performance of organizations. North's work emphasizes that institutions are the rules of the game in a society, encompassing formal rules (such as laws and regulations) and informal constraints (such as norms, conventions, and traditions). These institutions create a structure within which human interaction occurs, significantly impacting economic performance and organizational behaviour.

Institutional theory has been extensively examined and applied across various fields to understand the impact of institutions on economic and organizational performance. This review highlights key empirical studies that illustrate how formal and informal institutions shape organizational behaviour, economic development, and institutional change.

Institutional quality and construction project performance

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that the quality of institutions significantly impacts the performance of construction projects. Ofori (1993) explores institutional constraints in the construction industry in developing countries, finding that weak regulatory frameworks and corruption significantly hinder project performance.

Wells and Hawkins (2008) analyse the effects of regulatory systems on construction projects in Sub-Saharan Africa, concluding that clear and enforceable regulations improve project outcomes by reducing uncertainties and transaction costs.

Transaction Costs and Institutional Arrangements

North's concept of transaction costs is pivotal in understanding the efficiency of construction projects. Winch (2001) investigates the role of transaction costs in construction projects in the UK. The study shows that well-defined contractual arrangements and clear regulatory frameworks help reduce transaction costs, leading to better project performance.

Meng (2012) examines transaction costs in construction projects in China, finding that high transaction costs due to unclear regulations and corruption negatively impact project efficiency and increase overall project costs.

Contractual Completeness and Project Performance

The completeness of contracts is crucial in construction projects, where uncertainty and complexity are inherent. Observed studies emphasize the role of institutions in ensuring contractual completeness. Hartmann and Caerteling (2010) analyze the impact of contractual clarity on project outcomes in the Dutch construction industry. Their findings indicate that detailed and comprehensive contracts reduce misunderstandings and disputes, thereby enhancing project performance. Cheung, Yiu, and Lam (2013) study construction projects in

Hong Kong, demonstrating that contracts with clear terms and conditions, supported by robust institutional frameworks, lead to better adherence to schedules and budgets.

Trust and Institutional Frameworks

Trust among project stakeholders is another critical factor influenced by institutional settings. Studies highlight how institutional arrangements foster trust and collaboration in construction projects. Kadefors (2004) explores the role of trust in construction project management in Sweden. The study finds that strong institutional support and clear regulations promote trust among stakeholders, leading to improved project coordination and outcomes. Laan, Voordijk, and Dewulf (2011) investigate the impact of trust on construction projects in the Netherlands. Their research shows that institutional mechanisms that facilitate transparency and accountability enhance trust, thereby reducing opportunistic behaviour and improving project performance.

Institutional Change and Adaptability in Construction Project

The adaptability of institutions to changing circumstances is essential for the long-term success of construction projects. Mahalingam and Levitt (2007) study institutional change in the context of large-scale infrastructure projects in India. Their findings suggest that adaptive institutions that evolve in response to project-specific challenges lead to better project outcomes. Loosemore (2014) analyses institutional change in the Australian construction industry, highlighting that proactive institutional reforms that address emerging challenges such as sustainability and safety standards significantly enhance project performance.

The theory emphasizes the roles of social, political, and economic systems in which institutions operate and gain their legitimacy. Ugwuibe, Onah, and Olise (2021) define an institution as a formal or informal, structural, societal, or political phenomenon that exceeds the individual level, based on more or less common values, with a certain degree of stability and impacts behaviors. It considers the processes by which the structures, including schemes,

rules, norms, and routines, become established as authoritative guidelines for social behavior. According to Kuijpers and Eijdenberg (2021), formal and informal institutions such as the government and private sector form the rules of the game within society and they define the available ways to operate by discouraging, constraining, or encouraging given behavioral patterns. These institutions influence the decision-making process regarding the acceptable or not acceptable norms, values, rules, and laws in a given society.

From the cognitive perspective, the traditions and cultures of an institution or entity are followed subconsciously. The stakeholders' ethnicity, education, life experiences, upbringing, and background to a large extent influence cultural cognitive aspects.

Past literature assumes that the perceived performance of public construction projects is achieved when all stakeholders comply with the rules, laws, norms, and regulations governing their projects (Mwelu, et al., 2021). Thus, an efficient institutional framework with an effective enforcement mechanism constrains non-compliant stakeholders leading to successful project implementation. Considering the recurring interactions among partners, in the form of project partnerships or teams can gradually create shared norms and promote a trustful atmosphere.

(Kazmi, Shuja & Bukhari, 2021). Kazmi and colleagues stated that the best project performance is achieved when all parties to the contract are compliant and perform as expected. However, compliance with institutional norms and regulatory framework is resisted by some stakeholders who may find alternative means of accomplishing tasks within their knowledge and pecuniary interest. Thus, contractual completeness and trust are believed to minimize the occurrence of opportunistic behaviors among project stakeholders and consequently lead to excellent project performance. Moreover, for a successful public construction project, stakeholders should thoroughly understand its scope of work and its contract compliance, specifications, and adaptability (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016).

2.2 Conceptual Literature Review

2.2.1 Contractual completeness

Contract completeness refers to the state or condition in which a contract contains all the necessary provisions, terms, and details that are required to accurately and comprehensively define the rights, obligations, and expectations of the parties involved (Lu, Zhang & Zhang, 2016). It means that the contract is free from gaps, ambiguities, or missing information that could lead to misunderstandings or disputes. According to Luo, 2002 as cited in Mwesigwa, et al. (2019) contract completeness provides contract designs, terms, and structure adhered to during and after project implementation. An incomplete contract might cause task ambiguity, making it difficult for the parties involved to understand their obligations (Quanji, Zhang & Wang, 2017). On the contrary, some researchers argued that in a fast-changing environment, contract completeness leads to contracts becoming too rigid which makes it unable to cope with changes in the external environment (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). For instance, inflexible contracts may encourage contractor non-performance about the contract and the inability to respond to any arising conflict promptly.

It specifies the terms of a construction project contract that could be used to reduce the risk and resolve unforeseeable outcomes, contingency adaptability, and each stakeholder's obligation for the success of the project (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019; 2020). The contract terms specificity defines the rights and obligations of each party in a construction project. Every stakeholder has his/her own responsibilities and project failure is often attributed to the inability to fulfill his/her promise. Whereas, contingency adaptability focuses on the extent to which unanticipated changes are accounted for, and relevant guidelines for handling these changes are defined in a contract. Contractual obligatoriness refers to the extent to which each party involved in a project is restrained by the binding force of the contract.

2.2.2 Trust

The concept of trust is considered significant in construction projects given that it is fundamental in all human interactions (Strahorn, Brewer & Gajendran, 2017). Trust has gained increased recognition in all fields of knowledge by various researchers for decades. Trust is defined as an anticipation that people will not fail us even if there are perceived opportunities and incentives for it (Tai, Sun & Zhang, 2016). According to Han and Yin (2022), trust is the belief that a trading partner will act with integrity and consideration for the interest of the other party. Ke, Cui, Govindan, and Zavadskas (2015) considered trust to be the positive expectations one party has about another party's intentions. Therefore, trust is the confidence or belief that partners hold about each other's goodwill and reliability in an uncertain situation.

Previous literature has recognized trust as a multidimensional concept for instance, Javed, et al. (2018) contended that trust in any project includes competence trust, integrity trust, and reliability trust. In the competence trust dimension, one party of the contract is assured that the other is reliable, knowledgeable, and has the required expertise for the task at hand (Ke, et al., 2015). Integrity trust assures the parties involved in the contract that they will look after each other's interests for the success of the project. The higher the integrity levels between the parties, the higher the opportunities for parties to openly communicate their concerns, risks can easily be discussed and suggestions made genuinely. Papatriantafyllou (2017) further stated that the cognitive form of trust provides the initial response when making a decision and this decision is later post-evaluated based on competence trust and integrity trust. Han and Yin (2022) argued that competency and honesty are based on prequalification, reputation, and negotiation in the early stages of signing.

Engebø, et al. (2020) considered trust as the glue that keeps any shared undertaking or partnership together between individuals and or among organizations. Furthermore, apart from policies and precautionary measures, stakeholders need to be able to trust in each other's competence to achieve team unity. Trust is vital to the health and success of the construction projects. Much as there is considerable literature on trust and its dimensions, the construction project setting is different for each project and the party's mistrust is inevitable.

2.2.3 Perceived Project Performance

A project is a series of unique and related activities with a goal that must be achieved at a set time, and cost and following set quality specifications (Eja & Ramegowda, 2020). Defining project performance is complex given that it depends on the project participants and their expectations (Silva, Warnakulasuriya & Arachchige, 2019). Since project performance cannot be defined with a similar common definition within project management literature, Baker et al. (2008) as cited in Silva, et al. (2019) suggested that it is only perceived performance. However, the concept of project performance is based on the notion of overall achievement of project goals and expectations. In line with the previous scholars, Silva, et al. (2019), defined construction project performance as the perceived degree of achievement of predetermined performance objectives as well as participants' expectations. In this study, perceived project performance in construction projects will refer to the accomplishment of works according to desired project outcomes set out in a contract. Silva and colleagues noted that project performance in the construction industry is measured in terms of time, budget/cost, achievement of project objectives, and user satisfaction. Similarly, Seninde (2020), acknowledged that the measures of project performance include cost, schedule, and quality for design and structure.

Equally, various investigations in construction project management concur that time, cost/budget, quality, and client satisfaction are the most common measures used to determine project performance (Egwunatum, 2017; Kebede & Zhang, 2020; Unegbu, Yawas & Dan-Asabe, 2020). Kebede and Zhang (2020) further said that a project is said to have performed well if it is accomplished within the stipulated contract time, budget, and required quality achieved. These are vital factors used to assess the performance of a project and they need to be well balanced for the project objectives to be achieved. However, the literature concedes that project performance in the construction industry of many countries particularly developing economies is poor.

According to Eja and Ramegowda (2020), poor project performance rate is higher in developing countries as compared to developed countries which creates a need to address this issue as it affects their economic growth. Several challenges hampering the perceived project performance in construction projects in developing countries include cost overruns, contract variation, delays regarding design and release of project funds, time overruns, substandard and unfinished projects, delays in payment and project completion (Eja & Ramegowda, 2020; Mwelu, et al., 2021; Seninde, 2020; Volden & Welde 2022). This has led to the failure of many public projects and as a result, governments lose huge amounts of money that would be used to provide services to the citizens. For instance, the government of Uganda loses over \$300m per year over failed projects and shoddy works (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). Therefore, the application of Institutional theory improves project performance by helping project managers understand and navigate the institutional context in which their projects operate (Wagner, et al., 2022). Moreover, theory stipulates how organizations and projects are influenced by external institutions, norms, and practices.

Additionally, the Minister of State, Office of the President for Economic Monitoring on his district tour checking on government projects found none of the projects in the areas of Bunyoro, Bududa, Kamuli, Mbale, Kakumiro to Kiryandogo, fit for purpose despite billions of Uganda shillings spent to uplift the standards of living of local people in these areas (Independent, 2021). Moreover, the projects such as schools that were built were defective, non-existent boreholes, bridges in Bududa collapsed before commissioning, roads in Kakumiro were poorly done and health centers in Kamuli had collapsed before use. To improve perceived project performance, Han and Yin (2022) beseech clients (in this case government) and project managers to embrace contractual completeness and trust mechanisms.

2.2.4 Contractual completeness and perceived project performance

A construction project contract determines the outcomes or outputs to be delivered within the given time and budget. It gives a thorough description of the contractor's obligations, roles, and responsibilities of each party and specifies the monitoring procedures and penalties for any breach under a given agreement (Lin & Zhang, 2023).

The impact of contractual completeness on perceived project performance is mixed. While clear contracts can reduce disputes and misunderstandings, overly rigid contracts may hinder adaptability and responsiveness, potentially negatively impacting performance (Hart & Moore, 1999). Contract term specificity refers to the level of detail, clarity, and precision with which the terms and provisions of a contract are defined. With clear terms, there is no room for ambiguity or misinterpretation of the contract given that obligations and expectations of the parties are well articulated. However, the lack of capacity by the majority of the players in the construction industry especially the domestic firms, delayed approvals by statutory agencies, and uncoordinated and repetitive audits by the various government agencies affect the contractual process leading to poor contract execution (Oluka, Aluonzi &

Nduhura, 2016). Therefore, lack of understanding of the contract, its clarity, and changes in external conditions affect the implementation of the contract and compromise the project performance.

According to Tang and Li (2022), through contractual obligatoriness each party is forced to abide by the contract terms, reducing the incidence of opportunistic behaviors. Contractual obligatoriness involves the binding nature and legal enforceability of obligations outlined in a contract. It ensures that parties who enter into a contract are legally obligated to fulfill their agreed-upon responsibilities and perform the contractual obligations outlined in the agreement. Clear responsibilities and obligations enable all parties involved in a project to avoid the pitfalls of inefficient contract management processes that affect the outcomes of the project performance (Aluonzi1, et al., 2016). Moreover, describing the unanticipated incidents in a contract enhances the contracting parties' confidence in the long-term cooperation, minimizes contract rigidity, and boosts flexibility (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). Chen, Chen, Smyth, and Fu (2021) argue that a lack of awareness of obligations and honest attempts to react to future contingencies lead to contractual violations. Therefore, people in charge of the contracts need to ensure that the contractual obligations are fully adhered to to achieve the project goals and objectives at minimum cost, and time and according to stakeholders' expectations.

Mwesigwa, et al. (2019) stressed that there is a need for complete contracts which formally and legally bind partners for smooth interactions. The authors contend that contracts act as a force that keeps contracting parties together and provides relevant information required to make reasonable decisions. A complete contract provides a lawful and institutional framework for the rights, duties, and responsibilities of the stakeholders. It also offers guidance and acts as a basis for both parties to cooperate, manage conflicts, and adapt to contingency. However, in many developing countries it is still challenging to fully develop

complete contracts, particularly in the construction industry (Eja & Ramegowda, 2020). For instance, in Uganda, contractors tend to under-price to win contracts which results in cost overruns and inability to complete projects on schedule. This has increased the rate of project failure to over 72%, poor quality projects, and loss of huge amounts of money by the government of Uganda.

2.2.5 Trust and perceived project performance

Trust is an essential element in construction projects which can serve to positively or negatively affect the perceived project performance (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). It is essential to build strong relationships necessary to meet the stakeholders' expectations as well as project objectives.

Positive Correlation: Trust among project participants is generally positively correlated with perceived project performance. Trust fosters an environment where team members are more willing to share information and collaborate, leading to better project outcomes (Costa, 2003) Due to the complexity of construction projects and uncertainty, trust-based relationships among the project stakeholders are paramount. Javed, Syed, and Javed (2018) recommended project managers and top management in project-based organizations not ignore the role of trust in project management fields where people-related issues considerably impact project failures or successes. The authors further noted that the absence of trust can result in an increased cost of doing business that may affect the main objective of any project which is to achieve project deliverables within set cost and time.

Trust promotes the flexibility, solidarity, and information exchange needed to enforce obligations, promises, and expectations of a construction project contract (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). In the absence of trust, it is difficult for the partners to adapt to unforeseeable events and acquire new information and opportunities that could assist in achieving excellent project

performance (Addae-Boateng, et al., 2015). Project managers' interaction with various actors such as members of the project team, clients, contractors, and suppliers among other stakeholders requires them to build trust for better collaboration (Robert, 2015). As explained by Wang, et al. (2019), a lack of trust is considered to be one of the main factors that leads to the inefficiency of projects. However, mutual trust and collaboration improve project performance as well as stakeholders' satisfaction.

More so, trust between contractors and subcontractors contributes to substantial time and cost savings, thereby improving project performance. As noted by Jørgensen and Åsgård (2019), trust is necessary when one party is in situations where dependency on others is avoidable. In a construction project context, contracting parties are dependent on each other which makes trust a necessary factor in achieving the project outcomes as set in the contract. The authors further acknowledged that project managers must be able to trust their team members to perform their assignments satisfactorily as expected to avoid micromanaging the project. Micromanagement is an indication that the project manager does not trust his/her team and this in turn leads to manager burnout, demotivated teams, and loss of control and trust. All of these affect the project's performance.

In construction projects, the client's trust in the contractor's competence in executing his/her responsibilities is critical. Moreover, project managers' ignorance and lack of knowledge, faulty project conceptualization, and aggressive competition during tendering affect the construction project performance (Seninde, 2020). In their study on "Perceived organizational performance and trust" Javed, et al. (2018) concluded that trust especially at the top management level strongly correlates with perceived organizational performance in Pakistani public and private project-based organizations. However, the authors' findings revealed that public-sector employees were more trusted than private-sector employees.

2.2.6 Contractual completeness, trust, and perceived project performance

Using a combination of contractual completeness and trust mechanisms provides a clear and specific guideline of how to deal with stakeholders' scheming behaviors that contribute to the causes of conflicts and non-compliance risks that may arise during project implementation (Wu, Zhao, Zuo & Zillante, 2017). This signals the contracting parties from the start about acceptable behavior and penalties in case of violations of the stated rules, policies, and procedures (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). To restrict opportunistic behaviour, Wang et al. (2019) suggest that trust is preferred given that an environment high on trust reduces the growth of devious behaviour and encourages contracting parties to perform their tasks according to the contract terms. Contract compliance increases the level of trust between contractor and client which ultimately improves performance. Trust is the glue that keeps relationships strong and reliable. As noted by Oluka, et al. (2016) poor relationships between the client and the contractor are the catalyst for disputes, arbitrations, and other risks arising from time, cost, and quality slippage. The authors further stated that delayed payments attributed to a shortage of capital, for instance, delayed payments by the clients to contractors or contractors to sub-contractors as well as contractors' employees affect the client-contractor relationship. Therefore, with formal contracts coupled with trust-based relationships, the opportunistic behavior of project stakeholders will be contained for the success of the project.

Some studies indicate that detailed contracts may substitute for low trust, providing a safety net through explicit terms (Williamson, 1985). However, other studies argue that contracts and trust can be complementary, with trust enhancing the effectiveness of detailed contracts (Lumineau & Henderson, 2012).

Mwesigwa et al. (2019) noted that owing to the uncertainty caused by the increasing scale and complexity of construction projects, building stakeholder relationships is paramount in achieving the project and stakeholders' expectations. However, the above-mentioned contend

that some contractors tend to have self-seeking behaviors that affect their integrity and reliability. This in turn minimizes trust between the contractor and the client, an obstacle to developing a strong working relationship among the project teams causing confusion and conflicts that deter the project's progress. Similarly, projects involve people of different cultures and backgrounds which create tensions of loyalty through conflicting cultural norms and work expectations that project participants bring with them. In such situations, Benítez-Ávila (2019) suggests the use of both contractual and trust governance mechanisms to address these complexities of the multilevel identities of project participants.

Contracts include clear terms on how to handle project contingencies and risks related to budget, schedule, or scope. According to Wu et al. (2017), having contingency plans well set out in the contract will help the contracting parties respond to potential problems and conflicts and provide timely solutions. Skilled and experienced managers provide strategies to prevent or proactively respond to risks in the contract before they happen. For instance, during and post-COVID-19 pandemic, many contractors were left scratching their heads on how to escape liability for a rise in project cost and completion date delays, due to factors largely or completely out of their control. Therefore, project contracts must contain flexible terms to address unanticipated contingencies that may occur during project implementation.

Effective communication and coordination reduce the propensity of misunderstandings and distrust and allow timely project progress (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). Communication facilitates the development of a harmonious contractor-client relationship and provides timely information. Without effective communication, resources can be misallocated, contracts may be misinterpreted, and inadequate information exchange among the project teams which will result in cost and time overruns as well as client dissatisfaction

(Twinamatsiko, 2021). The use of communication technologies offers a great opportunity for project managers to prepare timely and inexpensive quality reports for clients.

During project contract implementation, the position held by the party will either facilitate or impose difficulties in achieving project success (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). The above-mentioned noted that parties deemed to be in a higher position as compared to their counterparts tend to distort systems of rewards, penalties, and beliefs in their favor. As a way of motivating the contractors to adhere to the contract terms and conditions, policies regarding incentives, price compensation, and risk allocation terms should be well articulated in the contract to encourage cooperative behaviors between contracting parties for the success of the project. The literature review on the effect of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance revealed that contractual completeness and trust safeguard the project by clarifying the rights and obligations of each party and promoting adequate monitoring and controls necessary to prevent or mitigate potential opportunism.

2.3 Related literature

Contractual Completeness

Contractual completeness refers to the extent to which a contract explicitly specifies the duties, rights, and responsibilities of the parties involved in a project.

1. **Clarity and Conflict Reduction:** Complete contracts help in reducing ambiguities and conflicts during project execution by clearly delineating expectations and procedures for conflict resolution (Crocker & Reynolds, 1993).
2. **Flexibility vs. Rigidity:** While more detailed contracts provide clarity, they can also lead to rigidity, making it difficult to adapt to unforeseen changes (Macneil, 1978). Balancing completeness and flexibility is critical (Gulati & Nickerson, 2008).

Trust

Trust in a project management context refers to the confidence that project parties have in each other's reliability and integrity.

1. **Trust and Cooperation:** High levels of trust among project participants promote cooperation, reduce transaction costs, and facilitate more effective communication (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995).
2. **Trust vs. Formal Control:** Empirical studies suggest a complementary relationship between trust and formal control mechanisms like contracts. Trust can enhance the effectiveness of formal controls and vice versa (Poppo & Zenger, 2002).

Perceived Project Performance

Perceived project performance is the assessment of a project's success based on criteria like timeliness, budget adherence, and quality standards, as perceived by stakeholders.

1. **Subjective vs. Objective Measures:** While objective measures of project performance (e.g., financial metrics) are important, stakeholder perceptions often play a critical role in the overall assessment of project success (Pinto & Slevin, 1988).
2. **Impact of Relationships:** The quality of relationships among project stakeholders, including trust and effective communication, significantly influences perceived project performance (Zwikael & Smyrk, 2011).

Summary of the literature review

The literature review gathered and presented above is an attestation that various studies across various contexts have been conducted to bring up their impact on perceived project performance in construction firms. However, the authors' literature reviewed falls short of demonstrating the clear relationships of contractual completeness, Trust with a critical focus on perceived project performance, in Wakiso District in the Ugandan context. Even those who attempted, several questionable gaps have been identified as depicted by the literature

review above upon which this research will be anchored. Scanty studies have been carried out on contractual completeness Trust and perceived project performance in Wakiso District Uganda

By institutional theory the performance of construction projects, High-quality institutions that minimize transaction costs, ensure contractual completeness, foster trust, and adapt to changing conditions significantly improve project outcomes. Studies across different countries consistently find that robust institutional frameworks lead to better adherence to schedules and budgets, reduce disputes, and enhance overall project efficiency. These findings highlight the importance of institutional quality and adaptability in achieving successful construction project performance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, study population, sample size determination, sampling techniques and procedures, data collection methods, data collection instruments, validity and reliability, measurements of variables, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research design

A research design is a plan for carrying out a research project (Creswell, 2014). The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. This design enabled the researcher to collect relevant information on contractual completeness, trust, and perceived project performance. The design was preferred because it allows a snapshot collection of data from a population of different characteristics at a particular given point in time. It is inexpensive to conduct. The study used a quantitative research approach to analyse data and interpret the findings.

3.2 Population

The study population consisted of 284 officials from the Wakiso district Local Government and contractors. They include; 85 Contractors, 30 members of the procurement and disposable unit, 30 members of the contracts committee, 20 members of technical planning, 25 members of the evaluation committee, and 90 beneficiaries. The population was preferred because it has roles and responsibilities to play in line with construction projects for the local government.

3.3 Sample size

Table showing the sample size and the sampling techniques. Using Krejcie & Morgan (1970), as shown in the appendix, the sample size for Members of the procurement and disposable

unit committee, technical planning, evaluation committee, Contractors, and Beneficiaries was determined.

Table 3.1: Sample Size

Population category	Population	Sample	Sampling technique
Project manager	1	1	Purposive sampling
Heads of procurement and planning units	3	3	Purposive sampling
Members of the procurement and disposable unit	30	28	Simple random technique
Members of the contracts committee	30	28	Simple random technique
Members of technical planning	20	19	Simple random sampling
Members of the evaluation committee	25	24	Simple random sampling
Beneficiaries	90	73	Simple sampling
Contractors	85	66	Simple random technique
Total	284	242	Simple sampling

Source: District human resource files

3.4 Sampling strategies

The study used simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Simple random sampling is a probabilistic sampling method that gives an equal chance for all elements under study to be selected (West, 2016). This method was used to select support Members of the procurement and disposable unit, Members of the contracts committee, Members of technical planning, Members of the evaluation committee, Beneficiaries, and Contractors. The lists of each category of respondents were obtained from district human resource and planning department files, then each member will be assigned a random number. The random numbers

were selected until a sample size of 238 was obtained. Purposive sampling is a non-probabilistic sampling method used to collect data from respondents who are deemed to be key informants of the study. The method used to collect data from the project manager and heads of procurement and planning units.

3.5 Data collection instruments

The study used questionnaires and interview instruments to collect data.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

This instrument was used to collect quantitative data which was used to test the hypotheses of the study (Fox, 2009). The questionnaire consisted of a set of open-ended and close-ended questions about the objectives of the study. The sections of the questionnaire included part A- Respondents demographic data, B- questions relating to the objectives of the study. The questionnaire instrument was self-administered to Members of the procurement and disposable unit, Members of the contracts committee, Members of technical planning, Members of the evaluation committee, Beneficiaries, and Contractors.

3.6 Data collection methods

The study used primary data which was collected using a questionnaire.

3.6.1 Questionnaire Survey

This method was used to collect primary data because it enables the collection of data from a large sample faster and in a short period. The researcher administered the questionnaires with the help of research assistants to the respondents to save time. More so, the questionnaire was preferred since it allows respondents to give their views and opinions at their convenience and reduces researcher bias (Oso & Onen, 2008).

3.7 Data collection procedures

The researcher got an introduction letter from Makerere University Business School (MUBS) after a successful proposal defense and presented it to Wakiso district local government offices for approval to collect data from there. The researcher submitted a leave request to the human resource office and directors to avoid personal and work overlapping schedules. The data was collected in a period of two weeks to ensure the completeness of the data-collecting exercise. After data collection, data was analyzed and the findings of the study were discussed.

3.8 Reliability and validity of instruments

3.8.1 Validity of instruments

Bolarinwa (2015) defined validity as the degree of accuracy with which an instrument measures what it intends to measure. Validity indicates the degree to which the instrument measures the constructs under investigation. The validity of the instrument was tested under the guidance of supervisors (validators 1 and 2) who were required to comment on the accuracy of the constructs and after pre-testing, unclear questions were adjusted or deleted. The study ensured the accuracy and clarity of the variables and measures of contractual completeness, trust, and project performance dimensions using the content validity index. Then the content validity index (CVI) was determined. According to Oso and Onen (2008), a CVI of 0.7 and above is good and indicates that the instrument is valid. The content validity index was computed for all the variables as presented in Table 3. 2.

Table 3.2: Validity of the instrument

Variable	Content Validity index	Total number of items valid (K)	Total number of Items (N)
Contract	0.857	12	14
Completeness			
Trust	0.889	8	9
Perceived project performance	0.818	9	11

Source: Primary data

From Table 3.2, the computed content validity index for all the variables ranges between 0.818 and 0.889 which is above the threshold of 0.6. Thus, the variables are relevant and accurate to measure the constructs.

3.8.1 Reliability of instruments

Bolarinwa (2015) defined reliability as the extent to which an instrument produces consistent results on repeated trials. The reliability test enables the researcher to have accurate results that are replicable in different research settings. The researcher tested the consistency of the instrument using the Cronbach's alpha test. According to Amin (2005), Alpha coefficients of 0.7 and above are acceptable.

The questionnaires were given to 26 employees of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda to give their opinion regarding the relevancy of the questions using a 5-point Likert scale.

Table 3.3: Reliability coefficient for each variable

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Contract Completeness	.746	14
Trust	.712	9
Perceived project performance	.835	11

Source: Output from data analysis

According to Nunnally (1978) and Field, (2009), the recommended cut-off alpha coefficient of 0.7 is sufficient to prove that the tool is reliable. Therefore, the reliability coefficients of the research tools were higher than 0.7, implying that the instrument was reliable.

3.9 Measurements

To evaluate the concepts of conceptual completeness, trust, and perceived project performance we adapted measures from Javed, et al. (2018); Luo (2002); Moradi and Kähkönen (2022). Contractual completeness was assessed by examining contract term specificity, contractual obligatoriness, contingency adaptability, and issue inclusiveness. Trust was measured through the dimensions of competence, integrity, and reliability trust. Perceived project performance was gauged based on quality, budget/cost, time, and client satisfaction. A five-point Likert-style rating scale to collect respondents' opinions on the variables of the study. The rating scale of 1-5 includes; strongly disagree (SD) =1, disagree (D) =2, Not sure (N) =3 agree (A) =4 and strongly agree (SA) =5.

3.10 Data analysis

Quantitative data was organized by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were then generated to form the basis for the analysis of quantitative data. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between contractual completeness, trust, and perceived

performance in construction projects. Regression analysis was used to determine the percentage with which independent variables explain the dependent variable.

3.11 Ethical Consideration

The researcher adhered to the following research ethical considerations.

Confidentiality and privacy; respondents were assured that the information provided is confidential and would be used for academic purposes only. Information from respondents would only be used after seeking their permission. For privacy purposes, participants' names, telephone contact lines, or personal email would be kept anonymous.

Plagiarism and Researchers' responsibility, all the works of other authors used in this study both published and unpublished was acknowledged using APA citation and referencing. The researcher observed *standard operating procedures (SOPs)* to protect herself and all respondents against COVID-19, Ebola, and all the related viral infectious diseases as required by the Ministry of Health.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis, presentation, and interpretation of findings in line with the study objectives. This chapter further covers response rate, demographic characteristics, correlation coefficients, and multiple regression analysis.

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher issued out 242 questionnaires and received 208 filled questionnaires making a response rate of 85.9%. The response rate conforms to the Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) stipulation that, the response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting. Therefore 85.9% for this study is good enough since is above 50%.

4.3 Socio-Demographic Characteristics

This study sought to find out the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents since they have direct and indirect effects on the study findings.

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	106	51.0	51.0
	Male	102	49.0	100.0
	Total	208	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2023)

The study analysed the gender of the respondents to understand the proportion of males and females represented in the study. The results revealed that the majority of respondents were female who were represented by 51.0%, while 49.6% of the respondents were male. Hence the results of the study were gender sensitive as an almost equal number of respondents from the two genders were involved in the study.

Table 4.2: Age bracket of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	18 - 25 years	8	3.8	3.8
	26 - 35 years	28	13.5	17.3
	36 - 45 years	88	42.3	59.6
	46 - 55 years	68	32.7	92.3
	56 - 65 years	8	3.8	96.2
	66 - 75 years	2	1.0	97.1
	76 or more years	6	2.9	100.0
	Total	208	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2023)

The study took into consideration the age bracket of the study population. This helped to generate mature reasoning and understanding about the purpose of the study, hence the free expression of respondents' views about the effect of contract completeness and trust on the perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda. The findings indicated that most of the respondents were between 36 and 45 years implying that this age group forms the highest proportion of the respondents surveyed during this study at construction projects in the Wakiso district. This age group falls between 14 and 64 as per Uganda census report, 2014 which indicates the active working age group range.

Table 4.3: Marital status of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Married	144	69.2	69.2
	Not married	52	25.0	94.2
	Other (please specify)	12	5.8	100.0
	Total	208	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2023)

Table 4.3 reveals that most of the respondents were married (69.2%) and (25.0%) were not married. This suggests that the study was dominated by married people. This implies that they find it hard to achieve good perceived project performance as they strive to meet their family needs.

Table 4.4: For how long have you been in this organization?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than three years	40	19.2	19.2
3 - 6 years	68	32.7	51.9
Valid 7 - 10 years	64	30.8	82.7
More than 10 years	36	17.3	100.0
Total	208	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2023)

For how long have the staff been in construction projects in Wakiso district, those that had worked for between 3 – 6 years (32.7%) and those that had worked for less than three years (19.2%), between 7 – 10 years (30.8%) and more than 10 years (17.3%). Therefore, staff of construction projects have worked for good years enabling them to learn the issues concerning contract completeness, trust, and perceived project performance and has guided them to answer the questions in the questionnaire appropriately.

Table 4.5: Indicate the highest level of education that you have completed

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
High school diploma or less	14	6.7	6.7
College certificate	34	16.3	23.1
Valid Bachelor's degree	86	41.3	64.4
Doctoral degree and above	66	31.7	96.2
Other (please specify)	8	3.8	100.0
Total	208	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2023)

The study sought to establish the highest level of education of the respondents. Results in Table 8 indicate that most of the respondents attained bachelor's degrees 41.3%, while 31.7%, 16.3%, and 6.7% had Doctorates, college certificates, and high school diplomas respectively. This implies that the level of education of the respondents was adequate to enable them to read and comprehend the questions in the questionnaires.

Table 4.6: The Nature of Job

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Permanent	128	61.5	61.5
Temporary - with no agreement date	32	15.4	76.9
Fixed period - with an agreed end date	48	23.1	100.0
Total	208	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2023)

Respondents were requested to indicate the nature of their job, from the research findings, the study revealed that respondents held various jobs with the majority coming from permanent (61.5%) and least with temporary with no agreement (15.4%). This implies that all job categories were represented in the study and also indicates that there was no segregation in the selection.

4.4 Correlation Coefficient

In correlation analysis, we determine the degree to which changes in perceived project performance are associated with changes in contractual completeness and trust. To quantify the strength of the relationship between the variables, the study used Pearson's coefficient correlation. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient is a measure of the strength of a linear association between two variables and is denoted by "r". The Pearson correlation

coefficient, r , can take a range of values from +1 to -1. A value of 0 indicates that there is no association between the two variables. A value greater than 0 indicates a positive association, that is, an increase in one variable is associated with an increase in the other variable. A value less than 0 indicates a negative association, that is, an increase in one variable is associated with a decrease in the other variable.

Pearson's coefficient was used to verify the existence or non-existence of linear correlation between and among the variables. The Pearson product-moment correlation was used to answer research objectives one and two of the study as was to establish the relationship between contractual completeness and perceived project performance, trust, and perceived project performance of the construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda. The results are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Correlation Coefficients

	Contractual Completeness	Trust	Perceived Project Performance
Contractual Completeness	1.000		
Trust	.745**	1.000	
Perceived Project Performance	.497**	.551**	1.000
2-tailed Sig.	.000	.000	
N	208	208	208

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

Source: Primary data (2023)

4.4.1 Relationship between Contractual completeness and perceived project performance

The results in Table 4.7 indicated that there exists a significant, moderate, and positive relationship between contractual completeness and perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda ($r = .497$, $p < .01$). This result indicates that a

positive increase in contractual completeness is associated with a positive increase in perceived project performance in respective to their dimensions.

4.4.2 Relationship between Trust and Perceived Project Performance

The results in Table 14.7 indicated that there exists a significant, moderate, and positive relationship between trust and perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda ($r = .551, p < .01$). These results imply that an improvement in trust with its constructs such as competence trust, integrity trust, and reliability is associated with an improvement in perceived project performance in term of better quality, low cost, completion of project within schedule and the beneficiaries' satisfaction.

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is the statistical method that identifies the relationship between two or more quantitative variables: a dependent variable, whose value is to be predicted, and an independent or explanatory variable (or variables), about which information is available. We plot a dependent (y) variable (perceived project performance) against an independent (x) variable (an index of contractual completeness and trust). Regression analysis is a way of fitting a "best" line through a series of observations. With the "best" line we mean that it is fitted in such a way that it minimizes the sum of squared differences between the observations and the line itself. When the regression analysis was performed using the collected data the results are presented in the regression models as follows:

$$y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + e$$

The α represents the constant (sometimes called intercept) of the regression model and indicates what your dependent variable would be if all of the independent variables were zero. The independent variables are indicated by x_1 and x_2 . While β_1 and β_2 (pronounced as beta) indicate the (regression) coefficient of the independent variable x . This coefficient

represents the gradient of the line and is also referred to as the slope. A positive β_1 and β_2 coefficient indicates an upward-sloping regression line while a negative β_1 and β_2 indicates a downward-sloping line. The results are summarized in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.325	.273		4.855	.000		
1 Contractual Completeness	.254	.113	.194	2.250	.026	.444	2.250
Trust	.317	.067	.407	4.709	.000	.444	2.250

Model summary

R = .566

R square = .321

Adjusted R² = .314

R Square change = .321

Std. error = 47414

a. Predictors: (Constant), Trust, Contractual Completeness

b. Dependent Variable: Perceived Project Performance

Source: Primary data (2023)

$$\text{Perceived project performance (y)} = 1.325 + 0.194X_1 + 0.407X_2 + 0.273$$

X₁ = contractual completeness

X₂ = trust

4.5.1 The predictive power of contract completeness and trust on perceived project performance

The regression model presented in Table 4.8 indicates that contractual completeness and trust combined predict 31.4% of the variation in perceived project performance of staff in construction projects in Wakiso district (Adjusted R Square = .314). The regression model also revealed that contractual completeness had an insignificant positive effect on perceived project performance (beta = .194, P-value = 0.026, $p > .01$). This means that a unit standard deviation increase on contract completeness affects perceived project performance by 0.194 unit. In addition, the regression model revealed that trust had a significant positive effect on perceived project performance (Beta = .407, $p < .01$). This means that a unit standard deviation increase in trust affects perceived project performance by 0.407 units.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of findings drawn from chapter four, a conclusion on the purpose of the study, and recommendations. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between contractual completeness, trust, and project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda.

5.2 Discussion of findings

Discussion of findings is presented according to each study objective.

5.2.1 Contractual completeness and perceived project performance

The first objective of the study was to examine the relationship between contractual completeness and perceived project performance. The correlation results revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between contractual completeness and perceived project performance. This implies that an improvement in contractual completeness in terms of its dimensions is associated with an improvement in perceived project performance.

Regression analysis results further revealed that contractual completeness in the regression model had an insignificant positive effect on perceived project performance. This implies that a unit standard deviation increase in contractual completeness has an effect on perceived project performance to a smaller extent than trust.

The result is in agreement with the findings of Tang and Li (2022), through contractual obligatoriness each party is forced to abide by the contract terms, reducing the incidence of opportunistic behaviors. Contractual obligatoriness involves the binding nature and legal enforceability of obligations outlined in a contract. It ensures that parties who enter into a contract are legally obligated to fulfill their agreed-upon responsibilities and perform the

contractual obligations outlined in the agreement. Clear responsibilities and obligations enable all parties involved in a project to avoid the pitfalls of inefficient contract management processes that affect the outcomes of the project performance (Aluonzi, et al., 2016). Moreover, describing the unanticipated incidents in a contract enhances the contracting parties' confidence in the long-term cooperation, minimizes contract rigidity, and boosts flexibility (Mwesigwa, et al., 2019). Chen, Chen, Smyth, and Fu (2021) argue that a lack of awareness of obligations and honest attempts to react to future contingencies lead to contractual violations. Therefore, people in charge of the contracts need to ensure that the contractual obligations are fully adhered to to achieve the project goals and objectives at minimum cost, and time and according to stakeholders' expectations.

However, the lack of capacity by the majority of the players in the construction industry especially the domestic firms, delayed approvals by statutory agencies, and uncoordinated and repetitive audits by the various government agencies affect the contractual process leading to poor contract execution (Oluka, Aluonzi & Nduhura, 2016). Therefore, a lack of understanding of the contract, its clarity, and changes in external conditions affect the implementation of the contract and compromise the project's performance. Furthermore, in many developing countries it is still challenging to fully develop complete contracts, particularly in the construction industry (Eja & Ramegowda, 2020). For instance, in Uganda, contractors tend to under-price to win contracts which results in cost overruns and inability to complete projects on schedule. This has increased the rate of project failure to over 72%, poor quality projects, and loss of huge amounts of money by the government of Uganda.

5.3.2 Trust and Perceived Project Performance

The second objective of the study was to examine the relationship between trust and perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda. The

correlation results revealed a significant positive relationship between trust and perceived project performance. This implies that a positive increase in trust in terms of competence, integrity, and reliability is associated with a positive increase in perceived project performance with its dimensions such as good quality of project outcomes, completion of project activities within budget and schedule, and projects' outcomes that meet beneficiaries' expectations.

Regression analysis results revealed that trust in the regression model had a significant positive effect on perceived project performance. This implies that a unit standard deviation increase in trust affected the perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda. Furthermore, the study revealed that trust is a better predictor of perceived project performance than contractual completeness.

The result is in agreement with the findings of Javed, et al. (2018) contended that trust in any project includes competence trust, integrity trust, and reliability trust. In the competence trust dimension, one party of the contract is assured that the other is reliable, knowledgeable, and has the required expertise for the task at hand (Ke, et al., 2015). Integrity trust assures the parties involved in the contract that they will look after each other's interests for the success of the project. The higher the integrity levels between the parties, the higher the opportunities for parties to openly communicate their concerns, risks can easily be discussed and suggestions made genuinely. Papatriantafyllou (2017) further stated that the cognitive form of trust provides the initial response when making a decision and this decision is later post-evaluated based on competence trust and integrity trust. Han and Yin (2022) argued that competency and honesty are based on prequalification, reputation, and negotiation in the early stages of signing.

In construction projects, the client's trust in the contractor's competence in executing his/her responsibilities is critical. Moreover, project managers' ignorance and lack of knowledge,

faulty project conceptualization, and aggressive competition during tendering affect the construction project performance (Seninde, 2020). In their study on “Perceived organizational performance and trust” Javed, et al. (2018) concluded that trust especially at the top management level strongly correlates with perceived organizational performance in Pakistani public and private project-based organizations. However, the authors’ findings revealed that public-sector employees were more trusted than private-sector employees.

5.3.3 Contractual completeness, trust, and perceived project performance

The results of the regression model showed that overall contract completeness and trust explain perceived project performance by 31.4%, that is, the variables under study of perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda. This implies that a unit increase in contract completeness and trust affected perceived project performance by 0.314 units.

The findings of this study concur with Mwesigwa et al. (2019) noted that owing to the uncertainty caused by the increasing scale and complexity of construction projects, building stakeholder relationships is paramount in achieving the project and stakeholders’ expectations. However, the above-mentioned contend that some contractors tend to have self-seeking behaviors that affect their integrity and reliability. This in turn minimizes trust between the contractor and the client, an obstacle to developing a strong working relationship among the project teams causing confusion and conflicts that deter the project's progress. Similarly, projects involve people of different cultures and backgrounds which create tensions of loyalty through conflicting cultural norms and work expectations that project participants bring with them. In such situations, Benítez-Ávila (2019) suggests the use of both contractual and trust governance mechanisms to address these complexities of the multilevel identities of project participants.

Contracts include clear terms on how to handle project contingencies and risks related to budget, schedule, or scope. According to Wu et al. (2017), having contingency plans well set out in the contract will help the contracting parties respond to potential problems and conflicts and provide timely solutions. Skilled and experienced managers provide strategies to prevent or proactively respond to risks in the contract before they happen. For instance, during and post-COVID-19 pandemic, many contractors were left scratching their heads on how to escape liability for a rise in project cost and completion date delays, due to factors largely or completely out of their control. Therefore, project contracts must contain flexible terms to address unanticipated contingencies that may occur during project implementation.

5.4 Conclusion

First, this study explored contractual completeness and perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda. A construction project contract determines the outcomes or outputs to be delivered within the given time and budget. It gives a thorough description of the contractor's obligations, roles, and responsibilities of each party and specifies the monitoring procedures and penalties for any breach under a given agreement.

Secondly, this study investigated trust and perceived project performance of construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda. Project managers and top management in project-based construction projects consider the role of trust in project management fields where people-related issues considerably impact project successes. Many authors noted that the absence of trust can result in increased cost construction projects that may affect the main objective of any project which is to achieve project deliverables within set cost and time hence perceived project performance.

Thirdly, this was to establish the combined effect of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance in construction projects in the Wakiso district. Contract

compliance increases the level of trust between contractor and client which ultimately improves performance. Trust is the glue that keeps relationships strong and reliable. Poor relationships between the client and the contractor are the catalyst for disputes, arbitrations, and other risks arising from time, cost, and quality slippage.

5.5 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that: -

1. Enhance Contractual Clarity and Completeness:

- Ensure that construction project contracts are thorough, clear, and complete. This includes detailed descriptions of deliverables, timelines, budgetary allocations, roles, responsibilities, and monitoring procedures.
- Emphasize the importance of mutual understanding and agreement on contract terms to avoid ambiguity and potential disputes.

2. Promote Trust Building Mechanisms:

- Implement strategies to foster trust between stakeholders involved in construction projects. This can include regular communication, transparency in decision-making processes, and fairness in dealings.
- Encourage collaborative efforts and mutual respect among project participants, which are foundational to building and maintaining trust.

3. Integrate Contractual Compliance and Trust Building:

- Recognize the synergistic relationship between contractual compliance and trust. Emphasize that adherence to contractual obligations enhances trust levels between contractors and clients.
- Incorporate clauses in contracts that promote trust-building behaviors, such as incentives for early completion or quality milestones, to align project goals with mutual benefits.

4. Invest in Relationship Management Skills:

- Provide training and development opportunities for project managers and key stakeholders in relationship management skills. This includes conflict resolution, negotiation techniques, and fostering positive interpersonal dynamics.
- Equip project teams with the tools and knowledge to navigate and mitigate potential conflicts that may arise during the project lifecycle.

5. Monitor and Evaluate Performance Continuously:

- Establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess project performance regularly. This includes tracking adherence to contractual obligations, measuring trust levels, and identifying areas for improvement.
- Use performance data to inform decision-making processes and adjust strategies as needed to enhance project outcomes.

6. Facilitate Knowledge Sharing and Learning:

- Create platforms for sharing best practices and lessons learned from successful projects within the construction sector. Encourage collaboration between academia, industry practitioners, and governmental bodies to promote innovation and continuous improvement.
- Foster a culture of learning and adaptation to evolving project management methodologies and industry standards.

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders in construction projects in Wakiso district, Uganda, can potentially improve project performance by addressing issues related to contractual clarity, trust-building, and effective relationship management. These efforts aim to minimize disputes, enhance collaboration, and ultimately achieve project objectives more efficiently.

5.5 Limitations of the study

The study was faced with non-response from some respondents who chose not to fill out the questionnaire due to time constraints. This was mitigated by appointing a research assistant who distributed and collected the duly filled questionnaires after the agreed time. There were cases of incomplete information from the respondents who were busy with their work schedules; this was minimized by making phone call reminders and suggesting a time frame for completing the questionnaire. Some respondents were reluctant to receive the questionnaire due to the fear of contracting COVID-19 and this was minimized by encouraging the participants and research assistant to adhere to standard operating procedures enforced as putting on gloves, applying sanitizer before touching unknown materials by the Ministry of Health.

5.6 Areas for further study

It is recommended that a more extensive study preferably qualitative research be carried out to provide more insights and details to address the “how” and “why” research questions and enable a deeper understanding of phenomena and the context of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance of construction projects. There is a need to determine the other predictors of perceived project performance since contractual completeness and trust only predicted 31.4% of the variance in perceived project performance of construction projects. This research investigated the influence of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance, future research can examine the effect of contractual completeness and trust on perceived project performance using mediating variables.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am **Christine Namakula**, a student of MUBS pursuing a Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA) conducting a study on Contractual completeness, Trust, and Perceived Project Performance in Construction Projects in Wakiso District, Uganda. As a requirement to carry out research, kindly spare a few minutes to fill in this questionnaire. All the sections of the questionnaire require ticking (✓) and the last section requires filling in your opinions concerning the study. The data provided will be confidential and used for academic purposes only. Thank you.

Section A: background information. (Tick the most appropriate for you)

1. Gender

Male	
Female	

2. Age (years)

18-24	25-31	32-38	39-45	46-52	53-59	60-66	67 years and above

3. Education level

Below certificate	Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Post graduate Diploma	Master's degree	Others (specify)

4. How long have you been/participated in the construction projects?

Less than 1 year	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8-9 years	10-11 years	12 years and above

5. Position/role held (tick the most appropriate)

Contractors	
Member of the procurement and disposable unit	
Member of the contracts committee	
Member of technical planning	
Member of the evaluation committee	
Beneficiary of the project	

SECTION B: Tick the most appropriate.

strongly disagree (SD) =1, disagree (D) =2, Not sure (N) =3 agree (A) =4 and strongly agree (SA) =5.

Item No.	Variable	SD	D	N	A	SA
	Contractual completeness					
1.	Contracts specify the objectives of the projects being constructed					
2.	Contracts spell out the roles and responsibilities expected from all the project stakeholders.					
3.	There are well-known monitoring procedures involved in the construction projects at the district					
4.	Breach of any clause in the contract of a construction project is heavily penalized					
5.	Delays in contract approvals by government agencies affect the execution of the construction contracts.					

6.	There are many uncoordinated and repetitive construction contract audits by the government					
7.	Some projects in the Wakiso district stalled due to the termination of contractor contracts					
8.	There are well-established enforcement mechanisms to prevent violation of contracts by stakeholders involved in construction projects in Wakiso district					
9.	All contracts for construction projects in the Wakiso district are legally binding					
10.	Opportunistic behaviors of the contractors are heavily penalized by the government of Uganda					
11.	Contractual violations in construction projects are minimal					
12.	There is a high tendency of contractors in Uganda to under-price construction projects					
13.	Most often, construction projects commence before completion of the contracts					
14.	Delays in project fund release affect the effective execution of contracts at the district					
	Trust					
15.	There is a good working relationship between the project managers and other stakeholders of the construction projects in the district					
16.	Members of the construction projects team work together for the good of the projects					
17.	Project managers trust their team members					

	to satisfactorily execute project assignments as required by the district					
18.	The construction projects in the district tend to be micromanaged by those in charge of the projects					
19.	The construction projects in the district tend to be micromanaged by those in charge of the projects					
20.	Recurring contracts are awarded on a trust and competence basis					
21.	There are well-established communication channels through which project information is shared					
22.	There are increased trust issues between the district officials and the contractors					
23.	Beneficiaries of the projects have confidence projects will be completed on time					
	Perceived Project performance					
24.	Construction projects in the district are always completed on time					
25.	The estimated cost of the projects in the district tends to be lower than the actual cost					
26.	Most of the completed projects are in line with the project objectives					
27.	Delays in payment by the government have affected the completion of construction projects in the district					
28.	Delays in project designs have contributed greatly to low project completion rates					

29.	Delays in project designs have contributed greatly to low project completion rates					
30.	Delays in project designs have contributed greatly to low project completion rates					
31.	Most of the construction projects at the district are of substandard level					
32.	The district has lost millions of shillings in unfinished project					
33.	Many completed projects such as schools, and bridges, among others, have collapsed before or just after the completion					
34.	The political interference has contributed to poor project performance in the district					
35.	Award of construction contracts to incompetent contractors has contributed greatly to poor project completion in Wakiso district.					
36.	Due diligence done on contractors and subcontractors of the construction projects in the district is lacking					

Appendix 4: Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size for a finite population.

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970