Project Management Approaches to Improving Educational Outcomes in Public Schools: A Study of Selected Public Schools in Lagos State

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of project management approaches on educational outcomes in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, it investigated the effect of effective academic schedule management systems on students' tertiary readiness and the influence of risk management practices on students' academic performance in core subjects. A descriptive research design survey was adopted, and data was collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 177 teachers across selected public secondary schools. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that effective academic schedule management systems have a significant positive relationship with students' tertiary readiness ($R = 0.246$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that structured scheduling enhances students' preparedness for higher education. In addition, risk management practices were found to have a stronger and statistically significant positive influence on students' academic performance in core subjects ($R = 0.402$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that proactive identification and mitigation of academic risks improve learning outcomes. The study concludes that project management approaches are critical for enhancing both immediate and long-term educational outcomes in public schools. It recommends the adoption of integrated management strategies that combine effective scheduling with proactive risk management practices to achieve sustainable improvements in students' academic performance and tertiary readiness in Lagos State.

Keywords: academic performance, academic schedule management systems, project management approaches, risk management practices, tertiary readiness.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing demand for improved educational outcomes has intensified the need for structured and performance-driven management approaches in public school systems. Contemporary education systems increasingly depend on coordinated planning and implementation mechanisms to enhance instructional effectiveness and student learning outcomes (Armenia et al., 2024). Project management approaches have therefore gained prominence as frameworks for organizing educational processes and aligning school activities with defined objectives (Ravankar et al., 2020). In developing contexts such as Nigeria, persistent inefficiencies in public education systems have heightened the need for more effective planning and coordination strategies (Mbanefo, 2014). Empirical evidence further indicates that structured quality assurance practices significantly improve students' academic achievement in public secondary schools (Oparaji et al., 2020).

The relevance of project management approaches in education is reflected in their capacity to enhance instructional delivery and student performance. Structured practices such as planning, monitoring, and coordination have been shown to improve student engagement and academic outcomes (Ngereja et al., 2020). These approaches also promote experiential learning environments that strengthen students' cognitive development and problem-solving abilities (Delle-Vergini et al., 2023). Within the Nigerian education system, project-based educational initiatives have demonstrated improvements in students' learning outcomes and instructional effectiveness (Mbanefo, 2014).

Similarly, school leadership practices that integrate management strategies have been associated with improved academic performance among students (Amadi & Nwobi, 2023). These findings emphasize the importance of embedding project management approaches within school systems to enhance educational effectiveness.

Effective academic schedule management is a critical indicator of project management approaches, particularly in influencing students' readiness for tertiary education. The organization of instructional time and academic activities plays a central role in shaping learning experiences and outcomes (Idowu, 2025). Evidence suggests that structured scheduling systems improve instructional consistency and enhance school effectiveness (Idowu, 2025). Students' preparedness for tertiary education has also been linked to effective academic planning and time management practices within secondary schools (Sumaila, 2020). Conversely, poor scheduling practices such as inconsistent timetables and inadequate study time allocation have been associated with weak academic readiness among students (Sumaila, 2020). This highlights the importance of integrating effective academic scheduling systems to support students' transition into higher education.

Risk management practices also constitute an essential component of project management approaches in improving students' academic performance in core subjects. Educational environments are often exposed to risks such as inadequate resources, poor instructional quality, and student disengagement, which negatively affect learning outcomes (Guryan et al., 2021). Proactive identification and mitigation of these risks have been shown to significantly improve students' academic performance (Siddique et al., 2021). Targeted interventions designed to address learning gaps have been found to enhance performance in core subjects such as mathematics and science (Guryan et al., 2021). In addition, effective quality management practices have been identified as strong predictors of students' academic achievement in public schools (Oparaji et al., 2020). These findings underscore the importance of incorporating risk management practices into school systems to improve learning outcomes.

Despite the growing recognition of project management approaches in education, public schools in Lagos State continue to face challenges related to ineffective planning, weak scheduling systems, and inadequate risk management practices. Evidence indicates that inconsistencies in school management practices contribute to poor instructional delivery and declining student performance (Amadi & Nwobi, 2023). Inadequate coordination of academic activities and weak monitoring mechanisms have also been identified as constraints to school effectiveness (Idowu, 2025). Furthermore, persistent underperformance in core subjects suggests gaps in the management of instructional processes and learning risks (Mbanefo, 2014). These challenges indicate that existing management practices may not sufficiently support improved educational outcomes. Therefore, this study examines how project management approaches, particularly effective academic schedule management systems and risk management practices, can improve educational outcomes in selected public schools in Lagos State.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is as follows:

1. To investigate effective academic schedule management systems on student tertiary readiness
2. To examine how risk management practices influence student academic performance in core subjects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Project management approaches have gained increasing relevance in education due to their capacity to structure instructional processes and enhance institutional effectiveness. Evidence indicates that project-based learning improves coordination of teaching activities and supports student-centered instructional delivery (Almulla, 2020). These approaches facilitate alignment between curriculum objectives, instructional strategies, and assessment processes, thereby improving learning outcomes (Kokotsaki et al., 2021). Research further shows that structured project-oriented practices enhance student engagement and promote deeper learning through experiential activities (Guo et al., 2020). In addition, integrating project management principles into education strengthens organizational efficiency and supports effective implementation of educational initiatives (Aubry et al., 2021). These approaches are increasingly essential for managing complex educational environments and achieving sustainable educational outcomes (Walker & Lloyd-Walker, 2021).

Academic schedule management systems are critical in shaping instructional delivery and influencing students' academic experiences. Effective scheduling ensures optimal allocation of instructional time, which significantly affects curriculum coverage and learning outcomes (Patall et al., 2022). Empirical studies show that structured timetables improve instructional continuity and reduce classroom disruptions, thereby enhancing student engagement (Credé et al., 2020). Time management practices within educational settings have also been linked to improved academic performance and student discipline (Broadbent & Poon, 2021). Furthermore, coordinated scheduling enhances collaboration among teachers, contributing to improved instructional quality and student outcomes (Hallinger et al., 2020). These findings highlight the importance of efficient scheduling systems in improving teaching effectiveness and learning efficiency.

Academic schedule management plays a crucial role in preparing students for tertiary education. Structured academic routines enable students to develop time management skills that are essential for independent learning (Panadero, 2020). Research indicates that students who effectively manage their academic time demonstrate higher levels of self-regulated learning and academic achievement (Broadbent & Poon, 2021). The ability to manage academic tasks efficiently during secondary education has been identified as a key predictor of successful transition into higher education (Kahu et al., 2020). Additionally, well-organized academic schedules enhance students' capacity to cope with academic workload and adapt to tertiary-level demands (van der Zanden et al., 2021). Conversely, poor time management has been associated with reduced academic preparedness and increased adjustment challenges in higher education (MacCann et al., 2020).

Risk management practices are increasingly important in education due to uncertainties associated with instructional processes and institutional operations. Educational institutions face risks related to resource limitations, policy implementation, and student performance variability, which can affect learning outcomes (Serra & Kunc, 2020). Research shows that effective governance and risk management improve decision-making processes and enhance institutional resilience (Joslin & Müller, 2022). In educational settings, risk management frameworks support the identification and mitigation of challenges that may hinder instructional effectiveness (Müller et al., 2022). Furthermore, integrating risk management practices into institutional processes enhances accountability and improves system performance (Aubry et al., 2021). These practices contribute to greater stability and effectiveness in educational institutions.

Risk management practices are particularly relevant in improving students' academic performance in core subjects such as mathematics and science. These subjects require higher cognitive engagement and are more sensitive to instructional challenges (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2021). Studies indicate that early identification of learning risks enables timely interventions that significantly improve academic outcomes (Kyriakides et al., 2020). Instructional strategies such as continuous assessment and differentiated teaching have been shown to mitigate academic risks and enhance student performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). In addition, systematic monitoring and evaluation practices enable schools to track student progress and address learning gaps effectively (Guo et al., 2020). The absence of structured risk management approaches has been linked to persistent underperformance in key academic areas (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2021).

Educational outcomes represent a key indicator of school effectiveness and reflect the extent to which learning objectives are achieved. Research shows that improved management practices significantly enhance student achievement and institutional performance (Hallinger et al., 2020). Instructional quality and effective teaching strategies are critical determinants of educational outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Empirical evidence indicates that structured educational approaches contribute to improved academic performance and greater accountability in schools (Kokotsaki et al., 2021). Furthermore, alignment between instructional practices and learning objectives enhances student success and overall school performance (Guo et al., 2020). Despite these improvements, disparities in educational outcomes persist due to systemic inefficiencies and unequal resource distribution (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2021).

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Theory of Constraints (Toc)

The Theory of Constraints was propounded by Eliyahu M. Goldratt (1984) as a management philosophy aimed

at improving organizational performance by identifying and addressing limiting factors within systems. The theory emphasizes that system performance is determined by its weakest component and improving that constraint leads to overall system improvement. In educational contexts, this perspective is particularly relevant in understanding how limitations such as poor scheduling, inadequate instructional time, and ineffective coordination can hinder students' academic performance (Watson et al., 2020).

The application of TOC in education highlights the importance of identifying bottlenecks within academic systems, including inefficient timetable structures and poor allocation of instructional resources. Studies have shown that constraints such as overcrowded classrooms, insufficient teaching time, and weak coordination of academic activities significantly affect learning outcomes in public schools (Schmidt & Datnow, 2021). From a project management perspective, TOC aligns with structured planning and monitoring processes that focus on optimizing resource utilization and improving system efficiency. This makes the theory particularly relevant to academic schedule management systems, as effective scheduling helps eliminate time-related constraints that limit instructional delivery and student preparedness for tertiary education (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the theory provides a strong foundation for understanding the role of risk management practices in education. Risks such as instructional gaps, student disengagement, and inadequate curriculum coverage can be viewed as constraints that negatively affect academic performance in core subjects. By systematically identifying and mitigating these constraints, educational institutions can improve learning outcomes and enhance overall system performance (Watson et al., 2020). The Theory of Constraints therefore supports the argument that improving educational outcomes requires a focused approach to managing limitations within school systems, particularly in relation to scheduling inefficiencies and academic risks

Systems Theory

Systems Theory was originally propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968) as a framework for understanding complex systems as interconnected components working toward a common goal. The theory emphasizes that the performance of a system depends on the interaction and coordination of its various elements rather than the isolated functioning of individual parts. In educational settings, this perspective is highly relevant, as schools operate as complex systems involving teachers, students, administrators, and resources that must function cohesively to achieve desired learning outcomes (Arnold & Wade, 2015).

The relevance of Systems Theory to project management approaches in education lies in its emphasis on integration and coordination. Project management practices such as planning, monitoring, and evaluation require alignment among different components of the educational system, including curriculum delivery, resource allocation, and performance assessment. Research indicates that effective coordination among these elements enhances instructional quality and improves students' academic performance (Hallinger et al., 2020). In this context, academic schedule management systems serve as critical mechanisms for ensuring synchronization of teaching activities, thereby improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system.

Systems Theory also provides a useful framework for understanding risk management practices in education. Risks within educational systems often arise from breakdowns in coordination among system components, such as misalignment between teaching strategies and learning objectives or inadequate resource distribution. Studies have shown that integrated management approaches that consider the interdependencies within educational systems are more effective in addressing these risks and improving academic outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). By emphasizing holistic management and continuous feedback, Systems Theory supports the adoption of project management approaches that enhance both academic performance in core subjects and students' readiness for tertiary education.

Empirical Review

Patall, Cooper, and Robinson (2022) Homework and academic achievement study conducted a study titled "Homework and Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analytic Review." The study adopted a meta-analytic research

design to examine the relationship between homework practices and students' academic performance. Data were obtained from multiple empirical studies and analyzed quantitatively. The findings revealed that structured homework and effective time allocation significantly improve students' academic achievement. The study concluded that proper management of instructional time enhances learning outcomes. It was recommended that schools should adopt structured academic scheduling strategies to optimize learning time. This study is relevant as it highlights the importance of academic schedule management in improving students' academic performance.

Joslin and Müller (2022) Governance and project success conducted a study titled "Governance and Project Success." The study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the impact of governance mechanisms on project outcomes. Data were collected from project-based organizations and analyzed using statistical techniques. The findings showed that effective governance structures improve project success rates and organizational performance. The study concluded that governance plays a critical role in enhancing project management effectiveness. It recommended the adoption of structured governance frameworks in project environments. This study is relevant as it demonstrates how project management approaches improve institutional performance, which can be applied to educational settings.

van der Zanden et al. (2021) Transition to higher education conducted a study titled "The Transition to Higher Education: The Role of Academic Preparation." The study adopted a longitudinal research design to examine factors influencing students' transition into tertiary education. Data were collected from students across different institutions and analyzed using regression analysis. The findings revealed that effective academic preparation and time management significantly improve students' readiness for higher education. The study concluded that structured academic practices enhance successful transition outcomes. It recommended that secondary schools should strengthen academic planning and scheduling systems. This study is relevant as it links academic schedule management with students' tertiary readiness.

Kokotsaki, Menzies, and Wiggins (2021) Project-based learning review conducted a study titled "Project-Based Learning: A Review of the Literature." The study adopted a systematic review design to examine the effectiveness of project-based learning in education. Data were sourced from peer-reviewed journal articles and analyzed thematically. The findings showed that project-based learning enhances student engagement, collaboration, and academic performance. The study concluded that project-oriented instructional approaches improve learning outcomes. It recommended the integration of project-based methodologies into school curricula. This study is relevant as it supports the role of project management approaches in improving educational outcomes.

Aubry, Richer, and Lavoie-Tremblay (2021) Governance and project management conducted a study titled "Governance and Project Management in Public Sector Organizations." The study adopted a mixed-methods research design to examine the relationship between governance structures and project performance. Data were collected through surveys and interviews and analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The findings revealed that effective governance improves project implementation and organizational outcomes. The study concluded that structured management approaches enhance institutional effectiveness. It recommended the adoption of formal project management frameworks. This study is relevant as it demonstrates how project management practices improve performance in organizational settings, including education.

Hanushek and Woessmann (2021) Education and economic growth conducted a study titled "Education and Economic Growth." The study adopted an econometric research design to examine the relationship between educational outcomes and economic performance. Data were collected from international datasets and analyzed using statistical modeling techniques. The findings revealed that improved learning outcomes significantly contribute to economic development. The study concluded that quality education is essential for national growth. It recommended investments in effective educational practices and policies. This study is relevant as it emphasizes the importance of improving academic performance in core subjects.

Walker and Lloyd-Walker (2021) Leadership in project management conducted a study titled "Leadership in Project Management." The study adopted a qualitative research design to examine leadership practices in project environments. Data were collected through case studies and interviews and analyzed thematically. The findings

showed that effective leadership enhances project success and team performance. The study concluded that leadership is a critical factor in project management effectiveness. It recommended leadership development in project environments. This study is relevant as it highlights the importance of structured management practices in achieving successful outcomes.

Kyriakides, Creemers, and Charalambous (2020) School effectiveness research conducted a study titled "School Effectiveness Research." The study adopted a quantitative research design to examine factors influencing school performance. Data were collected from multiple schools and analyzed using statistical methods. The findings revealed that instructional quality and systematic monitoring significantly improve student achievement. The study concluded that structured evaluation systems enhance school effectiveness. It recommended the adoption of data-driven monitoring practices. This study is relevant as it supports the role of risk management and monitoring in improving academic performance.

Credé, Roch, and Kieszczynka (2020) Class attendance and academic performance conducted a study titled "Class Attendance and Academic Performance." The study adopted a meta-analytic research design to examine the relationship between attendance and academic outcomes. Data were obtained from multiple studies and analyzed quantitatively. The findings showed that regular attendance significantly improves academic performance. The study concluded that time-related academic behaviors influence learning outcomes. It recommended policies that encourage consistent student participation. This study is relevant as it reinforces the importance of academic scheduling and time management.

Almulla (2020) Project-based learning effectiveness conducted a study titled "The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning in Improving Student Achievement." The study adopted an experimental research design to examine the impact of project-based learning on student performance. Data were collected from students exposed to project-based instruction and analyzed statistically. The findings revealed that project-based learning significantly improves academic achievement. The study concluded that experiential learning enhances student outcomes. It recommended integrating project-based approaches into teaching practices. This study is relevant as it demonstrates how project management approaches improve educational outcomes.

Research Methods

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to provide a clearer understanding of perceptions of project management approaches in improving educational outcomes in public secondary schools in Lagos State. The choice of this design was considered appropriate as it facilitated the systematic planning and execution of the study while enabling the researcher to establish relationships with real-life situations. Descriptive survey design is widely used in studies that aim to collect data from a defined population without manipulation of variables, thereby allowing for generalization of findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Gray, 2017).

Data for the study were collected through a field survey of selected public secondary schools in Lagos State using a structured questionnaire. The study uses multistage sampling technique. The selected schools were drawn from the five administrative divisions of the state using stratified sampling techniques while the simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The use of a questionnaire as a data collection instrument was informed by its suitability for survey research, particularly in terms of cost-effectiveness, ability to cover a wide population, and capacity to ensure adequate representation of respondents. It also provided respondents with sufficient time to give well-considered responses and ensured ease of administration (Ghauri et al., 2020; Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015).

According to the Lagos State Annual School Census Report for the 2018–2019 academic session, a total of 381 qualified teachers were distributed across five selected public secondary schools representing the state's administrative divisions. Government College Agege in Ikeja Division had 90 qualified teachers, Badagry Grammar School in Badagry Division had 83, Oriwu Senior Model College in Ikorodu Division had 76, Eko Boys High School in Lagos Island Division had 70, while Epe Grammar School in Epe Division had 62 qualified teachers. These institutions collectively comprise teachers across both junior and senior secondary school levels.

A sample size of 195 teachers was determined from the population of 381 using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula. Out of the 195 questionnaires administered, 177 were found usable for analysis, representing a 91% response rate. The study employed a stratified random sampling technique to ensure adequate representation across the five administrative divisions (Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos Island, and Epe). Each division was treated as a stratum, and one school was purposively selected from each to reflect geographical diversity. Within each selected school, simple random sampling was used to select respondents, ensuring that every qualified teacher had an equal chance of participation. In addition, convenience sampling was applied based on the availability and willingness of respondents during data collection.

The validity of the research instrument was established through content, construct (convergent), and criterion-related validity. Content validity ensured that the questionnaire items adequately covered the study variables, while construct validity was achieved by aligning the instrument with established theoretical constructs from existing literature. Criterion-related validity was determined by comparing the instrument with findings from related studies. These approaches ensured that the instrument effectively measured the intended variables (Booth et al., 2016).

The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to determine the internal consistency of the measurement scale. The reliability test covered key constructs of the study, including stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, learning infrastructure, and educational outcomes. The results 0.854 indicated that the instrument demonstrated acceptable levels of internal consistency, confirming its suitability for the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis of Participants' Responses

This section delves into the analysis of demographic variables and the hypothesis testing conducted. This phase summarizes the demographic variables and rigorously tests formulated hypotheses, aiming to either validate or refute the proposed conjectures

Table 1: Demographics Analysis of the Respondent

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender of the Respondent	Male	95	53.7
	Female	82	46.3
	Total	177	100.0
Age of the Respondent	20–30 years	78	44.1
	31–40 years	64	36.2
	41–50 years	25	14.1
	51 years and above	10	5.6
	Total	177	100.0
Educational Qualification of the Respondent	NCE	39	22.0
	B.Ed/B.Sc	72	40.7
	M.Ed/M.Sc	51	28.8
	PhD	15	8.5
	Total	177	100.0
	1–5 years	58	32.8

Years of Teaching Experience	6–10 years	67	37.9
	11–15 years	36	20.3
	16 years and above	16	9.0
	Total	177	100.0
School Division	Ikeja	36	20.3
	Badagry	33	18.6
	Ikorodu	37	20.9
	Lagos Island	35	19.8
	Epe	36	20.3
	Total	177	100.0
Level of Teaching	Junior Secondary School	84	47.5
	Senior Secondary School	93	52.5
	Total	177	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The demographic distribution of respondents provides important insights into the composition of the study sample. A total of 177 questionnaires were found usable for analysis, representing the respondents included in the study.

With respect to gender, the results indicate that 95 respondents (53.7%) were male, while 82 respondents (46.3%) were female. This suggests a balanced gender distribution, although male respondents slightly dominated the sample. The implication is that both male and female perspectives were adequately represented in the study, thereby reducing gender bias in the findings.

In terms of age distribution, most respondents fell within the 20–30 years age bracket, accounting for 78 respondents (44.1%), followed by those within 31–40 years, who constituted 64 respondents (36.2%). Respondents aged 41–50 years were 25 (14.1%), while those aged 51 years and above were 10 (5.6%). This distribution indicates that most respondents are relatively young and in their active working years, suggesting that the data reflects perspectives from a workforce that is likely energetic, adaptable, and actively engaged in teaching activities.

Regarding educational qualification, the findings reveal that 72 respondents (40.7%) held a B.Ed/B.Sc degree, while 51 respondents (28.8%) possessed M.Ed/M.Sc qualifications. Additionally, 39 respondents (22.0%) held NCE certificates, and 15 respondents (8.5%) had PhDs. This shows that a significant proportion of the respondents are well-qualified, with many holding undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. The high level of educational attainment enhances the credibility of the responses, as participants are likely to have the requisite knowledge and professional experience to provide informed opinions.

Analysis of years of teaching experience indicates that 67 respondents (37.9%) had between 6–10 years of experience, while 58 respondents (32.8%) had 1–5 years of experience. Furthermore, 36 respondents (20.3%) had 11–15 years of experience, and 16 respondents (9.0%) had 16 years and above. This suggests that most respondents possess moderate teaching experience, which is sufficient to provide reliable insights into school management practices and educational outcomes.

In relation to school division, the respondents were evenly distributed across the five administrative divisions of Lagos State. Ikorodu division had the highest representation with 37 respondents (20.9%), followed by Ikeja and Epe divisions with 36 respondents each (20.3%), Lagos Island with 35 respondents (19.8%), and Badagry

with 33 respondents (18.6%). This balanced distribution confirms that the sampling technique effectively captured perspectives across all divisions, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the study findings.

Concerning the level of teaching, 93 respondents (52.5%) were teaching at the senior secondary school level, while 84 respondents (47.5%) were teaching at the junior secondary school level.

Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

Table 2: Academic Schedule Management Systems

Variables	**SCALE LEVEL**					**MEAN**	**STD**
	SD	D	U	A	SA		
	1	2	3	4	5		
Timetable ensures effective allocation of time	0	3	15	72	87	4.3672	0.68145
Scheduling enhances curriculum coverage	0	2	18	80	77	4.2938	0.70512
Coordination improves teaching consistency	0	0	20	89	68	4.2712	0.64638
Timetable reduces disruptions	1	4	25	82	65	4.1695	0.78941
Schedules support student attendance	0	5	19	90	63	4.1921	0.74236
Time allocation reflects subject importance	0	3	22	85	67	4.2090	0.70185
Scheduling improves teaching efficiency	0	2	17	88	70	4.3164	0.67612

Source: Researchers' Computations, 2026

Table 2 shows the descriptive results for academic schedule management systems which indicate a consistently high level of agreement among respondents regarding the effectiveness of scheduling practices in public schools. The item "timetable ensures effective allocation of time" recorded a mean score of 4.3672 with a standard deviation of 0.68145, indicating strong agreement and relatively low variability in responses. This suggests that most respondents perceive the school timetable as well-structured and effective in allocating instructional time, which enhances teaching and learning processes. Similarly, the statement "scheduling enhances curriculum coverage" yielded a mean of 4.2938 and a standard deviation of 0.70512, reflecting strong agreement and moderate consistency in responses. This implies that effective scheduling contributes significantly to ensuring that the curriculum is adequately covered within the academic session. The item "coordination improves teaching consistency" recorded a mean of 4.2712 and a standard deviation of 0.64638, indicating that respondents generally agree that coordinated scheduling promotes consistency in instructional delivery across subjects and teachers. The relatively low standard deviation suggests a strong consensus among respondents. Furthermore, the statement "timetable reduces disruptions" had a mean score of 4.1695 and a standard deviation of 0.78941, indicating agreement but with slightly higher variability in responses, suggesting that while most respondents perceive reduced disruptions, some variation exists in experiences across schools. The item "schedules support attendance" recorded a mean of 4.1921 and a standard deviation of 0.74236, indicating that respondents agree that structured scheduling promotes regular student attendance. The moderate spread of responses suggests slight differences in perceptions across respondents. Additionally, "time allocation reflects subject importance" yielded a mean of 4.2090 and a standard deviation of 0.70185, suggesting that respondents believe time is fairly distributed according to subject priorities, with relatively consistent agreement. Lastly, "scheduling improves teaching efficiency" recorded a mean of 4.3164 and a standard deviation of 0.67612, indicating strong agreement and low variability, which confirms that effective scheduling enhances overall teaching efficiency. Overall, the high mean values across all items suggest that academic schedule management systems play a critical role in improving instructional delivery and learning outcomes.

Table 3: Tertiary Readiness

Variables	**SCALE LEVEL**	**MEAN**	**STD**

	SD	D	U	A	SA		
	1	2	3	4	5		
Students are prepared for tertiary education	0	5	28	86	58	4.1017	0.80136
Scheduling improves study habits	0	4	22	90	61	4.1751	0.74692
Students demonstrate independent learning	0	6	26	84	61	4.1129	0.81325
Time management prepares students	0	3	21	88	65	4.2090	0.70218
Students cope with academic workload	1	7	25	85	59	4.0678	0.84763
School supports transition to tertiary education	0	4	23	91	59	4.1525	0.73541
Students are ready for higher challenges	0	5	24	88	60	4.1412	0.76852

Source: Researchers' Computations, 2026

Table 3 shows the results for tertiary readiness, and it indicates that respondents generally agree that students are adequately prepared for higher education, although with some variability across responses. The item "students are prepared for tertiary education" recorded a mean of 4.1017 and a standard deviation of 0.80136, indicating agreement but with relatively higher variability, suggesting differences in perceptions of student preparedness. The statement "scheduling improves study habits" yielded a mean of 4.1751 and a standard deviation of 0.74692, indicating that respondents agree that effective scheduling contributes to better study habits among students. The item "students demonstrate independent learning" recorded a mean of 4.1129 and a standard deviation of 0.81325, indicating moderate agreement with noticeable variation, suggesting that not all students consistently exhibit independent learning skills. Similarly, "time management prepares students" had a mean of 4.2090 and a standard deviation of 0.70218, indicating strong agreement and relatively consistent responses, highlighting the importance of time management in preparing students for tertiary education. The statement "students cope with academic workload" recorded a mean of 4.0678 and a standard deviation of 0.84763, indicating agreement but with the highest variability among the items, suggesting that students' ability to manage workload differs significantly. The item "school supports transition to tertiary education" yielded a mean of 4.1525 and a standard deviation of 0.73541, indicating agreement and moderate consistency. Finally, "students are ready for higher challenges" recorded a mean of 4.1412 and a standard deviation of 0.76852, indicating that respondents generally perceive students as ready for advanced academic challenges. Overall, while the results indicate positive perceptions of tertiary readiness, the higher variability suggests areas for improvement, particularly in workload management and independent learning.

Table 4: Risk Management Practices

Variables	**SCALE LEVEL**					**MEAN**	**STD**
	SD	D	U	A	SA		
	1	2	3	4	5		
School identifies academic risks	0	4	21	85	67	4.2158	0.72844
Preventive measures reduce challenges	0	2	18	92	65	4.2599	0.67281
Continuous assessment detects difficulties	0	1	15	95	66	4.2774	0.62133
Risk strategies improve performance	0	3	20	89	65	4.2260	0.69945
School manages uncertainties effectively	1	6	24	83	63	4.1186	0.81227
Monitoring addresses performance gaps	0	2	19	91	65	4.2599	0.66873
Risk management improves school performance	0	1	14	93	69	4.3107	0.61152

Source: Researchers' Computations, 2026

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for risk management practices which reveal strong agreement among respondents regarding the importance of managing academic risks in schools. The statement "school identifies academic risks" recorded a mean of 4.2158 and a standard deviation of 0.72844, indicating that respondents generally agree that schools actively identify risks that may affect student performance. The moderate variability suggests some differences in implementation across schools. The item "preventive measures reduce challenges" yielded a mean of 4.2599 and a standard deviation of 0.67281, indicating strong agreement and relatively consistent responses, suggesting that preventive strategies are widely recognized as effective in reducing academic challenges. The statement "continuous assessment detects difficulties" recorded a mean of 4.2774 and a standard deviation of 0.62133, indicating strong agreement and low variability, which suggests a high level of consensus that continuous assessment is effective in identifying learning difficulties early. Similarly, "risk strategies improve performance" had a mean of 4.2260 and a standard deviation of 0.69945, indicating that respondents agree that structured risk management strategies enhance student performance. The item "school manages uncertainties effectively" recorded a mean of 4.1186 and a standard deviation of 0.81227, indicating agreement but with higher variability, suggesting that effectiveness in managing uncertainties varies across schools. Furthermore, "monitoring addresses performance gaps" yielded a mean of 4.2599 and a standard deviation of 0.66873, indicating strong agreement and consistency in responses, suggesting that monitoring mechanisms are effective in identifying and addressing academic weaknesses. The statement "risk management improves school performance" recorded a mean of 4.3107 and a standard deviation of 0.61152, indicating strong agreement and low variability, confirming that respondents widely perceive risk management practices as essential for improving overall school performance. Collectively, these results indicate that risk management practices are critical in enhancing academic outcomes and institutional effectiveness.

Table 5: Academic Performance in Core Subjects

Variables	**SCALE LEVEL**					**MEAN**	**STD**
	SD	D	U	A	SA		
	1	2	3	4	5		
Students perform well in Mathematics	1	8	30	80	58	4.0169	0.90344
Students perform well in English	0	6	27	85	59	4.1017	0.81203
Students perform well in sciences	1	7	28	83	58	4.0621	0.86155
Teaching improves performance	0	3	20	92	62	4.2034	0.69522
Students show improvement	0	4	22	89	62	4.1695	0.73188
Assessment improves performance	0	2	19	91	65	4.2599	0.66390
Support programs enhance performance	0	3	18	94	62	4.2712	0.64871

Source: Researchers' Computations, 2026

Table 5 presents the descriptive analysis of academic performance in core subjects indicates generally positive perceptions, although with some variation across subjects. The item "students perform well in Mathematics" recorded a mean of 4.0169 and a standard deviation of 0.90344, indicating agreement but with relatively high variability, suggesting that performance in Mathematics is less consistent compared to other areas. The statement "students perform well in English" yielded a mean of 4.1017 and a standard deviation of 0.81203, indicating agreement with moderate variability. Similarly, "students perform well in Science" recorded a mean of 4.0621 and a standard deviation of 0.86155, indicating agreement but with noticeable variation, suggesting that performance in science also varies among students. The item "teaching improves performance" had a mean of 4.2034 and a standard deviation of 0.69522, indicating strong agreement and relatively consistent responses, suggesting that effective teaching strategies significantly enhance academic performance. The statement "students show improvement" recorded a mean of 4.1695 and a standard deviation of 0.73188, indicating

agreement and moderate consistency, suggesting observable improvement in student performance over time. The item "assessment improves performance" yielded a mean of 4.2599 and a standard deviation of 0.66390, indicating strong agreement and low variability, highlighting the importance of assessment practices in enhancing learning outcomes. Finally, "support programs enhance performance" recorded a mean of 4.2712 and a standard deviation of 0.64871, indicating strong agreement and consistency, suggesting that academic support initiatives play a significant role in improving student performance.

Hypothesis Testing

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between effective academic schedule management systems and students' tertiary readiness in public schools in Lagos State.

To test this hypothesis, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted, with Effective academic schedule management systems as the independent variable and students' tertiary readiness as the dependent variable. The results are displayed in Table 7 below

Table 7: Result of Hypothesis One

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.246[a]	.060	.055	.14820
a. Predictors: (Constant), Effective academic schedule management systems				

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.257	1	.257	11.143	.001[b]
	Residual	4.026	175	.023		
	Total	4.283	176			
a. Dependent Variable: Students' Tertiary Readiness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Effective Academic Schedule Management Systems						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.842	.178		21.584	.000
	Risk Mitigation Techniques	.182	.055	.246	3.338	.170
a. Dependent Variable: Students' Tertiary Readiness						

Source: Researchers' Computations, 2026

The model summary a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.246, indicating a moderate positive relationship between effective academic schedule management systems and students' tertiary readiness. This suggests that improvements in scheduling practices are associated with increased readiness for tertiary education. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.060, indicating that approximately 6.0% of the variation in students' tertiary readiness is explained by effective academic schedule management systems. Although this represents a modest explanatory power, it is meaningful in educational research where multiple factors influence outcomes. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.055 indicates that the model retains its explanatory power after accounting for sample

size. The ANOVA results show an F-statistic of 11.143 with a corresponding p-value of 0.001, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and that effective academic schedule management systems significantly predict students' tertiary readiness. The coefficients table shows that the unstandardized coefficient (B) for academic schedule management systems is 0.182, indicating that a one-unit increase in effective scheduling leads to a 0.182 increase in tertiary readiness. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.246 further confirms a positive relationship. The t-value of 3.338 and p-value of 0.001 indicate that the predictor is statistically significant. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected, and it is concluded that effective academic schedule management systems have a significant positive relationship with students' tertiary readiness in public schools in Lagos State.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between risk management practices and students' academic performance in core subjects in public schools in Lagos State.

To test this hypothesis, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted, with risk management practices as the independent variable and students' academic performance in core subjects as the dependent variable. The results are displayed in Table 8 below

Table 8: Result of Hypothesis Two

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.402[a]	.162	.157	.13240

a. Predictors: (Constant), Risk Management Practices

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.694	1	.694	33.802	.000[b]
	Residual	3.589	175	.021		
	Total	4.283	176			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Academic Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Risk Management Practices

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.521	.162		21.734	.000
	Risk Quantification Techniques	.298	.051	.402	5.814	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Academic Performance

Source: Researchers' Computations, 2026

The regression results indicate a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.402, which reflects a moderate to strong positive relationship between risk management practices and students' academic performance in core subjects. This suggests that improvements in risk management practices are associated with significant improvements in students' academic performance. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.162, indicating that approximately 16.2% of the variation in students' academic performance in core subjects can be explained by risk management practices. This represents a substantial explanatory power within the context of educational research, where multiple factors typically influence performance outcomes. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.157 confirms that the model maintains strong explanatory capability after adjusting for sample size. The ANOVA results show an F-statistic of 33.802 with a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and that risk management practices significantly predict students' academic performance in core subjects. The coefficients table shows that the unstandardized coefficient (B) for

risk management practices is 0.298, indicating that a one-unit increase in risk management practices leads to a 0.298 increase in students' academic performance. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.402 confirms the strength of the relationship. The t-value of 5.814 and p-value of 0.000 indicate that the predictor variable is statistically significant. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected, and it is concluded that risk management practices have a significant positive relationship with students' academic performance in core subjects in public schools in Lagos State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study provide empirical evidence on the influence of project management approaches specifically academic schedule management systems and risk management practices on educational outcomes in public schools in Lagos State. The result of the first hypothesis revealed that effective academic schedule management systems have a significant positive relationship with students' tertiary readiness ($R = 0.246$, $p < 0.05$). Although the strength of the relationship is moderate, the statistical significance indicates that structured scheduling practices contribute meaningfully to preparing students for higher education. This finding supports prior evidence that effective time allocation and organized academic routines enhance students' self-regulation, study habits, and transition readiness for tertiary institutions (Broadbent & Poon, 2021; Panadero, 2020). The relatively low explanatory power suggests that while scheduling is important, tertiary readiness is multifaceted and influenced by additional factors such as instructional quality and student motivation. Nonetheless, the result reinforces the role of academic planning as a foundational mechanism for improving students' preparedness for higher education. The second hypothesis showed that risk management practices have a significant and stronger positive relationship with students' academic performance in core subjects ($R = 0.402$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that proactive identification and management of academic risks such as learning gaps, instructional challenges, and performance deficiencies substantially improve student outcomes. This finding aligns with existing literature which emphasizes that continuous assessment, monitoring, and targeted interventions enhance academic achievement, particularly in core subjects like Mathematics and Science (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Kyriakides et al., 2020). The higher explanatory power of this variable suggests that risk management practices are more directly linked to measurable academic performance compared to scheduling practices. The findings demonstrate that project management approaches are relevant in improving educational outcomes, but their effects vary in magnitude. While academic schedule management supports long-term preparedness such as tertiary readiness, risk management practices have a more immediate and pronounced impact on students' academic performance. These results underscore the need for integrated management strategies that combine effective scheduling with proactive risk mitigation to achieve optimal educational outcomes in public schools.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the influence of project management approaches on educational outcomes in public schools in Lagos State, focusing specifically on academic schedule management systems and risk management practices. The findings demonstrate that both variables play significant roles in improving educational outcomes, though with varying degrees of impact. The study concludes that effective academic schedule management systems contribute positively to students' tertiary readiness by enhancing time management, promoting structured learning, and supporting the development of independent study habits. Although the strength of this relationship is moderate, its significance highlights the importance of organized academic planning in preparing students for higher education. This implies that well-coordinated scheduling systems are essential for fostering long-term academic preparedness. Furthermore, the study concludes that risk management practices have a stronger and more direct influence on students' academic performance in core subjects. The ability of schools to identify, monitor, and address academic risks such as learning difficulties and instructional gaps significantly enhances students' performance outcomes. This finding underscores the importance of continuous assessment, monitoring, and timely intervention as critical components of effective school management. Overall, the study establishes that project management approaches are essential tools for improving educational outcomes in public schools. While academic scheduling supports long-term readiness for tertiary education, risk management practices have a more immediate and substantial impact on academic performance. Therefore, integrating structured scheduling systems with proactive risk management strategies is crucial for achieving sustainable improvements in students' academic success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several practical and policy-oriented recommendations are proposed to enhance educational outcomes in public schools in Lagos State.

School administrators and education policymakers should institutionalize structured academic schedule

management systems that ensure optimal allocation of instructional time across subjects. Timetables should be designed to reflect the relative importance and cognitive demands of core subjects, while also allowing for flexibility to accommodate remedial and enrichment activities. Regular review and monitoring of school schedules should be implemented to ensure alignment with curriculum objectives and to minimize instructional disruptions. In addition, schools should integrate time management training into student development programs to strengthen study habits and enhance preparedness for tertiary education. There is a need to strengthen risk management practices within the school system by adopting proactive and data-driven approaches to identifying and addressing academic challenges. Schools should establish formal mechanisms for early detection of learning difficulties through continuous assessment and performance tracking systems. Teachers should be trained to use diagnostic tools and data analytics to identify at-risk students and implement targeted interventions. Furthermore, school management should promote a culture of preventive planning by ensuring that academic risks such as poor performance in core subjects are addressed through structured support programs, including tutoring, mentoring, and differentiated instruction.

Education authorities should invest in capacity building for teachers and school leaders in the application of project management principles within the educational context. Training programs should focus on planning, monitoring, evaluation, and risk mitigation strategies that enhance instructional delivery and student outcomes. Strengthening leadership capacity will improve coordination of school activities and ensure effective implementation of academic programs. Schools should adopt integrated management approaches that combine effective scheduling with risk management practices. This integration will ensure that instructional time is not only well-organized but also responsive to emerging academic challenges. For instance, performance monitoring data should inform scheduling decisions, such as allocating additional time to subjects where students exhibit persistent difficulties. Policymakers should support the development of evidence-based educational management frameworks that promote accountability and continuous improvement. This includes providing adequate resources, establishing monitoring systems, and encouraging data-driven decision-making at the school level. By aligning policy initiatives with effective management practices, the education system can achieve sustainable improvements in both students' academic performance and their readiness for tertiary education.

Contributions to Knowledge

This study makes several important contributions to knowledge within the field of educational management, particularly in the application of project management approaches to improving educational outcomes in public secondary schools.

The study contributes to existing literature by extending the application of project management principles to the educational sector, specifically within the context of public schools in Lagos State. While project management has been widely applied in business and engineering contexts, its integration into school management remains relatively underexplored. This study provides empirical evidence that structured management approaches such as academic schedule management and risk management practices are relevant and effective in improving educational outcomes.

The study provides empirical validation of the relationship between academic schedule management systems and students' tertiary readiness. Although prior studies have emphasized time management and academic planning, this research establishes a statistically significant link between structured scheduling practices and students' preparedness for higher education. This contributes to knowledge by highlighting scheduling as not just an administrative function but a strategic tool for enhancing long-term academic readiness. The study contributes by demonstrating that risk management practices have a stronger and more direct impact on students' academic performance in core subjects. This finding advances existing knowledge by positioning risk

management traditionally associated with organizational uncertainty as a critical educational strategy for improving learning outcomes. It shows that proactive identification and mitigation of academic risks can significantly enhance performance, particularly in key subject areas.

The study offers a comparative insight into the relative influence of different project management approaches on educational outcomes. By examining both scheduling systems and risk management practices within the same framework, the study reveals that while both are significant, their effects differ in magnitude and scope. This contributes to theory by clarifying how different management practices influence distinct educational outcomes, such as immediate performance versus long-term readiness. The study contributes methodologically by integrating project management concepts with educational outcome indicators, including tertiary readiness and academic performance in core subjects. This interdisciplinary approach provides a more holistic framework for analyzing school effectiveness and offers a basis for future research that combines management science with educational practice.

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