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AGILE AND HYBRID APPROACHES TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION PERFORMANCE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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Abstract

Cost and time overruns are common problems in construction projects. Agile project management uses flexible planning, regular feedback, and teamwork to help project teams respond to changes. However, construction projects also require proper budgeting, scheduling, safety measures, and contract management. This study evaluates Agile and hybrid approaches to project management and construction performance in the United Kingdom. It reviews findings from the supplied dissertation and compares them with published construction research. The dissertation reports that 45% of respondents considered Agile successful or very successful in reducing project overruns. Respondents also gave Agile higher average ratings than traditional approaches for flexibility (4.2 vs. 2.8), cost control (3.9 vs. 3.1), time management (4.0 vs. 3.0), stakeholder communication (4.3 vs. 3.2), and work quality (4.1 vs. 3.4). However, these results reflect respondents' opinions, and the available material does not provide the sample size or verified project cost and duration records. Other studies provide evidence about the factors affecting Agile implementation. Kineber et al. (2024) analysed responses from 109 Nigerian construction professionals, while Elseknidy et al. (2024) identified economic factors as an important barrier to Agile adoption. Zamil and Alhusban (2025) reviewed 104 scholarly articles and highlighted the importance of flexible planning, collaboration, and responsiveness. However, the available evidence does not establish a specific reduction in construction costs or delays through Agile methods. This study therefore recommends a hybrid approach that combines Agile practices with formal budgeting, scheduling, safety, and contract controls. Further research in the United Kingdom should compare project managers' opinions with actual project cost and schedule data.

1. INTRODUCTION

Construction delivery involves clients, designers, contractors, specialist trades, suppliers, regulators, and site teams. Performance depends on how these parties coordinate scope, cost, schedule, technical information, risk, and change. A delayed design decision can postpone procurement or disrupt work sequencing; an inadequately assessed change can increase rework, extend site overheads, or affect later activities. Cost and schedule overruns should therefore be understood as interacting outcomes rather than isolated planning errors (Ahiaga-Dagbui et al., 2017; Simushi & Wium, 2020).

Traditional project management remains essential where approved budgets, contracts, critical-path schedules, risk registers, quality procedures, and safety requirements must be maintained. However, slow information exchange and delayed decisions can make it difficult to respond to changing conditions. Agile project management contributes iterative planning, frequent review, visible work

priorities, cross-functional collaboration, and continuous improvement. These practices have been studied beyond software development, including in construction and hybrid project-management settings (Conforto et al., 2014; Lalmi et al., 2021).

The question is not whether Agile should replace conventional construction management in every circumstance. Rather, the question is where iterative practices can improve coordination and change management while preserving formal controls. This article combines the source dissertation's reported descriptive statistics with statistical results from published studies. It distinguishes three evidence types: (a) figures reported in the supplied dissertation, (b) quantitative findings from identifiable published studies, and (c) interpretive recommendations. The source dissertation's figures are not presented as independently verified UK industry estimates.

1.1 Research questions

The article addresses three questions:

Q1 What do the supplied dissertation's figures suggest about practitioners' perceptions of Agile and traditional methods?

Q2 What quantitative evidence from published research helps contextualise those perceptions?

Q3 What management and research implications follow when perceptions are distinguished from verified project outcomes?

2. Literature review

2.1 Causes and measurement of construction overruns

Overruns may reflect scope growth, design changes, procurement and price uncertainty, inaccurate early estimates, resource constraints, coordination failures, or external disruptions. System-oriented research warns against attributing complex project outcomes to one factor alone (Ahiaga-Dagbui et al., 2017; Love et al., 2016). Consequently, any assessment of Agile should define the baseline, identify approved scope changes, and compare final cost and actual duration with the appropriate reference values.

For a project with baseline cost B and final cost F, cost overrun percentage can be expressed as ((F − B) / B) × 100. Schedule overrun can be calculated as ((actual duration − baseline duration) / baseline duration) × 100. These measures require project records and a consistent rule for treating approved changes. They cannot be calculated from opinion ratings alone.

2.2 Agile practices and construction fit

Relevant Agile practices include short coordination meetings, iterative planning, prioritised issue lists, frequent stakeholder reviews, cross-functional problem-solving, and retrospectives. In construction, these practices are most plausibly useful for design coordination, information requests, stakeholder decisions, and selected change-sensitive work packages. They should not be interpreted as permission to bypass statutory inspections, contractual approvals, safety procedures, or critical-path dependencies.

Conforto et al. (2014) examined the adoption of Agile project management beyond software, while Lalmi et al. (2021) proposed a conceptual hybrid model for construction. The literature supports considering contextual fit and combining management approaches, rather than treating one methodology as universally superior.

2.3 Quantitative evidence from existing studies

Published studies provide useful quantitative evidence, but their populations, research questions, and outcome measures differ. The available studies mainly examine critical success factors, barriers, or thematic trends in Agile adoption; they do not all measure actual cost and schedule reductions. Results should therefore be compared by design and outcome rather than combined into a single effect estimate.

Study	Sample	Statistical finding	Relevance and caution
Kineber et al. (2024), Nigerian construction sector	Questionnaire survey; 120 professionals approached; 109 responses reported; EFA and PLS-SEM	The article reports 109 responses from 120 approached (about 90.8%, described by the authors as 90%). Dynamic project optimisation emerged as the more influential of two grouped critical-success-factor dimensions. Harman's single-factor result was 21.75% of variance, below the authors' 50% screening threshold.	Supports attention to adaptive planning and optimisation. It evaluates implementation success factors, not a causal reduction in UK project overruns.
Elseknidy et al. (2024), Nigerian residential construction	Questionnaire distributed to 120 professionals; EFA and PLS-SEM	Economic factors were reported as the most significant barrier group, with a coefficient of 0.516. The study also identifies social, human, and cultural/expectation-related barriers.	Shows that cost and resource conditions can constrain adoption. The coefficient is a model result, not a percentage increase in overruns.
Zamil and Alhusban (2025), sustainable construction literature	Systematic review using PRISMA; 104 scholarly articles published 2006–2025; thematic coding	Five themes were identified: iterative planning, responsiveness to change, stakeholder collaboration, digital facilitation, and sustainability integration.	Broadens the evidence base and identifies recurring themes. It is a thematic synthesis, not a meta-analysis and does not yield a pooled cost-saving or delay-reduction estimate.
Source dissertation supplied for this article; UK construction context	Questionnaire/interview approach described; sample size and sampling details not established in supplied material	45% rated Agile successful/very successful; mean ratings favoured Agile on five dimensions; collaboration 60%, change handling 55%, faster delivery 50%, reduced costs 40%.	These figures are retained as reported but cannot be independently recalculated or generalised without the original dataset, questionnaire, sample size, and project records.

The studies above do not provide a directly comparable effect size for the reduction of cost or schedule overruns. Kineber et al. (2024) and Elseknidy et al. (2024) examine adoption conditions and critical factors in Nigeria, while Zamil and Alhusban (2025) synthesise thematic patterns across published literature. The source dissertation reports UK practitioner

perceptions, but its available material does not establish objective cost or schedule outcomes. A pooled estimate would therefore be inappropriate.

2.4 Research gap

The central gap is the lack of directly comparable, project-level evidence linking the intensity of Agile implementation to final cost and schedule performance in UK construction. Perceptions of better communication or flexibility may represent valuable process outcomes, but they are not equivalent to measured savings. Future research should link survey and interview data to project records and account for project type, size, phase, procurement route, approved changes, and external disruptions.

3. Conceptual framework

The proposed framework treats Agile practices as potential contributors to process improvements, rather than as direct guarantees of lower costs or shorter schedules. Iterative planning, prioritised issue logs, short coordination meetings, stakeholder reviews, and retrospectives may improve information visibility and collaboration. These process changes may support earlier issue resolution and better change decisions, which could reduce avoidable waiting or rework. The relationship is conditional on leadership, team capability, project phase, procurement arrangements, contract terms, and regulatory requirements.

Proposed pathway: Agile practices → information visibility and collaboration → earlier issue resolution and improved change decisions → potential reduction in avoidable waiting/rework → potential improvement in cost and schedule performance. This is a conceptual proposition for testing, not a causal finding established by the supplied dissertation.

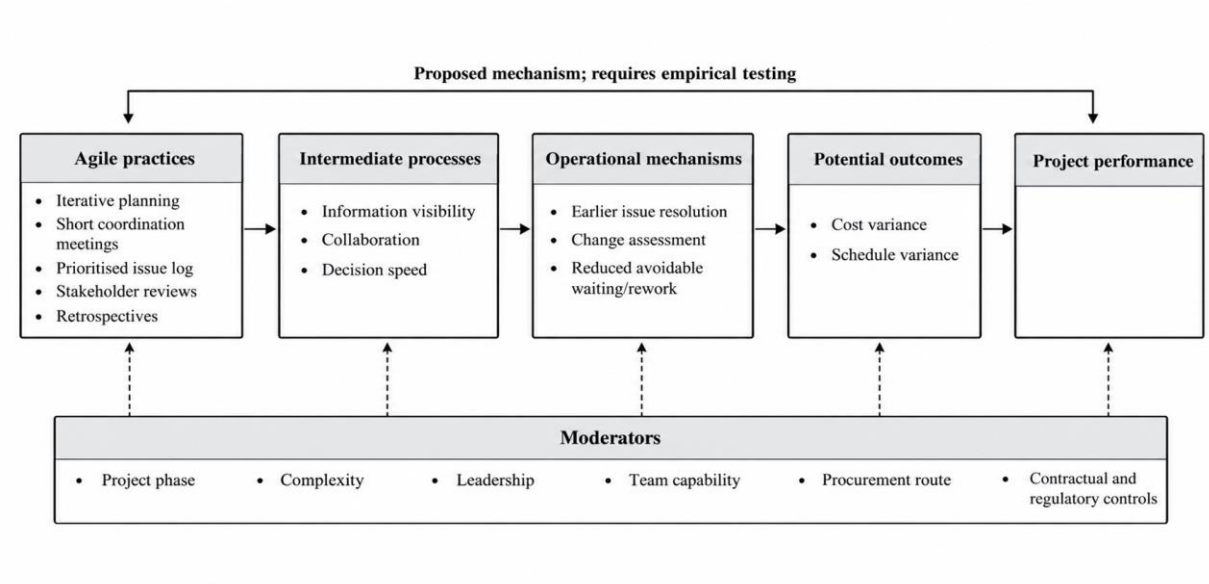


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual framework linking Agile practices to construction performance.

4. Methodology

4.1 Design

This article is a critical secondary analysis of the supplied dissertation's reported findings, supplemented by a focused comparison with published research identified through publisher and journal records. It is not a new survey and does not claim to reproduce the dissertation's underlying analysis. The source material describes questionnaire and semi-structured interview methods, but the supplied extract does not clearly document the total sample, response rate, sampling frame, complete questionnaire, scale anchors, interview count, or qualitative coding procedure.

4.2 Evidence handling and statistical boundaries

The dissertation's percentages and means are retained as supplied. Descriptive differences

between the reported Agile and traditional mean ratings are calculated by subtraction only. No p-values, confidence intervals, standard deviations, effect sizes, respondent counts, or regression estimates are invented. The external studies' sample sizes and statistical findings are attributed to their published reports. Differences between studies are not pooled because they use different populations, designs, constructs, and outcomes.

The source dissertation's project-management approach percentages sum to more than 100%. This may reflect multiple responses, but the questionnaire must be checked before that interpretation is confirmed. The respondent-role and project-type percentages each sum to 100%, but their underlying counts cannot be reconstructed without the sample size.

4.3 Recommended outcome measures

A follow-up UK study should collect approved baseline budget, final cost, baseline duration, actual duration, approved change values, rework, issue-resolution time, and documented Agile-practice intensity. Where possible, outcomes should be compared across similar projects or analysed with suitable adjustment for project size, type, complexity, procurement route, and phase.

5. Results

5.1 Respondent profile and project types reported in the dissertation

Reported respondent role	Share
Project managers	40%
Site managers	25%
Engineers	20%
Architects	10%
Contractors	5%

The source material identifies project managers as the largest reported professional group, followed by site managers and engineers. Without the sample size and sampling frame, these proportions cannot be treated as representative of the UK construction workforce.

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Reported project type	Share
Residential	40%
Commercial	30%
Industrial	15%
Infrastructure	10%
Mixed-use	5%

Residential projects were the largest reported category. The suitability of iterative management can differ by project type: design-heavy projects may allow more structured iteration than projects dominated by tightly sequenced physical activities and statutory approvals.

5.2 Reported project-management approaches

Approach	Reported share
Traditional/Waterfall	60%
Agile	25%
Lean	20%
PRINCE2	15%
Hybrid	10%
Other	5%

The reported shares exceed 100% when added together. Until the original questionnaire is checked, they should be described as reported shares rather than mutually exclusive categories. They suggest that traditional approaches remained common in the source respondent group, but do not establish national adoption rates.

5.3 Familiarity and perceived effectiveness

Measure	Reported result	Interpretation
Somewhat or very familiar with Agile	55%	Reported familiarity; not a measure of implementation maturity.
Successful or very successful in mitigating overruns	45%	Positive perception reported by respondents.
Neutral effectiveness rating	25%	Neither positive nor negative assessment.
Unsuccessful or very unsuccessful	30%	Negative perception; reasons are not established.

Positive ratings (45%) exceed negative ratings (30%), but a quarter of respondents were neutral and almost one-third reported an unfavourable assessment. The figures suggest mixed experiences, not universal effectiveness. They do not establish whether ratings differed significantly across professional roles, project types, or levels of Agile experience.

5.4 Comparative mean ratings

Dimension	Agile mean	Traditional mean	Descriptive difference
Flexibility to change	4.2	2.8	+1.4
Cost control	3.9	3.1	+0.8
Time management	4.0	3.0	+1.0
Stakeholder communication	4.3	3.2	+1.1
Quality of work	4.1	3.4	+0.7

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The largest reported mean difference is for flexibility (+1.4), followed by stakeholder communication (+1.1), time management (+1.0), cost control (+0.8), and work quality (+0.7). These differences are arithmetic comparisons of reported means, not inferential tests. The source does not provide scale anchors or dispersion estimates, so the precision and statistical significance of these differences cannot be assessed.

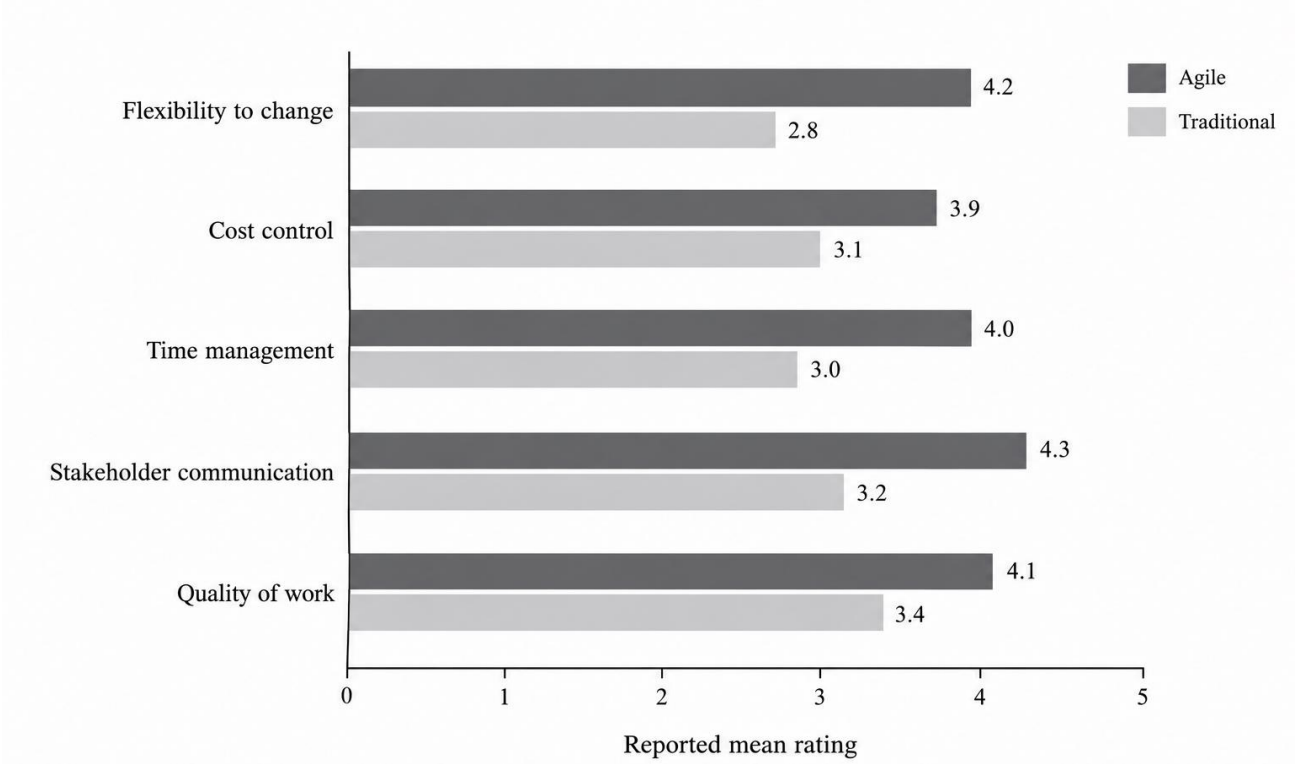


Figure 2. Reported mean ratings for Agile and traditional methods.

5.5 Reported benefits and practices

Reported benefit	Share
Improved team collaboration	60%
Better handling of changes	55%
Faster project delivery	50%
Enhanced stakeholder satisfaction	45%
Reduced costs	40%
Improved transparency	35%

Collaboration and change handling were the most frequently reported benefits. The 50% reporting faster delivery and 40% reporting reduced costs indicate perceived benefits only. The source does not supply baseline/final duration or cost data to quantify any reduction.

Reported Agile practice	Share	Possible construction application
Daily stand-ups	40%	Identify blockers and immediate priorities.
Sprint planning	35%	Plan short-horizon tasks within approved work packages.
Cross-functional teams	30%	Coordinate design, commercial, procurement, and delivery teams.
Iterative development	30%	Review evolving design and technical information.
Backlog prioritisation	25%	Rank outstanding requests, decisions, and issues.

Retrospectives	20%	Identify recurring coordination problems and process improvements.

5.6 Reported barriers and support requirements

Barrier	Share	Potential response
Resistance to change	50%	Explain the purpose and involve teams early.
Limited Agile expertise	40%	Provide construction-specific training and mentoring.
Incompatibility with existing processes	35%	Link iterative routines to contracts, approvals, and records.
Collaboration difficulties	30%	Clarify responsibilities and escalation routes.
Unclear project goals	25%	Agree priorities, outcomes, and decision rights.
Other barriers	5%	Define this category in the original instrument.

Support requirement	Share	Potential response
Agile training/certification	45%	Provide applied training for construction contexts.
Experienced Agile coaches	40%	Coach teams during bounded pilots.
Tailored construction frameworks	35%	Align routines with project governance.
Management buy-in	30%	Appoint a sponsor and assign responsibilities.
Tools and technology	25%	Maintain shared issue, decision, and change logs.
Other support	5%	Clarify the category before publication.

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These source findings broadly align with published work that identifies economic, social, human, and cultural constraints on Agile adoption. For example, Elseknidy et al. (2024) report an economic-factor coefficient of 0.516 in their Nigerian residential-construction model. This result supports treating resources and cost conditions as relevant adoption barriers, but it should not be compared numerically with the dissertation's 50% resistance-to-change result: one is a model coefficient and the other is a reported percentage.

5.7 Cross-study statistical interpretation

Evidence source	What its statistics can support	What they cannot establish
Supplied dissertation: 45% positive effectiveness rating	The respondent group included favourable perceptions of Agile.	Causal reduction in final costs or actual project duration.
Supplied dissertation: mean differences of +0.7 to +1.4	Reported mean ratings favoured Agile across five dimensions.	Statistical significance or size of a real-world performance effect.
Kineber et al. (2024): 109 responses; EFA and PLS-SEM	A structured empirical assessment of critical success factors in Nigerian construction.	Direct generalisation to UK projects or a quantified reduction in overruns.

Elseknidy et al. (2024): economic-factor coefficient 0.516	Economic factors were prominent in the study's model of adoption barriers.	A 51.6% increase in cost overruns or a direct Agile treatment effect.
Zamil and Alhusban (2025): 104 studies reviewed	Recurring themes across a broad literature corpus.	A pooled effect size, because the review reports thematic synthesis rather than meta-analysis.

The studies are complementary but not directly interchangeable. The source dissertation reports perceived comparative ratings; Kineber et al. (2024) model critical success factors; Elseknidy et al. (2024) model barriers; and Zamil and Alhusban (2025) map themes across the literature. The current evidence base therefore supports a cautious conclusion about potential mechanisms and implementation conditions, not a numerical claim that Agile reduces overruns by a fixed percentage.

6. Discussion

6.1 Flexibility and communication

The source dissertation's largest descriptive difference favours Agile on flexibility, with stakeholder communication next. These findings are consistent with the practices emphasised in the wider literature: iterative review, visible priorities, and frequent feedback. They suggest that respondents associate Agile with responsiveness and collaboration. However, no verified issue-resolution times, rework records, or project completion dates are available to show that these perceptions translated into measurable project performance.

6.2 Cost control and schedule performance

The source dissertation reports an Agile mean of 3.9 for cost control versus 3.1 for traditional methods, and 4.0 versus 3.0 for time management. It also reports that 40% perceived reduced costs and 50% perceived faster delivery. These results are promising as practitioner perceptions, but cannot be interpreted as cost savings or time reductions. Cost and schedule outcomes are affected by procurement prices, scope changes, labour productivity, design maturity, site conditions, and project complexity.

The published studies reviewed here reinforce the need to assess implementation conditions. The critical-success-factor study by Kineber et al. (2024) highlights dynamic project optimisation, while Elseknidy et al. (2024) identify economic barriers as especially influential in their model. Neither study supplies a universal percentage reduction in construction overruns. A defensible conclusion is that Agile may support the processes through which teams manage uncertainty, but objective project-level evidence is required to determine its effect on final cost and time.

6.3 Organisational readiness and hybrid implementation

Resistance to change and limited expertise are prominent in the supplied dissertation. Elseknidy et al. (2024) likewise identify social, human, cultural, and economic barriers. Taken together, these findings imply that adoption depends on team capability, leadership, resource availability, and compatibility with existing governance. Agile routines that create extra meetings without changing decision speed or accountability may add administrative burden rather than improve performance.

A hybrid model is therefore a practical proposition. Formal baselines, contractual change control, critical-path planning, risk management, quality assurance, safety, and statutory approvals should remain in place. Iterative methods can be used for suitable activities such as design coordination, issue tracking, stakeholder review, and short-term planning. This aligns with the hybrid construction model discussed by Lalmi et al. (2021).

6.4 Recommended implementation and evaluation

Stage	Action	Governance safeguard	Evidence to record
1. Select a workstream	Choose a bounded design or coordination problem.	Confirm suitability and interfaces with project leadership.	Project type, phase, scope, team, selection rationale.
2. Establish baseline	Record budget, duration, scope, and unresolved issues.	Freeze and document the approved baseline.	Baseline cost/duration, date, scope, issue register.
3. Introduce routines	Use short planning cycles, issue reviews, and clear priorities.	Keep approval authority and formal sign-offs explicit.	Meeting actions, decision dates, issue closure dates.
4. Record change	Assess each scope or design change.	Apply contractual change-control procedures.	Change requests, approvals, cost/time impact.
5. Evaluate outcomes	Compare results with baseline and, where possible, similar projects.	Report negative as well as positive results.	Final cost, actual duration, rework, delay causes.

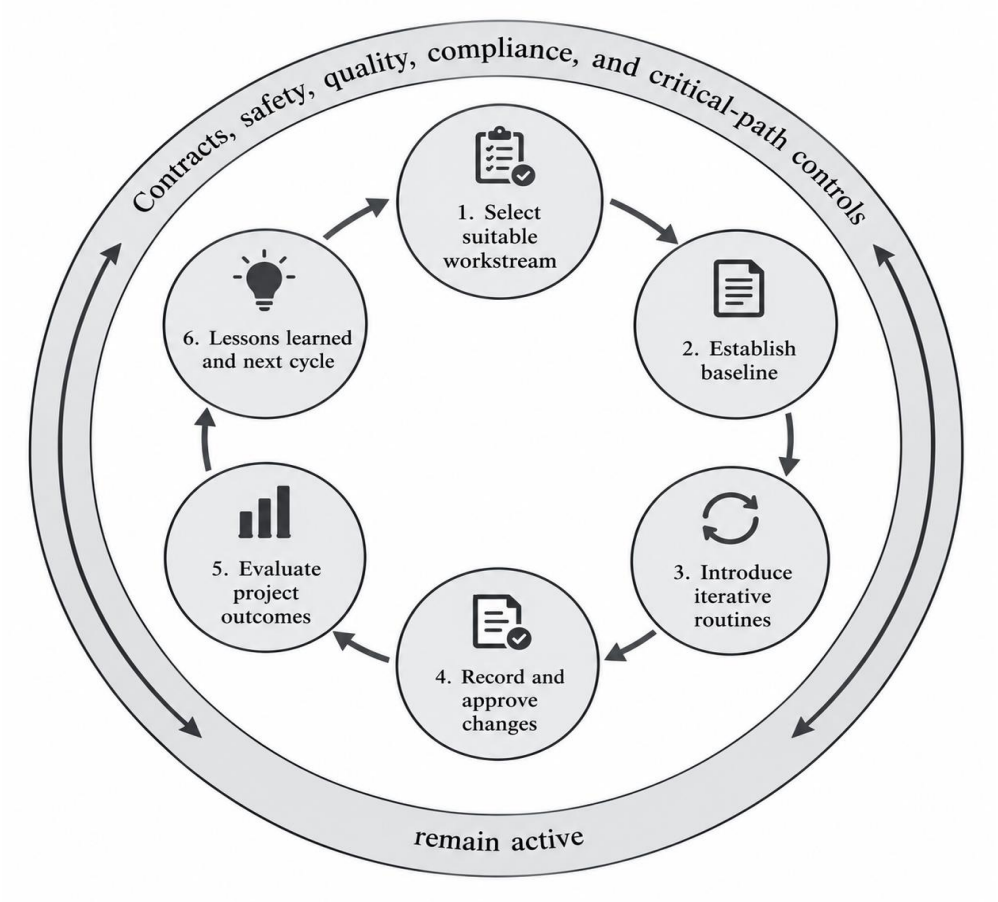


Figure 3. Hybrid Agile implementation and evaluation cycle.

7. Implications for practice and research

For project managers, Agile routines should address a defined coordination problem and produce traceable actions, owners, and decisions. For clients and contractors, hybrid methods may be useful where project

requirements evolve but formal approvals and physical dependencies remain binding. For organisations, training and coaching should be linked to real construction workflows, rather than generic certification alone. For researchers, reporting should include sample size, response rate, sampling method, measurement scales, data quality checks, missing-data treatment, statistical tests, and project-level outcome definitions.

A future UK study could use a prospective or retrospective comparative design. Projects with documented Agile-practice intensity could be compared with similar projects managed conventionally, while adjusting for project type, value, duration, complexity, procurement route, scope changes, and market conditions. If the sample permits, multivariable regression or matched comparisons could estimate adjusted associations. Any causal interpretation would require a design capable of addressing selection effects and confounding; a cross-sectional perception survey alone would not be sufficient.

8. Limitations

This article inherits the reporting limitations of the supplied dissertation extract. The sample size, sampling frame, response rate, exact scale anchors, variability estimates, interview count, and coding process are not clearly established. The original data were not available for reanalysis. Several reported approach percentages sum to more than 100%, and the reason is unknown. The dissertation's figures are therefore presented as reported, not independently validated.

The external studies have their own limitations. Kineber et al. (2024) and Elseknidy et al. (2024) focus on Nigerian construction settings and cannot be assumed to represent UK practice. The 2025 review by Zamil and Alhusban synthesises themes rather than estimating a pooled effect on cost or schedule overruns. The available literature does not justify treating results from different countries, samples, constructs, and methods as if they were measurements of the same outcome.

9. Conclusion

The supplied dissertation reports favourable perceptions of Agile across flexibility, communication, time management, cost control, and work quality, alongside mixed overall judgements and clear adoption barriers. Existing published research provides quantitative support for the importance of implementation conditions: Kineber et al. (2024) report 109 responses and model critical success factors; Elseknidy et al. (2024) identify economic factors as a prominent barrier group with a reported coefficient of 0.516; and Zamil and Alhusban (2025) review 104 studies and identify recurring themes involving iterative planning, responsiveness, collaboration, digital facilitation, and sustainability.

These studies do not establish that Agile reduces UK construction cost overruns or delays by a specific amount. The strongest defensible conclusion is that Agile practices may improve coordination and responsiveness when adapted to construction constraints, but their impact on final cost and schedule must be tested using project records. A context-sensitive hybrid approach is recommended, with formal controls retained and measurable outcomes defined before implementation.

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