



**ST. MARY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATED STUDIES**

**PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES OF STAKEHOLDER
MANAGEMENT: THE CASE OF COVID-19 EMERGENCY
RESPONSE PROJECT**

**BY:
TEDELA TEFERA**

**MAY, 2022
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

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**BY:
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Arts in Project Management**

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**ST. MARYS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
FACULTY OF BUSINESS**

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DECLARATION

I the undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of **Dr. Maru Shete**. All sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution for the purpose of earning any degree.

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ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

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May, 2022

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the practices and challenges of stakeholder management in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. The study employed a quantitative research approach and descriptive research design. A five-point Likert scale-based questionnaire was used to collect data for the assessment from 51 chosen respondents (project managers, project team members, support staffs and project coordinators). The study's findings show that the project has an institutionalized stakeholder management framework. In addition, the project stakeholder identification, planning, and communication methods were excellent. However, there was a gap in the analysis, engagement of all stakeholders, and management of their expectations. The findings show that significant stakeholders were not identified at the outset of the project and their interests were not adequately assessed. Understanding the unique characteristics of each stakeholder group, creating empathy among stakeholders, defining stakeholders' power and influence, managing expectations of stakeholders effectively are the major challenges concerning stakeholder management in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. The study also revealed that intra-organizational communication and trust were identified as important components for both internal and external relationships. Inter-organizational communication and trust, as well as long-term business, were also essential factors in external partnerships. Finally, it is advised that all stakeholders understand the project goals and objectives, and that the project has strong engagement and analysis methods in place, as well as an effective conflict resolution strategy in place for future projects. It is also suggested that project managers must consider both IRM and ERM. They must also pay attention to many areas of relationship management.

Keywords: *External Relationship Management, Internal Relationship Management, Stakeholder Management.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ERM – External Relationship Management
- IRM – Internal Relationship Management
- SPSS – Statistical Software Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Project management is the use of learned skills, strategies, and tactics to oversee a project process from start to finish (Daniel & Inim, 2020). Every project has stakeholders. A stakeholder is defined as "an individual, group, or organization who may impact, be affected by, or consider themselves to be affected by a project decision, action, or outcome." (PMI, 2013); Project stakeholder management is also defined as "the processes required to identify the people, groups, or organizations that may have an impact or be impacted by the project, analyze stakeholder expectations and their impact on the project, and develop appropriate management strategies for effectively engaging stakeholders in project decisions and execution." According to Riahi (2017) these stakeholders include both internal and external players, as well as a company's social and economic partners.

In current project management literature, the concept of internal stakeholders is frequently employed in conjunction with the concepts of important stakeholders or business actors (Alderman et al., 2005). Such stakeholders have a formal, official, or contractual relationship with the organization or are actively involved in the decision-making processes of the organization. Clients, sponsors, contractors, and suppliers are examples of internal stakeholders (Atkin & Skitmore, 2008).

External stakeholders are not formally members of the project coalition, but they may have an impact on or be impacted by the project. These individuals are referred to as non-business stakeholders or secondary stakeholders (Alderman et al., 2005). Internal stakeholders are those who actively participate in project implementation, whereas external stakeholders are those who are simply affected by the project. As a result, authorities are included in their definition of internal stakeholders (Olander & Landin, 2008). External stakeholders are individuals who are significantly impacted by an organization's operations.

Project success is linked to the ability to successfully interact with and manage relationships with the project's many stakeholders. This regarded stakeholder management as a critical issue in project management (Assudani & Kloppenborg, 2010).

Stakeholder management also pays special attention to communication with stakeholders in order to understand their requirements and expectations, handle issues as they emerge, manage competing interests, and increase stakeholder commitment to project decisions and activities (Riahi, 2017).

According to the researchers, formal and transparent communication channels/networks are required to efficiently communicate information. As a result, the greater the degree of communication among project participants, the greater the participant satisfaction (Takim, 2009; Leung, Ng & Cheung, 2004). Communication is frequently recognized as one of the most critical areas for change. To guarantee a project's success, considerable information must be conveyed to all important stakeholders on a consistent basis, including expectations, goals, needs, resources, progress updates, budgets, and purchase requests (Čulo & Skendrovi, 2010). Project managers should be extremely competent negotiators and communicators who can manage individual stakeholder expectations while also fostering a positive cultural shift within the entire project (Olander & Landin, 2008). The management of stakeholders, thus, is a critical component of the project management process (Meng & Boyd, 2017).

Stakeholders are significant contributors to every project; consequently, the project manager should foster community relationships among various groups of individuals in order to accomplish the project (Olanrewaju et al., 2017). Because project success is dependent on more than simply the performance of the project team, success or failure frequently depends on the participation of top management, functional managers, customers, suppliers, contractors, and others (Dekkar & Qing, 2014).

At this juncture, therefore, this study intends to assess the role of project manager in internal and external relationship management in the case of Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response Project. That is dealt with the overall stakeholders' management. Stakeholders who are involve in the prevention and control of the pandemic. These stakeholders are from internal and external. Internal stakeholders are those who have direct relationship or impact in the process of COVID-19 prevention. On the other hand, external stakeholders are those who have indirect relationship or impact on the prevention and control process.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Projects are organizational strategic tools that drive innovation and value creation; however, their failures and challenges cost global businesses, governments, and organizations billions of dollars each year (Rajablu, Marthandan & Yusoff, 2014). Studies identified that one of the primary causes of project failure as a lack of understanding of stakeholder management (Rajablu, Marthandan & Yusoff, 2014). The challenges with stakeholders having varied interests on projects make it tough to manage them all, thus creating a balance and an atmosphere where each stakeholders interest is represented and the project's success is accomplished is essential (Daniel & Inim, 2020).

The issue of stakeholder communication must be addressed, as well as how inadequate stakeholder management might hinder project success. Ineffective stakeholder management, in particular, can: reduce stakeholder satisfaction with project outcomes (Bourne, 2011); negatively impact an organization's capabilities (Aaltonen et al., 2010); obstruct future opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders (Manowong & Ogunlana, 2010); and potentially cause harm to individuals or groups (Phillips, 2003). Therefore, project managers should recognize the reciprocity of efforts and rewards among stakeholders and strive for a fair allocation of the advantages and costs of business activity among them, taking into account their various risks and vulnerabilities (Leigh-Hunt and Markwell, 2016).

In addition, the project environment is dynamic and complicated, and if stakeholder management is not properly addressed, the project may run into unforeseen issues and uncertainties. Poor communication; insufficient resource allocation; changes in the project's scope of work; unfavorable community responses to the project; etc. are only a few examples of the uncertainty produced by stakeholders. As a result, proactive measures must be taken to reduce the possibility of ambiguity and issues caused by stakeholders; otherwise, the project will fail (Karlsen, 2002). Results from several studies have shown that management of stakeholders is lacking in many projects globally in terms of strategy, plans, and methodologies. The research done by Karlsen (2002) on project managers to get their opinions on stakeholder management, which reveals the inadequacies of formal and systematic project stakeholder management procedures in

projects, is only one excellent example that exemplifies these ideas. The same is true for Africa, where several studies have demonstrated that poor stakeholder management practices have led to the failure and/or non-success of programs. In Nigeria, research by Zarewa (2019) found that the majority of projects had issues owing to bad stakeholder management practices. Another study by Rwelamila, Talukhaba, & Ngowi (1999) revealed the existence of poor stakeholder relationships in the majority of African projects, which contributed to project failure. This study can be used as an example of how project stakeholder management is lacking in projects carried out in various regions of Africa.

Few researches on project relationship management have been undertaken in Ethiopia. Temesgen (2021), for example, evaluated stakeholder management approaches in the Omo Kuraz Sugar Factory 1 Project (OKSFP). The study found that even if the stakeholder management system is institutionalized (part of an organizational body), it is not functioning; Siyade (2021) evaluated stakeholder management techniques and problems in the example of Heineken Ethiopia's phase three expansion projects in Kilinto. According to the report, project stakeholder identification, planning, and communication methods are strong, but there are gaps in assessing, involving all stakeholders, and managing their expectations; Rediate (2020) assessed the influence of stakeholder management on project success in the chosen construction firms by evaluating stakeholder management techniques and methodologies used by project managers. According to the survey results, the majority of respondents believe that good stakeholder management is a significant aspect in meeting both hard and soft project success criteria; Marta (2018) investigated the association between stakeholder participation and project performance on Ethiopian roads.

According to the findings of the study, stakeholder participation has a significant impact on project performance; Martha (2020) evaluated the present stakeholder management procedures in DCE road building projects. Setting shared goals and objectives in the project, project manager managerial competency, and measuring stakeholder attitude are the top three elements that impact stakeholder management process, according to the study; Yehualashet (2017) assessed the stakeholder management protocol of collaborative projects carried out by selected Ethiopian non-governmental organizations

(NGOs); and Tsegaye, Ammen, and Dechasa (2017) investigated the practices and problems of stakeholder management in the context of Mission for Community Development Program (MCDP) projects. According to the findings of the study, the stakeholder management system is mostly not institutionalized (separate organizational body).

According to Lalic et al. (2013), one of the trends that is recognized but not sufficiently institutionalized in the field of project management, particularly when they are part of a group of international development projects, is the importance of stakeholder management throughout the project life cycle. The research identifies issues such as how the project manager manages these connections in order to meet the project's objectives. How do problems arise? How should these issues be addressed? What communication challenges are experienced, and how do they affect project completion? How did the project manager interact with the stakeholders? As it is evident from the above review, none of these studies addressed the challenges and practices of stakeholder management in Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response Project in particular. Therefore, this study tried to fill the gap by assessing the practices and challenges of stakeholder management, the case of Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response project.

1.3 Research Questions

To address the research problem, this study tried to answer the following research questions:

1. What does the current stakeholders' management practice of Covid-19 Emergency Response Project look like?
2. What are the challenges that Covid-19 Emergency Response Project is facing in managing the stakeholders?
3. What is the role of Covid-19 Emergency Response Project managers in IRM and ERM?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The main goal of this study is to assess the practices and challenges of stakeholder management in Ethiopian Covid-19 Emergency response project.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the current stakeholder management practice of Covid-19 Emergency Response Project.
2. To assess the challenges faced in project stakeholder management by Covid-19 Emergency Response Project.
3. To assess the role of Covid-19 Emergency Response Project managers in IRM and ERM.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study focused solely on the practices and challenges of stakeholder management of the Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response Project. It focused on relationship management in project situations in particular. It sought to investigate how project managers perform in terms of relationship management both inside and outside. The study was conducted only on the Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response Project in Addis Ababa, which may not be good enough to extrapolate the findings directly to other projects, and it does not analyze the practice of other analogous projects in other locations. In terms of time, this study was a cross-sectional study, with data were collected at a certain point in time.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Understanding stakeholders and having good stakeholder management techniques are critical factors impacting project success (PMI, 2013). Considering the needs and requirements of both major and secondary project stakeholders as a key contributing factor to improved project performance gives a firm foundation for stakeholder

identification, categorization, and evaluation. According to Freeman's seminal work, the management-for-stakeholder approach offers an inclusive and holistic perspective that aims to engage with a broader group of stakeholders, who could be harmed by the organization's strategy, by meeting or exceeding their needs and expectations and balancing the projects' Economic, ecologic, and social interests.

The significance of this study is analyzing the role of project managers in stakeholder management practices, as well as investigating the practices and challenges of stakeholder management in the Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response Project in order to achieve its intended objectives. The success of this project may have a significant impact on effective stakeholder management and project sustainability by incorporating important stakeholders and replicating in the areas. The finding of this study helps to give a better knowledge and teach policymakers on how stakeholder management ideas may be more effectively implemented in this specific industry, as well as how it might improve project completion and sustainability. This understanding is based on stakeholders' perspectives on practical techniques that can optimize the efficacy of their engagement in achieving the desired outcome and best practice processes that can be implemented to these projects.

Furthermore, the purpose of this research is to give a better understanding of a more inclusive and comprehensive strategy to interacting with a larger variety of stakeholders. The study attempted to analyze and demonstrate how excellent stakeholder communication management practices are implemented, as well as to provide insight into the significance of stakeholder communication management practices. It is also beneficial for future researchers who may desire to do future research on project communication management performed by the project manager in internal and external relationships.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This study has some drawbacks, much as any other studies. The key limitations of the study, a lack of adequate and up-to-date literature, and a lack of comparable studies in the Ethiopian context, is the major challenges encountered while conducting this study. The investigation centered on the COVID 19 Emergency Response Project. Directly applying the findings to other projects may be challenging to accomplish for a variety of reasons.

One cause might be that the kind and type of stakeholders participating in one project varies from those in others. Time and resources are limited. Due to the researcher's lack of expertise and time constraints, summarizing and analyzing the data to be obtained was difficult.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Project: A project is a one-of-a-kind collection of coordinated operations with a distinct beginning and end point, undertaken by an individual or organization to achieve particular goals within specified time, cost, and performance criteria (British Standards Institution, 2000).

Project Management: The application of information, skills, tools, and procedures to project activities in order to achieve project requirements is referred to as project management (Rose, 2013).

Stakeholder: Stakeholders are any group or people who can influence or is influenced by the accomplishment of the organization's goals (Freeman & McVea, 2001).

Stakeholder Management: Stakeholder management is the process of identifying the people, groups, or organizations that may have an impact or be impacted by the project, analyzing stakeholder expectations and their impact on the project, and developing appropriate management strategies for effectively engaging stakeholders in project decisions and execution.

Project Manager: A project manager is the person who is ultimately in charge of managing and directing the project to a successful finish (Gardner, 2005).

Communication: Communication is the act of giving, receiving, and sharing information.

Project Communication Management: It encompasses the procedures necessary to assure timely and proper project planning, gathering, development, distribution, storage, retrieval, management, control, monitoring, and final disposition of project information (PMBOK, 2001)

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters which includes chapter one on the background of the study, the objectives, research questions, scope of the study and significance of the research. Chapter two includes the literature review consisting of theoretical review and empirical review. Chapter three consists of research methodology that was adopted in carrying the study. Chapter four comprises the data analysis, interpretations and discussion of the findings. The study is finalized with chapter five on the summary of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The analysis of the literatures on this issue in this chapter places the research into a broader context. The study of theories is relevant to stakeholder relationship management and project performance, topics addressed by the researchers, a critique of what was addressed, and the current gap in the body of knowledge.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory emerged from Freeman's "A stakeholder Approach" writings (Freeman, 2010). Stakeholder theory has evolved into several taxonomies (normative stakeholder theory, descriptive stakeholder theory, and instrumental stakeholder theory) (Donaldson, 1995). The normative Stakeholder theory covers the concepts and views of the stakeholder concept, showing how managers and stakeholders should perceive the goal of the organization's existence in light of specific ethical norms. The Instrumental Stakeholder Theory, which provides views about how managers should act if they desire to work in the best interests of the business, is the alternative approach to stakeholder notion. The descriptive stakeholder theory examines managers' actual behavior as well as how they perceive their responsibilities and behaviors (Rajablu, Marthandan, & Yusoff, 2015).

Any intervention's goal is to provide advantages to its stakeholders. These stakeholder benefits are the project's major drivers, and the achievement of the stakeholders' objectives drives the project's success. A stakeholder is any individual or group of individuals who may influence or are influenced by the success of the organization's goals (Freeman, 2010). Stakeholders in a project might be either internal or external to the organization. The observer's point of view determines whether an individual or a group of individuals is external or internal to a project. Stakeholders in a project believe they have a stake in the project or job, and as a consequence of their perceived stake in

the project, they have certain expectations and, as a result, they engage in particular behaviors, which can be constructive or detrimental.

2.2.2 Theory of Performance

Humans are capable of remarkable feats via high levels of performance (Neu, 2013). The Theory of Performance (ToP) serves as the study's guiding theory. According to Elger (2007) the theory's proponent, performance is a trip, whereas location determines the level of performance. A performer can be an individual or a collection of separate entities working together (Elger, 2007). This performance theory describes greater levels of performance as an increase in quality, degree of knowledge and skills, capacity, identity and motivation, capability, and cost effectiveness.

This theory also states that certain elements determining intervention performance are unchangeable, whilst others may be altered to create favorable effects. The performance theory informs project performance measures such as scope, quality, time, and cost. High-level performance yields excellent results that are more successful in meeting or surpassing the demands and expectations of stakeholders. Higher levels of performance save costs by reducing waste and the resources necessary to deliver a result or product a high degree of performance increases an entity's capacity and potential to create greater throughput. The time it takes to execute a job in a project, according to this Performance Theory, demonstrates the degree of performance in proportion to the declared scope as described in the project charter.

2.2.3 System Theory

One of the most important management theories is system theory. A system is a collection of interconnected different pieces that compose and influence the operation of a unified whole. Changes in one or more elements in a system will alter an element in the system, affecting the entire system. A system's essential premise is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The limits of a system define it, and the pieces of a system interact to achieve a shared goal. Because a system cannot live in isolation, its performance will be judged by its ability to adapt to its surroundings (Neu, 2013).

As the system accepts inputs from the environment and discharges the changed outputs to the environment, it adapts to the outside environment. All of the system's components interact with one another as well as with the outside world. A project is a system because it involves the interplay of interdependent elements that create a whole to achieve a certain goal. Sankaran, Haslett, & Sheffied (2010) studies urge for project managers to use a system thinking approach while managing complicated projects. Project stakeholders are components of a system that work together to generate a coherent whole. These project stakeholders must collaborate to ensure the project's success.

2.3 Stakeholder Management

2.3.1 Stakeholders Defined

Project stakeholders, according to Larson & Gray (2011), are "people and organizations that are actively participating in the project, or whose interests may be positively or negatively affected by the project." Similarly, the PMBOK Guide defines project stakeholders as "an individual, group, or organization who may impact, be affected by, or believe themselves to be affected by a project decision, action, or result" (PMI, 2013). Stakeholders, according to Taschner & Fiedler (2009), are actors with a special interest. Almost everybody involved in a project may be referred to be a stakeholder (Lester, 2003), as people come to share a vision of the issues and players that comprise the domain; they become stakeholders (Hardy & Phillips, 1998). According to Curtice (2006), "stakeholders are persons or organizations who demand specific things from the firm while also having a significant effect on its performance." Stakeholders are important sources of information and should be encouraged to participate in any process, even if they are fundamentally opposed to it (Taschner & Fiedler, 2009).

2.3.2 Stakeholder's Classification

Stakeholders on a project include practically every individual who is touched by it, and identifying these many categories of stakeholders necessitates some approach. According to Newcombe (2003), defining stakeholders is based on the following factors: power/interest - authority versus interest, Power vs. influence - authority vs. influence Influence/effect - influence vs impact, as well as the Salience model – authority, urgency,

and legitimacy. Mitchell, Agle, & Wood (1997) define stakeholder categories as latent, dormant, discretionary, demanding, expectant, dominating, reliant, hazardous, and definitive stakeholders based on various combinations of the traits power, legitimacy, and urgency. According to Malkat & Byung-Gyoo (2012), stakeholders are as follows: - Primary stakeholders; interact on a daily basis on significant activities, allowing them to exert direct impact on decision-making. Secondary stakeholder; depending on the stage of the project, engagement with the project is unanticipated. Primary stakeholders in construction have a direct impact on the project, whereas secondary stakeholders have an indirect impact. Internal and external stakeholders were categorized by Olander (2003). The project owner, the project management team, suppliers, and customers are all internal stakeholders. External stakeholders include the general public, local and international governments, the trade industry, interest organizations, and the media. Lester (2003) distinguished between direct and indirect stakeholders. Direct stakeholders include the sponsor, client, project manager, project team, construction or installation team, contractors and subcontractors, suppliers, consultants, and others. Indirect stakeholders include an organization's support staff such as the accounts department, HR department, secretariat, management levels not directly involved in the project, environmental and political pressure groups, and, of course, the families of project team and construction/installation team members. Each category can then be further subdivided into good and negative stakeholders. According to Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997), stakeholder salience is positively related to the total number of stakeholder attributes—power, legitimacy, and urgency—perceived by managers to be present.

Legitimacy: The acceptance by the other players that the first actor's activity is desirable or suitable in light of socially formed norms, values, beliefs, and meanings. **Power:** is an actor's capacity (expressed or potential) to force his will on others. **Urgency:** The actor's perception that his own request is urgent or vital.

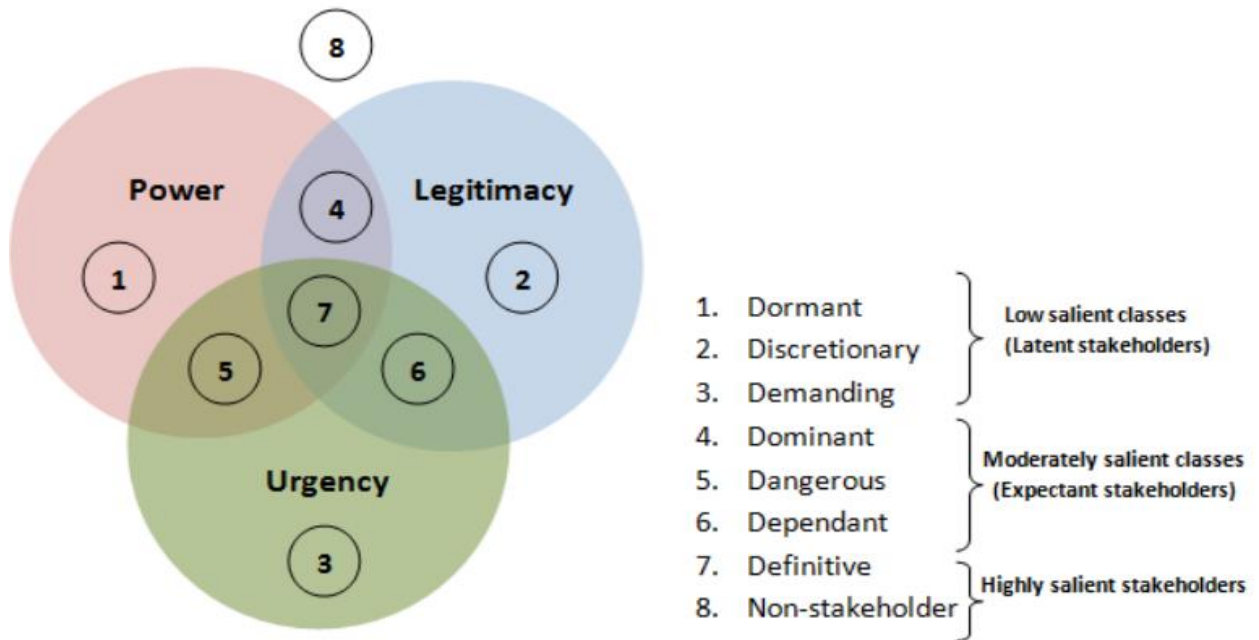


Figure 1. Salience Model / Typology of Stakeholders

Source: *Mitchell, Agle, & Wood (1997).*

2.3.3 Key Stakeholders

According to PMBoK (2000), the important stakeholders in all projects are the project manager, the customer, the performing organization, the project team members, and the sponsors. Key stakeholders, according to Pett et al. (2004), are organizations or individuals with significant power and influence as a result of their political responsibilities, financial resources, authoritative abilities, and/or experience.

2.3.4 Stakeholder Management Process

The important processes necessary for the creation and execution of stakeholder-related strategies are the identification of stakeholder expectations and the study of stakeholders to establish their influence. This implies that the techniques employed should prioritize the degree of the influence a stakeholder might have on a project over the impact of the project on the stakeholder or the stakeholders' objectives (Johnson et al. ,2020). Following a thorough review of the literature, Yang (2010) concluded that the main stakeholder management theory is concerned with two major areas: identifying project

stakeholders, evaluating the dedication and interests of stakeholders, and determining their potential influence on the project, and analyzing different types of stakeholder relationships, explaining how stakeholders react to the divergence of the project objectives from their own objectives, and for Previous research has caused considerable confusion by using phrases like "stakeholder management," "stakeholder analysis," and "stakeholder engagement" interchangeably to express connected topics without providing a clear explanation of their significance. Furthermore, the stakeholder management strategy outlined in the PMBOK Guide (PMI, 2013) allocates stakeholder management procedures to project management process groups. This framework categorizes "stakeholder analysis" as a method in the process category "identify stakeholders."

Stakeholder management also pays special attention to communication with stakeholders in order to understand their requirements and expectations, handle issues as they emerge, manage competing interests, and build stakeholder commitment to the project's choices and actions. Stakeholder satisfaction should be addressed as a main project goal. The diagram below depicts an overview of the project stakeholders' management procedures.



Figure 2. Stakeholders Management Cycle

2.3.4.1 Identify Stakeholders

Examine stakeholder expectations and how they affect the project. Create successful engagement tactics that encourage stakeholder participation in project decision-making and execution. Furthermore, the PMBOK Guide recommends that the focus of stakeholder management be on ongoing communication with stakeholders. Stakeholder analysis, according to Reed (2008) and Yang et al. (2011), consists of three steps: identifying stakeholders and their interests, measuring stakeholders' influence, and analyzing stakeholders' interactions. Reed et al. (2009) find that failing to involve stakeholders early on has a negative influence on the quality and robustness of choices.

Continuously effective communication among stakeholders is critical to the procedures involved in stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder engagement is linked to the processes of stakeholder identification and analysis because some methodologies of stakeholder identification and analysis need data obtained via stakeholder engagement (Reed, 2008). Snowballing, for example, is a stakeholder engagement strategy that involves existing stakeholders in the identification of additional stakeholders and their interests (Yang et al., 2011). Furthermore, stakeholder workshops can give vital insights into stakeholder interactions. This data may then be used to examine these correlations and their implications for the project. The interdependence between stakeholder interaction and stakeholder identification and analysis emphasizes the dynamic character of the stakeholder management process (Yang et al., 2011).

Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

According to the PMBOK Guide, this process entails identifying project stakeholders and assessing pertinent data on their interests, engagement, interdependencies, influence, and possible impact on project success (PMI, 2013). This process's outputs should be documented in a Project Stakeholder Register. This register is a "living" record that is reviewed and updated during the project life cycle and contains enough information to identify, appraise, and categorize project stakeholders. The Project Stakeholder Register serves as the foundation for developing stakeholder engagement methods (PMI, 2013).

Identifying Stakeholders, their Interests and Influences

According to the PMBOK Guide, there are two types of stakeholders: internal stakeholders and external stakeholders (PMI, 2013). Internal stakeholders are actively involved in project execution, and external stakeholders are impacted by the project (Olander, 2007). Mitchell, Agle, and Wood's (1997) salient model is widely acknowledged as a major theoretical advance in stakeholder theory, and some writers believe it to be the ultimate stakeholder identification and assessment model. The salient model, according to the PMBOK Guide, is built on the traits of power (ability to enforce their will), urgency (need for rapid attention), and legitimacy (their involvement is appropriate). A project stakeholder is defined as any individual, group, or organization who possesses one or more of these characteristics (Olander, 2007). The combination of these factors determines the stakeholder's relative relevance. Dormant stakeholders, discretionary stakeholders, demanding stakeholders, dominating stakeholders, hazardous stakeholders, dependent stakeholders, and definitive stakeholders are the stakeholder classifications covered in the salient model.

Power/interest matrix, vested interest-impact index, and stakeholder impact index are some other stakeholder assessment or mapping methodologies presented in the literature. A stakeholder mapping approach used to determine stakeholder expectations and power is the power/interest matrix. The two stakeholder qualities are used to categorize stakeholders based on their potential to affect the project and their level of desire in seeing their expectations satisfied (Johnson et al., 2011). Olander and Landin (2008) utilized a scale of 0 to 10 to position stakeholders in the power/interest matrix, Vested interest-impact index, in the examination of two construction project case studies. They did, however, have difficulty rating the power and amount of interest on a scale. Bourne and Walker (2005) advocated replacing power and degrees of interest with influence impact and levels of vested interest. The influence impact level in this model quantifies the amount of impact each stakeholder has on the project, while the vested interest level examines the likelihood that a stakeholder will have an impact on project choices.

While the vested interest-impact index technique is useful for statistically assessing project stakeholders, it does have certain drawbacks. It does not categorize stakeholders like Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) advocated in the salient model. Furthermore, this technique does not examine project stakeholders' views toward the project (i.e., are the

stakeholders project supporters or opponents?). According to Olander (2007), a stakeholder's attitude or posture toward the project influences whether that stakeholder has a good or negative impact on the project decision-making process. To address the limitations of the previous stakeholder analysis models discussed in this section, Olander (2007) created the stakeholder impact index (SII), which combines the attributes included in the salient model, the vested-interest index, and stakeholder position into a single stakeholder analysis tool.

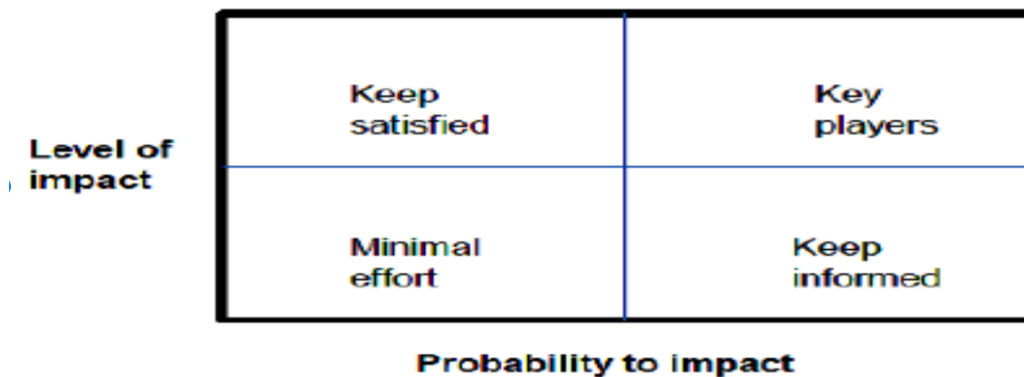


Figure 3. Stakeholder Impact Index (SII)

2.3.4.2 Analyzing Stakeholders' Relationships

One significant drawback of the previously reported stakeholder categorization techniques is that they do not handle stakeholder relationship management. According to Yang (2010), "effective management of the project management team's relationships with its stakeholders is a vital key to project success." According to Olander (2007), stakeholders in construction projects are components of a system, and an examination of the interactions between these components is required.

Hidden project stakeholders do not have enough influence to directly affect the project, but they might have a significant positive or negative impact on it through their ties with powerful project stakeholders. As a result, the ability of the project manager to develop and maintain strong relationships with project stakeholders may be critical to the successful delivery of project outcomes (Bourne and Walker, 2005). Bourne and Walker (2005) created the Stakeholder Circle as a stakeholder management tool capable of managing interactions between the project's stakeholder community and the project,

hence enhancing the chance of project success. The Stakeholder Circle methodology employs some of the previously stated stakeholder categorization methodologies and is divided into three stages: Identifying project stakeholders, assigning project stakeholders a priority, and Creating a stakeholder engagement plan for a project: The capacity of the project team to appropriately measure the effect of each stakeholder determines the success of stakeholder relationship management systems based on the Stakeholder Circle. As a result, as project complexity rises, the accuracy of the project team's evaluations is likely to diminish (Yang, 2010).

2.3.5 Stakeholder Communication

Project success is linked to the ability to successfully interact with and manage relationships with the project's many stakeholders. As a result, stakeholder management is a critical problem in project management (Assudani & Kloppenborg, 2010). According to the researcher, formal and unambiguous communication channels/networks are required to ensure efficient information flow. As a result, increasing the level of communication among project participants increases participant satisfaction (Takim, 2009; Leung, Ng, & Cheung, 2004). Communication is a critical element in project management. It is tough to master, but it is necessary to make a good effort in accomplishing, many times on troublesome projects, project team members' opinion; that if communication had been better, the project would have run more smoothly. As a result, one of the most critical areas for development is communication. To guarantee the success of a project, considerable information, including expectations, goals, objectives, resources, progress reports, budgets, and purchase requests, must be provided to all important stakeholders on a regular basis (Čulo & Skendrovic, 2010).

Project managers must be skilled negotiators and communicators capable of managing individual stakeholder expectations and fostering a positive culture change throughout the project (Olander and Landin, 2008). The key to effective stakeholder management is a focus on continuous communication with all stakeholders, including team members, in order to understand their needs and expectations, address issues as they arise, manage competing interests, and foster appropriate stakeholder management in project decisions and activities (PMBOK, 2017).

2.3.6 Communication and Project Performance

Projects do not fail at the end of the project lifecycle; rather, failure happens during the planning and execution stages (Wang & Hu, 2012). Communication is essential in projects (Alatalo, 2010). A project is a provider of many types of information to the project's stakeholders. Communication is a dynamic relationship and a continual activity (Affare, 2012). According to Alatalo (2010), communication should be enough but not excessive. The transmitter and recipient of the message encoded in form of symbols, pictures, words, and so on are involved in the communication process. A communication channel is used to send the message to the receiver. The message is decoded by the message's recipient. Only if the intended meaning is deciphered and comprehended by the receiver can the communication provide value. The receiver determines how to respond by giving feedback to the sender via the communication channel. The sender of the message must be able to analyze the audience before encoding the message, taking into account how the recipient will decode the message. When there are only one or a few receivers, it is easy to shape the message to them; nevertheless, targeting communications to numerous people is more difficult. Some messages are one-way in communication; for example, memoranda, newsletters, brochures, and so on. Communication can be classified as written or oral; external or internal communication based on the recipient's proximity to the project organization; formal or informal communication based on the channel used to deliver the message; and vertical (up or down the organization) or horizontal (between peers) based on the flow of the message (Affare, 2012).

Communication, according to Wang & Hu (2012), may either wreck or salvage a project. In project communication, project managers play a critical role. Project management is based on collaboration among stakeholders, since work completed by one party contributes to the attainment of overall project goals. The project manager's communication and leadership abilities are critical to maintaining effective control over the numerous project stakeholders while ensuring the project meets its project objectives (Alatalo, 2010). Efficient information sharing does not spontaneously happen in an organization; rather, effective communication is properly planned and coordinated. Data management systems used by the project have an impact on project communication. To

guarantee operational efficiency, the message to external project stakeholders must be a presentation of facts in an intelligible style; internal communication must be timely, clear, and thorough (Alatalo, 2010).

Finally, stakeholders are individuals or groups who may be within or external to a corporation and who can impact or are affected by the project. Stakeholders identify all those who are interested. An individual, group, or organization that may influence, be influenced by, or consider itself to be influenced by a project decision, action, or outcome. The stakeholder analysis synthesizes and analyzes information on all of the people, groups of people, organizations, and institutions that will be affected by the future project in some manner. This entails identifying all actors engaged in the activity, examining their distinct responsibilities, interests, abilities to contribute or stymie the project, and estimating the level of collaboration or possible friction between the various parties.

Depending on the scope and complexity of the project, there may be several sorts of stakeholders with varying needs, aims, and objectives. A capable project manager acknowledges the significant influence that stakeholders may have on the project's success, both positively and negatively. A thorough stakeholder analysis and a well-planned communication strategy will increase the project's chances of completing deliverables on time and under budget. The framework for an effective stakeholder management which is adopted from Park et al. (2017) can be depicted as follow:

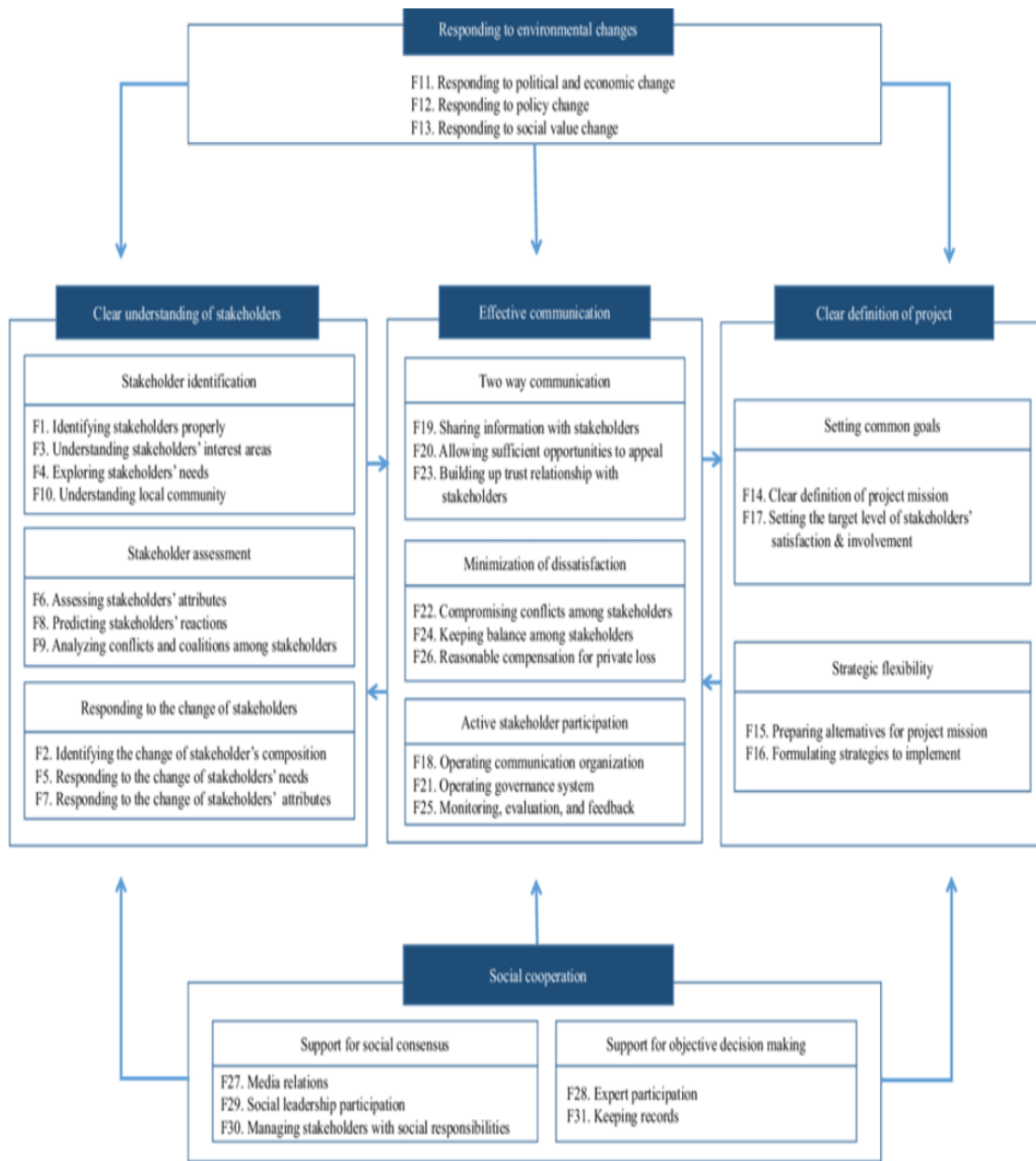


Figure 4. Framework of Stakeholder Management

Source: Park et al. (2017)

2.4 Role of Project Managers

The analysis of the literature reveals a range of interests in the EI and personality of project managers. Dolfi and Andrews (2007) assert that project managers should be optimistic rather than pessimistic because, whether it is natural or taught, optimism

empowers project managers to overcome challenges in the workplace. Bevilacqua et al. (2014) thought that extroverted project managers are more likely to enhance project performance and achieve project success than introverted project managers. Project managers' personalities have an impact on their leadership abilities (Burke and Barron, 2007). On the other hand, project managers' EI and personalities have an influence on their competence (Davis, 2011). Haynes and Love (2004) suggested that project managers with various personality qualities may differ in terms of psychological adjustment to job stress. This is consistent with research on the personality of project managers. According to Wang et al. (2016), project managers with various personality types may view and approach risks in various ways. According to Zhang and Fan (2013), team leadership, conflict resolution, and communication all significantly depend on the EI and personality of project managers.

Certain general research suggests that project managers have a crucial role in team development, knowledge management, innovation management, and change management. More importantly, Sommerville et al. (2010) believe that although construction project managers have a variety of roles to play, which ones they will actually take on depend on their level of maturity and the nature of the project. These roles include decision-maker, safety coordinator, organizer, team worker, motivator, planner, process controller, inspector, diplomat, quality coordinator, communication facilitator, and implementer. Despite this, there hasn't been any systematic, focused research on the function of project managers in relationship management. Only research on specific themes related to project relationship management can provide evidence of the role of project managers.

Two of these research themes are trust and collaboration. The relevance of project managers building intra-organizational trust to team performance and project success was underlined by Munns (1995) in general and Wong et al. (2000) in the construction industry. Project managers should seek to build inter-organizational trust since this is the foundation upon which project partners may cooperate with one another, according to Anantatmula (2010) in general and Fong and Lung (2007) in the construction industry. Trust is widely accepted as a crucial component of working relationships, according to Wong et al. (2000) on intra-organizational trust and Meng (2015) on inter-organizational

trust as two construction studies. However, Anantatmula (2010) generally thought that project managers needed to focus on both intra-and inter-organizational collaboration. It is generally compatible with Ammeter and Dukerich (2002) in terms of intra-organizational collaboration. In terms of inter-organizational collaboration, it also supports Fong and Lung's (2007) building study. Similar to Anantatmula (2010) generally, Chen and Partington (2004) in construction believed that intimate working connections and project managers' conceptions of relationships depend on collaborative culture for both intra-organizational and inter-organizational cooperation.

Other similar study subjects include relationship performance and relationship quality. The relationship performance index was separated into relationship-oriented subjective measures and relationship-oriented objective measures by Yeung et al. in 2009. Relationship-oriented subjective measures included trust and respect; effective communication; harmonious working arrangements; long-term business; top management commitment; employee attitude; and reduction of paperwork. Relationship-oriented objective measures included the frequency and severity of claims, disputes, and litigation, as well as the introduction of facilitated workshops. The index may be used by project managers to assess, track, and enhance the effectiveness of relationship management in construction projects. On the other hand, when creating the relationship quality framework, Jelodar et al. (2016) selected teamwork, commitment, and trust as the three qualities of relationship quality, all of which require the assistance of project managers.

2.5 Empirical Review

2.5.1 Global Studies

To study the relative influence of project stakeholders, Nguyen, Skitmore, & Wong (2009) conducted a survey of project managers employed by state-owned civil engineering design firms in Vietnam. Respondents were asked to rate the identified project stakeholders using the stakeholder impact index's stakeholder qualities. The survey's findings showed the importance of clients and the project team on state-owned civil engineering projects in Vietnam.

Meng & Boyd (2017) used a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to investigate the impact of construction project managers to relationship management. Internal or external project-based relationship management is possible. This study defines 18 project management jobs in internal relationship management (IRM) and 18 roles in external relationship management (ERM) (ERM). They are classified into six internal role groups and five external role groups as a result of data analysis. This research, in addition to job identification and classification, provides evidence for the shift in construction from conventional project management, which focuses on planning and control, to modern project management, which emphasizes the significance of people and working relationships.

Chandr, Wiguna, & Koming (2012) created a model to forecast the impact of stakeholders on project success. The study looked at three stakeholder aspects that have an influence on project success criteria: stakeholder impact, stakeholder involvement, and stakeholder psychological empowerment. According to the findings of a study of over 204 persons working in construction projects, all three of the stakeholder aspects investigated had a major impact on project success in the Indonesian construction sector.

Yang et al. (2011) investigated the building industries of Hong Kong and Australia. The study's goal was to identify and assess the effectiveness of realistic stakeholder analysis and engagement methodologies. As a result, a thorough typology of approaches to stakeholder analysis and engagement was developed. Many of the techniques are multi-functional in the sense that they may be used to identify, analyze, and/or engage stakeholders.

Aaltonen et al. (2010) demonstrated how the local stakeholder connections of a focus project are related to the appearance and handling of unexpected occurrences in the context of multinational initiatives. A qualitative case study of three multinational initiatives carried out in difficult institutional settings. This paper's findings demonstrate the many methods through which local stakeholder connections influence the appearance and handling of unexpected occurrences in multinational initiatives. Because of variations in the quantity and quality of local stakeholder interactions, the management, type, and number of unexpected events faced vary from project to project. The findings

of this article indicate a paradox: both the presence and absence of local stakeholder ties with key players can result in unanticipated outcomes in multinational initiatives. According to the findings, two types of unexpected events related to local stakeholder relationships were identified: unexpected events that arose as a result of misunderstandings and diverging practices, processes, values, and norms between the focal project organization and the local stakeholders; and unexpected events that arose as a result of difficulties in establishing direct and indirect relationships with salient external local stakeholders. Furthermore, the findings show how local stakeholder connections may be used to cope with and manage the unexpected occurrences that occur.

Olanrewaju, Tan, & Kwan (2017) investigated the variables that contribute to poor communication on construction sites and developed ways to overcome the related issues. According to the findings of a cross-sectional survey questionnaire administered to 80 site workers, the major causes of poor communication are: a lack of a shared language between superiors and workers, workplace stress, superiors' and colleagues' attitudes toward site workers, misinterpretation of instructions, and poor communication skills among workers. Noise reduction techniques, honesty among workers and supervisors, a reduction in on-site bullying, and promotion of communication and innovation among workers can all help to reduce communication difficulties on the job. The findings can help construction businesses, developers, construction and project managers, and others improve efficiency and revenues.

Dekkar & Qing (2014) investigated project manager leadership responsibilities in addressing project stakeholders' management concerns in order to produce a successful project. It contends that, while completing a great project is a significant undertaking, the notion of project success differs from stakeholder to stakeholder. As a result, a lack of in-depth stakeholder analysis "identification, prioritizing, and interest assessment" would result in divergence in stakeholders' perceptions of project success criteria and project success in general. Project manager leadership qualities and traits are critical in accurately nailing down the project stakeholders' web in order to improve the effectiveness of cooperation, collaboration, consultation, and communication with the various project stakeholders in order to shape their expectations and consolidate a common project success criterion.

2.5.2 Related Studies in Ethiopia

Yehualashet (2017) assessed the stakeholder management protocol of chosen non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have recently begun operations in Ethiopia. The descriptive technique of research design was used in the study, and a mixed research strategy was used to carry it out. This project's conclusions emphasize the significance of stakeholder management in collaborative initiatives. These studies also revealed how a collaborative project may analyze its stakeholder environment and adapt to stakeholder demands and unexpected occurrences in the context of collaborative projects. Finally, greater information about joint stakeholders' influence methods, as well as a better grasp of how a joint project may cope with stakeholder influences, assists project managers in developing successful project stakeholder management techniques.

Tsegaye, Ammen, & Dechasa (2017) investigated the practices and problems of stakeholder management in the context of Mission for Community Development Program (MCDP) projects. The census sampling approach was utilized to use all of the MCDP organization's staff. Donors, beneficiaries, traditional and governmental authorities, and Project Community were identified as widely acknowledged essential stakeholders in the organization by the research. However, other initiatives designated the project team, insurance companies, media, sister/line projects, contractors/consultants, and financial institutions as stakeholders. It was also determined that the interests and roles of the major stakeholders were important to the project's success. The stakeholder management system was shown to be mostly un-institutionalized (separate organizational body). The study also discovered that challenges such as low commitment, conflicting interests, personal benefit seeking, ineffective communication, low understanding of different issues, deviation from common agreement, unrealistic expectations, and high management costs had a negative impact on the performance of projects in the organization. Finally, the study recommends that all stakeholders understand the project's goals and objectives, that strong communication be maintained, that relevant stakeholders be identified early in the project planning process, that stakeholder management be institutionalized, and that full commitment be obtained from all stakeholders.

Temesgen (2021) evaluated stakeholder management strategies in the example of the Omo Kuraz Sugar Factory 1 Project (OKSFP). Using the Census sampling approach, all 34 OKSF1P staff members were included in the sample. It was discussed that the interests and responsibilities of the major stakeholders were crucial to the project's success. The stakeholder management system was discovered to be institutionalized (as part of the organizational body), but it was not operational (the functionality was under quotation). The study found that challenges such as low commitment, conflicting interests, personal benefit seeking, ineffective engagement and communication, low understanding of different issues, deviation from common agreement, unrealistic expectations, environmental peace is critical, and high management costs had a negative impact on the performance of projects in the organization. Finally, it is recommended that all stakeholders understand the project goals and objectives, ensure strong engagement and communication, identify relevant stakeholders early in the project planning process, ensure functionality, accountability, and transparency of stakeholder management, and ensure full commitment from all stakeholders.

Siyade (2021) evaluated stakeholder management techniques and problems in the example of Heineken Ethiopia's phase three expansion project in Kilinto. The descriptive research design and a combined technique of qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed in the study. The study's findings show that the company has an institutionalized stakeholder management framework. In addition, the project's stakeholder identification, planning, and communication methods were excellent. However, there was a gap in the analysis, engagement of all stakeholders, and management of their expectations. The findings show that significant stakeholders were not identified at the outset of the project and their interests were not adequately assessed. Conflicts of interest among stakeholders, as well as a lack of a good conflict resolution plan method, have been cited as important challenges for the project. The study also found that issues such as various stakeholder characteristics, differing expectations, inadequate stakeholder comprehension, and inefficient communication all had an impact on the performance of projects in the business. Finally, it is advised that all stakeholders understand the project's aims and objectives, and that the project has strong engagement

and analysis methods in place, as well as an effective conflict resolution strategy in place for future initiatives.

Rediate (2020) investigated stakeholder management methods and methodologies used by project managers, as well as the influence of stakeholder management on project success in selected Ethiopian construction enterprises that have just begun operations. The descriptive approach of research design was used in this study. Meanwhile, a mixed research strategy has been used to carry out the study. The project managers and resident engineers of the selected organizations working in Addis Ababa are the study's target audiences. The project's conclusions emphasize the significance of stakeholder management in building projects. According to the survey results, the majority of respondents believe that good stakeholder management is a significant aspect in meeting both hard and soft project success criteria. According to the findings, building project managers in Ethiopia lack the implementation necessary to conduct stakeholder management activities in line with a defined approach. According to the findings, most project managers in Ethiopia's construction industry are aware of stakeholder management and its importance to project success, but their stance on project stakeholder management (PSM) is erratic and inconsistent. Furthermore, project stakeholder management activities are not being supported by enough funding and other non-financial help.

Marta (2018) investigated the association between stakeholder participation and project performance on Ethiopian roads. This study used a descriptive survey research strategy to collect data to answer research questions. The stakeholders, comprising the ERA, consultant, and contractor, were the study's target population. To evaluate quantitative data, descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations were employed. Correlation analysis investigates the link between stakeholder participation and project performance with a focus on Ethiopian Road Authority. According to the findings of the study, stakeholder participation has a significant impact on project performance.

2.6 Summary and Research Gap

Studies identified that one of the primary causes of project failure as a lack of understanding of stakeholder management (Rajablu, Marthandan & Yusoff, 2014). The challenges with stakeholders having varied interests on projects make it tough to manage them all, thus creating a balance and an atmosphere where each stakeholders interest is represented and the project's success is accomplished is essential (Daniel & Inim, 2020). The issue of stakeholder communication must be addressed, as well as how inadequate stakeholder management might hinder project success. Ineffective stakeholder management, in particular, can: reduce stakeholder satisfaction with project outcomes (Bourne, 2011); negatively impact an organization's capabilities (Aaltonen et al., 2010); obstruct future opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders (Manowong & Ogunlana, 2010); and potentially cause harm to individuals or groups (Phillips, 2003). Therefore, project managers should recognize the reciprocity of efforts and rewards among stakeholders and strive for a fair allocation of the advantages and costs of business activity among them, taking into account their various risks and vulnerabilities (Leigh-Hunt and Markwell, 2016).

Few research on project relationship management have been undertaken in Ethiopia (Temesgen, 2021; Siyade, 2021; Rediate, 2020; Marta, 2018; Martha, 2020; Yehualashet, 2017; and Tsegaye, Ammen, & Dechasa, 2017). As it is evident from the above review, most of the studies conducted focused on the practices and challenges of stakeholder management, less emphasis is placed on the connection between the project manager and the stakeholders in general and the case of Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response Project in particular. Therefore, this study tried to fill the gap by assessing the project managers' role in internal and external relationship management, the case of Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response project.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology that was adopted in the study. The chapter contains the research design, target population, sampling technique, data collection, data reliability and validity and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is the overall plan for relating the research problem to relevant and practicable empirical research. In other words, the research design provides a plan or framework for data collection and its analysis. The study adopted a descriptive research design in assessing the project management practices. The descriptive research involves gathering data and systematically treating it to present a comprehensive and intelligible inference (Orodho & Kombo, 2002). This design is considered most appropriate since the purpose of the study is to document the systems as is.

3.3 Research Approach

As far as the research approach for the study is concerned, the research employed a quantitative research approach wherein a survey questionnaire is used to collect data from the project participants. Creswell (2009) noted that quantitative approach employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield numeric data that can be analyzed using statistical procedures. It is a means for testing objective theories through examining the relationship among variables. It is advantageous as it, procedure, follow scientific approach, tests reliability and validity of the instrument. It minimizes bias from the researcher's influence and employs large sample size. Hence, the results can be believed on and the results can be generalized to larger population. However, it is not capable to address issues which cannot be quantified.

3.4 Target Population

According to Hair et al. (2010), target population is said to be a specified group of people or object for which questions can be asked or observed made to develop required data structures and information. Therefore, for this paper, the target population is all project managers, project team leaders, project team members and support staffs who are involved in Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response Project. The total population size was 56.

3.5 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

For the purpose of this study, the census survey was used for the project employees as they are not many in number. According to (Parker, 2011) in a census survey every participant has an opportunity to participate which reduces the concern on accuracy. Therefore, the study included all the respondents from the employees involved in project. That means the study was conducted considering all the 56 respondents involved in the project.

3.6 Types and Source of Data

3.6.1 Types of Data

Based on the objectives of the study, the study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data come from the original sources and collected specially to answer the research questions. Secondary type of data involves sourcing for already processed information.

3.6.2 Sources of Data

The study incorporated both primary and secondary data sources for data collection purpose. The study mainly used primary data source. Employees who are participating in the project implementation process were the main sources for the primary data. Besides, secondary data were collected through review of the project plan of the project, journals and the Internet.

3.7 Data Collection Techniques and Procedure

To achieve the study's goal, individually administered structured questionnaires were employed, which are based on the criteria found by referring to existing research and the study's objective. To collect quantitative data regarding stakeholder management practices and challenges, a questionnaire survey is employed. The questionnaire survey was the only primary data gathering instrument in this study. The questionnaire is adapted from Meng & Boyd (2017), who investigated the project manager's role in relationship management in the context of building construction and civil engineering projects in the United Kingdom (UK). As a result, this study finds 18 project manager jobs in internal relationship management (IRM) and 18 roles in external relationship management (ERM). The qualitative data type is gathered, and the primary and secondary data sources in this study include the Ethiopian COVID-19 Emergency Response Project staffs.

3.8 Data Analysis Technique

Data from the appropriate source were examined and presented. Statistical approaches were utilized to assess quantitative data in order to offer explanations for practices and challenges of project stakeholder management and the role of managers in stakeholder management. The study used descriptive designs. Descriptive analysis entails summarizing data using measures of central trends such as mean and measures of variation or dispersion (e.g., standard deviation), and presenting the data using frequency tables. For rating questions with a predetermined level, Likert scaling is employed. The structured questionnaire data were examined using SPSS version 25 software.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the research measuring instruments determine, first and foremost, the extent to which one may learn from the study's phenomena. Second, the likelihood of obtaining statistical significance in data analysis, and third, the extent to which meaningful conclusions may be drawn from the obtained data.

3.9.1 Validity

According to Yin (2008), research validity may be accomplished in two steps: internal and external validity. Internal validity refers to the correctness or quality of the study activity, whereas external validity refers to the degree to which conclusions or conclusions may be generalized. Given that the questionnaires were delivered in person, the data collecting technique reliably measured what it is meant to assess, and the research is certain that the findings are what they claim to be about. Because the theoretical framework developed is extensive in scope, it allowed us to internally validate the survey, and the responses of respondents also allowed us to examine the degree of external validity. The theoretical framework included specific theories allowed us to validate the survey, which was validated with other comparable research within the subject of our study; so, we can conclude that the survey generated is validated to some extent because it was produced from numerous research works.

3.9.2 Reliability

Williamson (2002) defines reliability as the extent to which a research may be repeated with the same findings. The survey's dependability may be defined as obtaining quality replies to the questions and being able to get the respondents to comprehend the questionnaire. To do this, sample questions were utilized in conjunction with a scaling mechanism. The survey was carefully designed to guarantee that respondents can react in the best possible way and that there is a high response rate. As a result, in order to assure the reliability of the measuring instrument, the researcher first standardized it before distributing it to all respondents. Cronbach's alpha was also utilized to examine the internal consistency of each construct. As a result, the data gathering approach produced consistent results, and there was openness in how the raw data are interpreted.

The result of the coefficient alpha for this study's instrument was found to be overall 0.8364, as an indication of the acceptability of the scale for further analysis. As a consequence, because the results are satisfactory, additional analysis is carried out.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Item	Cronbach's Alpha
General stakeholder management Practice	5	.834
Stakeholder Identification and planning	7	.820
Stakeholder engagement and analysis	6	.839
Manage stakeholder Communication	5	.837
Stakeholder management challenge	8	.822
Internal Relationship Management	5	.872
External Relationship Management	5	.831
Overall	41	0.836

Source: Survey data (2022)

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Ethical issues are expected to consider in any kind of research study. Therefore, this paper took into consideration those ethical issues on access and use of data, analysis and report of the findings in a moral and responsible way. The respondents are informed the purpose of the study and ask their permission. Participants are assured that the data collected from them will remain confidential and that anonymity will be maintained.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter contains the analysis of data, presentation of the findings and discussion of the data analyzed. It starts with a discussion of the response rate, and assessment of research instrument. The findings of descriptive statistics of the profiles of respondents are presented followed by descriptive statistics findings on the study's variables. Data is also tested for validity and reliability.

A total of fifty six (56) questionnaires were sent out. A total of fifty-one (51) questionnaires were filled and returned. This represented a response rate of 91.07%. This response is considered well enough for data analysis (Magutu, 2014). Bailey (2002) stipulates that a reaction rate of half is sufficient, while a reaction rate more noteworthy than 70% is great. A review of the collected data revealed that there were few and random cases of missing values. These missing values did not reveal any systematic pattern for the variables. Since the missing variables were few and random, their imputation was considered unnecessary and they were excluded pair wise in the SPSS version 25.

4.1 Characteristics of Respondents

The first part of the questionnaire consists of the general profile of respondents. This part of the questionnaire requested a limited amount of information related to general and company status of the respondents. Descriptive statistics (frequency distribution) is used to discuss the general demographic characteristics of respondents (Age, gender, education & experience) and general information of respondent which are suitable for study that are discussed in the table below.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

<i>No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	
			Frequency	Percentages
<i>1</i>	<i>Age</i>	26-35	21	41.2
		36-45	29	56.9
		Above 45	1	2.0
		Total	51	100
<i>2</i>	<i>Gender</i>	Male	40	78.4
		Female	11	21.6
		Total	51	100
<i>3</i>	<i>Qualification</i>	First Degree	17	33.3
		Master's Degree	20	39.2
		PhD	14	27.5
		Total	51	100
<i>4</i>	<i>Experience</i>	Project Manager	5	9.8
		Project Team Leader	11	21.6
		Project Team Member	25	49.0
		Support Staff	10	19.6
		Total	51	100

Source: Survey data (2022)

The majority of respondents (56.9 percent) said they were between the ages of 36 and 45, 41.2 percent said they were between the ages of 26 and 35, and the remaining 2 percent said they were above 45 years. These results show that respondents were selected from all age groups, with the majority of them being mature in age and life since they were between the ages of 26 and 45. Generally, the majority of the respondents were middle aged. This implies that they could have good productive prospects. From the total 51 respondents 40 (78.4%) are males and 11 (21.6%) of them are female this tell us largest respondents are male.

The above table also shows that from the total respondents of 51, most of them 20 (39.2%) are Master's degree holders. Holders of Bachelor's degree (17) ranked second at 33.3% and the remaining 14 (17.5%) were PhD holders. Cumulatively, degree holders made up 72.5% of the respondents. Regarding the respondents' educational background, it demonstrates that respondents are literate enough to accurately comprehend and reply to the research instruments, and respondents from various educational backgrounds are represented in the study.

When we come to the position of the respondents, 25 respondents (49 percent) are project team members, 11 (21.6 percent) of them are project team leader, 10 (19.6 percent) of them are support staffs and the remaining 5 (9.8 percent) are project managers. This implies that respondents are relevant to accurately comprehend and reply to the research instruments.

4.2 Practices of Stakeholder Management

The study did descriptive analysis on the data obtained on the variables; General stakeholder management Practice, Stakeholder Identification and planning, Stakeholder engagement and analysis, and Manage Stakeholder Communication in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. In examining the practices of stakeholder management, the data analysis is based on the reply by the respondents on their degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the questions on a five-point Likert response scale (Likert, 1932) that ranged from 5 "strongly agree" (scored as 5) to "strongly disagree" (scored as 1). The researcher used similar questionnaires to examine the practices of stakeholder management in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. This data was addressed and examined separately based on the average mean responses and are relevant to project management activities. The findings are detailed in the next section.

4.2.1 General Stakeholder Management Practice

The study assessed the respondents' perspectives on general stakeholder management practices in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project, and the results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 3: General Stakeholder Management Practice

No.	Statements	N	Freq.	Response Categories					Mean	Std. Dev.
				SD	D	N	A	SA		
1	There was a standardized stakeholder management Practice in your project.	51	F	1	-	-	16	34	4.6078	.69508
			%	2	-	-	31.4	66.7		
2	The project is implemented as it is planned.	51	F	1	1	11	25	13	3.9412	.85818
			%	2	2	21.6	49.0	25.5		
3	A project stakeholder management can Make a difference in the performance of a project?	51	F	1	3	7	22	18	4.0392	.95835
			%	2	5.9	13.7	43.1	35.3		
4	Project Stakeholder Management were an important and priority activity for your project	51	F	1	2	7	23	18	4.0784	.91309
			%	2	3.9	13.7	45.1	35.3		
5	Formal stakeholders 'management (the interaction among each stakeholder) is sufficient enough to achieve the objectives.	51	F	3	10	16	22	-	4.1176	.93053
			%	5.9	19.6	31.4	43.1	-		
Overall Mean & Std. Dev.								4.1568	0.8710	

Source: Survey Data (2022)

One of the research objectives was to look into the management techniques of stakeholders in the Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. According to the results of table 4.2, 31.4 percent of respondents agreed, 2% disagreed, and 66.7 percent strongly agreed regarding the existence of standardized stakeholder management practices in the project. The majority of respondents say that standardized stakeholder management methods are in place and that stakeholder management has received attention. The results also show that project stakeholder management practices are coordinated at the institutional level. According to the data, the project established standard stakeholder management procedures with a mean of 4.6078 and a standard deviation of 0.69508.

Project planning is an essential part of project management. Given that the majority of respondents agreed that the project is being carried out as planned. The above data also reveals that 2 percent highly disagree, 2 percent disagree, 11 percent neutral, 49.0 percent

agree, and 25.5 percent severely disagree in project involvement. As a result of the mean 3.9412, we can deduce that research participants agreed that the project was carried out as intended. Because it is less than one, the average standard deviation figure (0.85818) suggests that respondents' assessment of this item is less varied.

Most project team members agree that executing stakeholder management may improve project performance; they also believe that it is a priority activity that can assure project quality. When we look at the results, we notice that 43.1 percent of respondents agree, 35.3 percent strongly agree, 13.7 percent are indifferent, and 5.9 percent disagree. In general, they agreed by mean 4.0392 that stakeholder management is a valuable and key action for one project's success and complete performance.

The respondents were questioned if formal stakeholder management is adequate to achieve the objectives, and they believed that formal stakeholder management is not simply sufficient to archive one project target. 43.1 percent of those polled agreed, 31.1 percent were indifferent, and 19.6 percent disapproved. The mean in this content is 4.1176.

Further, the overall mean value (4.157) indicates that respondents are agreed as to the implementation of general stakeholder management practices in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. The overall standard deviation value (0.87) also indicates that respondents' perception towards this item is less varied, since it is less than one.

4.2.2 Stakeholder Management Process

4.2.2.1 Stakeholder Identification and Planning

Proper stakeholder planning and identification, according to Peter (2008), is crucial for project success. It is critical for successful project success to identify stakeholders early in the project or phase and analyze their degrees of interest, individual expectations, relevance, and impact. The study assessed the respondents' perspectives on stakeholder Identification and planning practices in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project, and the results are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4: Stakeholder Identification and Planning

No.	Statements	N	Frequency	Response Categories					Mean	Std. Dev.
				SD	D	N	A	SA		
1	All key stakeholders identified properly at the planning stage of the project.	51	F	1	21	17	6	6	3.4902	.92461
			%	2	41.2	33.3	11.8	11.8		
2	Stakeholder power and influence have been well defined	51	F	4	3	12	18	14	3.6863	1.17457
			%	7.8	5.9	23.5	35.3	27.5		
3	Project team members have participated in identifying stakeholders	51	F	1	10	17	16	7	3.3529	1.01634
			%	2	19.6	33.3	31.4	13.7		
4	Key stakeholders are integrated well in the project.	51	F	1	3	11	19	17	3.9412	.98817
			%	2	5.9	21.6	37.3	33.3		
5	Key stakeholders share a common understanding in the project	51	F	15	30	5	1	-	1.8431	.67446
			%	29.4	58.8	9.8	2	-		
6	There is a conflict resolution plan to Manage different competing stakeholder interest in the project	51	F	17	27	4	2	1	2.3824	.86364
			%	33.3	52.9	7.8	3.9	2		
7	There are any key stakeholders who are being missed in stakeholder identification.	51	F	16	16	12	6	1	2.2157	1.08284
			%	31.4	31.4	23.5	11.8	2		
Overall Mean & Std. Dev.								2.9874	0.9607	

Source: Survey Data (2022)

Participation of project teams in stakeholder identification is critical to prevent ignoring crucial stakeholders who might have a substantial influence on the project. Table 4.3 demonstrates that 2 percent of respondents disagree about their engagement in identifying stakeholders, 33.3 percent are neutral, 19.6 disagree, and 31.4 percent agree and 13.7 percent strongly agree in the participation of project team members in stakeholder identification. The average mean value (3.3529) indicates that the majority of respondents are unsure whether project teams have paid enough attention to stakeholder

identification, and the standard deviation of 1.01634 indicates that respondents' perception of this item is somewhat varied, as it is greater than one.

Table 4.3 shows the respondents' replies to the question if all main important stakeholders have been identified and the project is in the planning stage. 2 percent of respondents strongly disagreed, 41.2 percent disagreed, 11.8 percent agreed, and 11.8 percent strongly agreed on the identification of important stakeholders during the project planning stage. As a consequence, the results demonstrate that there was a gap in identifying key stakeholders during the project's planning stage, which influenced the project's overall stakeholder management strategy.

Because different stakeholders are involved in one project, their power, interest, responsibility, and relevance level will differ; the above table result shows that 35.3 percent of respondents agree, 27.5 percent strongly agree, and 23.5 percent are neutral about this, indicating that stakeholder power and influence have been well defined in the Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. In terms of stakeholder integration, 33.3 percent of respondents strongly agreed, and 37.3 percent agreed that key stakeholders are well integrated throughout the project. This result suggests that there are no gaps in integrating stakeholders throughout the project's life cycle.

Because stakeholder participation has clearly influenced project performance, key stakeholders that have a direct impact on project deliverables should be identified throughout the planning stage. According to the results of Table 4.3, 11.8 percent of respondents agreed that there are missing stakeholders who were not identified during the planning stage, 2 percent strongly agreed, 31.4 percent disagreed, and 31.4 percent strongly disagreed. This suggests that there are some missing stakeholders, which will have an impact on the project's success.

Conflicts are a normal occurrence, and they may have a negative impact on project success by squandering the stakeholders' time, money, and energy. According to the table above 4.3, 52.9 percent of respondents opposed and 33.3 percent strongly disagreed about the presence of a conflict resolution plan, whereas 3.9 percent agreed and 2 percent strongly agreed about the existence of a stakeholder dispute resolution plan. As a result, it is impossible to conclude that the project conflict resolution strategy is adequate. And the

results of the question on common understanding among stakeholders show that 58.8 percent of respondents strongly disagree with shared understanding among key stakeholders. 29.4 percent of respondents disagree, 3 percent agree, and the remaining 9.8 percent are neutral. We might deduce from this outcome that the project organization was unable to achieve common ground with its main stakeholders.

Further, the overall mean value (2.98) indicates that respondents are uncertain as to the stakeholder identification planning process in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. The overall standard deviation value (0.96) also indicates that respondents' perception towards this item is less varied, since it is less than one.

For the success of the project, the identification, mapping, control and monitoring of stakeholders is as important as coordinating actions for stakeholder engagement and collecting information about their perceptions throughout the life cycle, thereby composing the framework of management actions with a relational focus (Mok et al., 2014). This approach sets forth to the management the need to consider the social and environmental contexts in which projects are included (Gil, 2010).

4.2.2.2 Stakeholder Engagement and Analysis

The study assessed the respondents' perspectives on stakeholder engagement and analysis practices in Covid-19 emergency response project and the results are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 5: Stakeholder Engagement and Analysis

No.	Statements	N	Frequency	Response Categories					Mean	Std. Dev.
				SD	D	N	A	SA		
1	Stakeholder engagement is considered vital for project success and sustainability	51	F	3	2	4	40	2	4.0000	.72111
			%	5.9	3.9	7.8	78.4	3.9		
2	Engage all people internally/externally linked with your project as stakeholders	51	F	13	20	1	16	1	3.0392	.95835
			%	25.5	39.2	2	31.4	2		
3	Stakeholder engagement helps to manage relationships by aligning mutual interests, which mitigate project risk/uncertainty	51	F	2	3	7	23	16	3.9412	1.02785
			%	3.9	5.9	13.7	45.1	31.4		
4	The project reduces the risk of each interaction by successfully involving stakeholders.	51	F	6	2	9	21	13	3.6471	1.24617
			%	11.8	3.9	17.6	41.2	25.5		
5	Their expectation is understood, acknowledged and managed.	51	F	3	5	10	22	11	3.6471	1.11038
			%	5.9	9.8	19.6	43.1	21.6		
6	Stakeholder analysis is useful to ensure the quality of the decision making processes	51	F	23	5	6	16	1	3.9412	1.00820
			%	45.12	9.8	11.8	31.4	2		
Overall Mean & Std. Dev.								3.7026	1.0120	

Source: Survey Data (2022)

Stakeholder engagement is the process through which projects interact with and inform its stakeholders. Rowlinson & Cheung (2008) pointed out the importance of stakeholder engagement in the project as a factor to achieve success. By getting to know them, organizations may better grasp what people truly want, when they want it, how involved they are, and how their plans and actions will affect their goals. It will aid in the identification of important project stakeholders as well as the creation of clarity and shared objectives among stakeholders.

As demonstrated in table 4.4 above, the majority of respondents saw stakeholder participation as critical to project success and sustainability, with 78.4 percent agreeing

and 3.9 percent disagreeing. As a result, respondents' comprehension of the relevance of stakeholder involvement is positive, with a mean of 4.0000 and a standard deviation of 1.72111. Furthermore, 31.4 percent highly agreed, 45.1 percent agreed, 13.7 percent were neutral, and 5.9 percent and 3.9 percent opposed and strongly disagreed, respectively, if stakeholder management helps decrease project risk/uncertainty. This means that the majority of respondents, with a mean of 3.9412 and a standard deviation of 1.02785, agreed with this issue. Respondents were also asked whether they thought stakeholder analysis was important for ensuring the quality of decision-making processes. The majority of respondents agreed, with 45.1 percent agreeing, 31.4 percent strongly agreeing, 11.8 percent neutral, and 9.8 percent disagreeing.

With a mean of 3.9412 and a standard deviation of 1.00820, the following table results show that the majority of respondents felt that stakeholder analysis is important for ensuring quality in decision making processes. However, based on the above table results, there was a gap in engaging all persons associated with your project as stakeholders. Only 31.4 percent of respondents agreed, 39.2 percent disapproved, and 25.5 percent strongly disagreed. In terms of how well stakeholder expectations are recognized, acknowledged, and handled, 31.4 percent of respondents agreed, 11.8 percent were indifferent, 9.8 percent disagreed, and 45.12 severely disapproved. As a consequence of the findings, we may infer that there was a gap in managing stakeholder expectations and recognition throughout the project.

Further, the overall mean value (3.70) indicates that respondents are agreed as to the process of stakeholder engagement and analysis in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. However, the overall standard deviation value (1.01) indicates that respondents' perception towards this item is somehow varied, since it is above one.

4.2.3 Manage Stakeholder Communication

The study assessed the respondents' perspectives on manage stakeholder communication practices in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project, and the results are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 6: Manage Stakeholder Communication

No.	Statements	N	Frequency	Response Categories					Mean	Std. Dev.
				SD	D	N	A	SA		
1	Communicating with stakeholders early at the project initiation stages.	51	F	1	3	4	15	28	4.2941	.98578
			%	2	5.9	7.8	29.4	54.9		
2	Keep stakeholders informed as the project progresses by sending updated information is an important approach of engaging with them	51	F	5	10	13	17	6	3.1765	1.17823
			%	9.8	19.6	25.5	33.3	11.8		
3	Communicate with stakeholders through formal meeting	51	F	8	12	17	10	4	2.8039	1.16653
			%	15.7	23.5	33.3	19.6	7.8		
4	Stakeholders are updated on the project's progress on a regular basis.	51	F	1	10	13	22	5	3.3922	.98140
			%	2	19.6	23.5	43.1	9.8		
5	All stakeholders aware of project goal	51	F	2	10	7	13	19	3.7549	1.05533
			%	3.9	19.6	13.7	25.5	37.3		
Overall Mean & Std. Dev.								3.4843	1.0734	

Source: Survey Data (2022)

Effective communication, according to Bourne (2006), is crucial for sustaining the support and commitment of all stakeholders in the process of creating and maintaining partnerships. Effective, frequent, scheduled, and ad hoc communication with all project stakeholders is critical to the project's success. The above table 4.5 result indicates that the project is good at communicating with stakeholders early in the project's life cycle. In this regard, 54.9 percent of respondents strongly agreed, 29.4% agreed, and 5.9% disagreed, with a mean and standard deviation of 4.2941 and 0.98578, respectively.

Updating stakeholders on project progress is also necessary, as is identifying deviations from the plan for early correction (Aston, 2017). With a mean and standard deviation of 3.1765 and 1.17823, respectively, 33.3 percent of respondents agreed that keeping stakeholders informed as the project progresses by sending updated information is an important approach to engaging with them, 11.8 percent strongly agreed, 25.5 percent were neutral, and 19.6 percent disagreed that stakeholders are being updated about the project. In response to the question of whether stakeholders are aware of the project aim,

37.3 percent strongly agreed, 25.5 percent agreed, 19.6 percent disagreed, and 13.7 percent were neutral, with a mean of 3.7549 and a standard deviation of 1.05533.

Further, the overall mean value (3.48) indicates that respondents are moderately agreed as to the management of stakeholder communication in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. However, the overall standard deviation value (1.07) indicates that respondents' perception towards this item is somehow varied, since it is above one.

According to the PMI book, creating ground rules for successful stakeholder communication can save time, eliminate impediments, and allow the project to be completed on time and under budget. When engaging with stakeholders in your firm, you should use a variety of communication channels. The data clearly reveal that the project communicates with its many stakeholders through a variety of communication methods. Interacting with and managing stakeholders can provide a variety of challenges for project managers. An increase in the number of stakeholders, for example, increases stress to the project and influences its level of complexity (Lodhia, 2019).

4.3 Challenges of Stakeholder Management

The study assessed the respondents' perspectives on stakeholder management challenges in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project, and the results are shown in Table 4.6.

Table 7: Stakeholder Management Challenge

No.	Statements	N	Frequency	Response Categories					Mean	Std. Dev.
				SD	D	N	A	SA		
1	Effectively managing expectations of stakeholders is a challenge.	51	F	9	8	6	13	15	3.9804	1.27264
			%	17.6	15.7	11.8	25.5	29.4		
2	Building trust on a project by stakeholders is a challenge	51	F	6	13	14	11	7	3.0000	1.23288
			%	11.8	25.5	27.5	21.6	13.7		
3	Stakeholder power and influence have been well defined	51	F	2	11	4	18	16	3.7157	1.00625
			%	3.9	21.6	7.8	35.3	31.4		
4	Creating empathy among stakeholders is a challenge in Stakeholders management.	51	F	1	7	7	23	13	3.7843	1.04525
			%	2	13.7	13.7	45.1	25.5		
5	Identifying Stakeholders properly is challenge at the planning stage of the project	51	F	14	12	11	9	5	2.5882	1.32931
			%	27.5	23.5	21.6	17.6	9.8		
6	Lack of good communication is a challenge in stakeholders management	51	F	7	8	13	15	8	3.1765	1.27602
			%	13.7	15.7	25.5	29.4	15.7		
7	Project stakeholders have conflicting interests	51	F	6	5	13	17	10	3.3922	1.25025
			%	11.8	9.8	25.5	33.3	19.6		
8	Understanding the unique characteristics of each stakeholder group	51	F	3	-	16	22	10	4.1176	.93053
			%	5.9	-	31.4	43.1	19.6		
Overall Mean & Std. Dev.								3.4694	1.1678	

Source: Survey Data (2022)

As it is evident from the above table 4.6, understanding the unique characteristics of each stakeholder group, creating empathy among stakeholders, defining stakeholders' power and influence, managing expectations of stakeholders effectively are the major challenges concerning stakeholder management in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. In line with this, 43.1% of the respondents agreed that understanding each stakeholder group's unique characteristics is a challenge, 19.6% strongly agreed, 31.4% of them were neutral and the remaining 5.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed. 45.1% of the respondents agreed whether creating empathy among stakeholders is a challenge in stakeholder

management, 25.5% were strongly agreed, 13.7% disagreed and the remaining 13.7% were neutral.

Respondents also opined that defining stakeholders' power and influence is a challenge in stakeholder management with average mean value of 3.7157 and standard deviation value of 1.00625. Furthermore, majority of the respondents 29.4% strongly agreed whether managing expectations of stakeholders effectively is a challenge in stakeholder management. 25.5% of them agreed, 15.7% disagreed and 17.6% of them strongly disagreed. The average mean value (3.9804) also indicates that respondents were agreed to this item. However, respondents' perception towards this statement is somehow varied as the standard deviation value (1.27264) is above one.

Further, the overall mean score (3.4694) shows that respondents moderately agreed that understanding the unique characteristics of each stakeholder group, creating empathy among stakeholders, defining stakeholders' power and influence, managing expectations of stakeholders effectively are the major challenges concerning stakeholder management in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. The overall standard deviation value (1.16), however, shows that respondents' perception towards these items is somehow varied, as it is above one.

4.4 Role of Project Managers

The study assessed the respondents' perspectives on the project managers' role in managing internal and external relationship in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project, and the results are shown in Table 4.8. and 4.7.

Table 8: Internal Relationship Management

No.	Statements	N	Frequency	Response Categories					Mean	Std. Dev.
				SD	D	N	A	SA		
1	Creating good communication channels with team members.	51	F	1	6	17	21	6	3.8902	.92461
			%	2	11.8	33.3	41.2	11.8		
2	Developing trust between project manager and team members	51	F	4	3	12	18	14	3.6863	1.17457
			%	7.8	5.9	23.5	35.3	27.5		
3	Encouraging open and effective communication between team members	51	F	1	10	7	16	7	3.7529	1.01634
			%	2	19.6	13.3	31.4	33.3		

4	Fostering trust between different team members.	51	F	2	11	4	18	16	3.9157	1.00625
			%	3.9	21.6	7.8	35.3	31.4		
5	Listening carefully and responding actively to team members	51	F	1	7	7	23	13	3.7843	1.04525
			%	2	13,7	13,7	45.1	25.5		
Overall Mean & Std. Dev.									3.806	1.033

Source: Survey Data (2022)

The descriptive statistics (Table 4.7) show that effective communication and trust between the project manager and team members are required for internal stakeholder relationship management, with an average mean value of 3.8902 (SD=0.9461) and 3.6863 (SD=1,17457, respectively. The findings also revealed that encouraging open and effective communication among team members, as well as attentively listening to and actively responding to team members, are critical for effectively managing internal stakeholders, as indicated by average mean score values of 3.7529 (SD=1.01634) and 3.7843 9 (SD=1.04525), respectively.

This means that project managers must prioritize intra-organizational communication and trust as a necessity for project team creation and supply chain collaboration. In general, Anantamula (2010) stated that project managers should focus on both intra- and inter-organizational collaboration. This study's findings on intra-organizational collaboration are congruent with Ammeter & Dukerich (2002).

Table 9: External Relationship Management

No.	Statements	N	Frequency	Response Categories					Mean	Std. Dev.
				SD	D	N	A	SA		
1	Developing trust between own team and other project parties.	51	F	1	2	9	22	17	4.0196	.92715
			%	2	3.9	17.6	43.1	33.3		
2	Facilitating open and effective communication between own team and other project parties	51	F	1	4	6	17	23	4.1176	1.03242
			%	2	7.8	11.8	33.3	45.1		
3	Developing long-term business relationship with client	51	F	1	3	2	23	22	4.2157	.92334
			%	2	5.9	3.9	45.1	43.1		
4	Establishing a good dialogue with local social communities	51	F	4	8	18	21	-	4.0980	.94350
			%	7.8	15.7	35.3	41.2	-		
5	Developing long-term business relationships with suppliers	51	F	1	6	7	18	19	3.7706	.94558
			%	2	11.8	13.7	35.3	37.3		
Overall Mean & Std. Dev.								4.044	0.954	

Source: Survey Data (2022)

Although a project is temporary, the table 4.8 above shows that both inter-organizational and intra-organizational communication and trust present a starting point for developing long-term business relationships between project parties, with an average mean value of 4.1176 (SD=1.03242) and 4.0196 (SD=0.92715) respectively. This suggests that, from an internal and external standpoint, team cohesiveness, motivation, and collaborative working among project stakeholders are key components. As a result, project managers play a significant role in this respect. To work collaboratively on a project, project stakeholders must develop common objectives based on a thorough grasp of each other's concerns and expectations. Furthermore, respondents believe that developing long-term business relationships with suppliers and establishing a good dialogue with local social communities are critical components in external stakeholder relationship management, with average mean scores of 4.0980 (SD=0.94350) and 3.7706 (SD=0.94558) respectively.

Further, the overall mean score (4.044) indicates that respondents believed external stakeholder relationship management is a critical role of project managers for successful

project management. Respondents' perception towards this item is less varied, since the standard deviation value is less than one.

Davis & Pharro (2003) regard relationship management as the next generation of project management. Project managers are increasingly like relationship managers in this regard. This is mostly due to the fact that a project and its project manager cannot function without the assistance of senior management, the project team, and external stakeholders (Godbold, 2003). According to Yeung et al. (2012), relational contracting is defined as cooperative interactions between project stakeholders based on mutual benefits and win-win outcomes. According to Mazur & Pisarski (2015), project managers are responsible for managing internal and external stakeholders. Walker (2013) proposed that project managers should lead or influence people and ensure that relationship efforts are continued.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings from chapter four, as well as the conclusions and suggestions. The chapter also included recommendations for future research in order to answer the research question or achieve the research aim.

5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The study focuses on the assessment of stakeholder management practices and challenges in the context of the Covid-19 Emergency Response Project, as well as how respondents view general stakeholder management practices in the project. The study used self-administered questionnaire for primary data collection technique.

Regarding the general stakeholder management practices of the project, we find that more than 98 percent of respondents believe that there is a standard stakeholder management practice in the project and that 78 percent believe that stakeholder management can make a difference in project performance. Furthermore, 78 percent of respondents believed that stakeholder management was their most important project activity. Whereas the respondent felt that stakeholder management alone is insufficient for project success.

In terms of stakeholder identification and planning, the project team numbers participated well in the identification process, and important stakeholders were well incorporated into the project; nevertheless, there was a gap in identifying all key stakeholders at the planning stage and dispute resolution plan. And, based on the responses, no important stakeholder is being overlooked in the project.

More than 82.3 percent of respondents believed that stakeholder participation is critical for project success and sustainability. However, 64.7 percent of them disagree on involving all persons associated with their project as stakeholders in the entrance project. When asked whether expectations are known, acknowledged, and managed, more than half of those polled agreed. This means that the project team as a whole views

stakeholder participation as a critical aspect in project success and in mitigating project risk/uncertainty. However, there is still a significant gap in involving all stakeholders involved in the project. There were also issues with managing stakeholder expectations. In general, the stakeholder analysis section does a decent job of comprehending and identifying stakeholders' interests, expectations, and powers.

Furthermore, more than 84 percent of respondents agreed on interacting with stakeholders early in the project's start stages, communicating with stakeholders through formal meetings, and regularly updating stakeholders on project progress. Furthermore, 62.8 percent of respondents indicated that stakeholders are aware of the project's aim. In general, the project stakeholder communication results suggest that the project paid close attention. However, there is still a vacuum in notifying stakeholders about the overall project status.

Furthermore, the study identifies the challenges cited by respondents in order to identify the fundamental challenges that the project confront. Understanding the distinctive features of each stakeholder group, fostering empathy among stakeholders, identifying stakeholders' power and influence, and successfully managing stakeholder expectations are the primary challenges in the Covid-19 Emergency Response Project's stakeholder management.

Finally, intra-organizational communication and trust were identified as important components for internal relationships. Inter-organizational communication and trust, as well as long-term business, were also essential factors in external partnerships. Without a question, strong communication and mutual trust are crucial for the growth of both internal and external relationships. Other than inter-organizational communication and trust and long-term business, the relationship components for external project managers are collaborative working between project parties, mutual understanding and objectives, working with other project stakeholders, and compliance with contracts and regulations.

5.3 Conclusions

The study's broad objective was to assess the practices and challenges related with stakeholder management in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project. The study's findings led to the following conclusions;

According to finding the general stakeholder management practices of project were good. In terms of stakeholder identification and planning, the project team has a minimal level of participation in the process. The project's communication practices were also satisfactory. However, there was a gap in identifying all key of stakeholder at planning stage. Understanding the distinctive features of each stakeholder group, fostering empathy among stakeholders, identifying stakeholders' power and influence, and successfully managing stakeholder expectations are the primary challenges in the Covid-19 Emergency Response Project's stakeholder management.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the analysis and the conclusions reached, the following suggestions are made:

- Projects must be well-planned, key stakeholders must be identified based on their interest, cost, and attitude, project managers may conduct stakeholder profiling in order to formulate an effective stakeholder management strategy, and stakeholders must be informed about the project and their responsibilities on a timely and integrated basis.
- Project managers must design successful tactics involving stakeholder impact and relationships to create a sense of ownership among stakeholders by clearly defining project goals and benefits. In addition, project managers must design successful tactics involving stakeholder impact and relationships to manage stakeholders successfully through the project life cycle.
- The project should be well-organized and have a set of risk-mitigation policies in place. Management should also develop a way for tracking stakeholder engagement so that they can promptly monitor the process and take corrective action.

- Good communication is essential for initiatives with various stakeholders and different interests. To attain a common understanding and conclusion, the project should maintain open lines of communication throughout its life cycle.
- All stakeholders must have a better understanding of the project's general aim and goals, and excellent communication with all stakeholders must be maintained from the beginning to the completion of the project.
- Project managers must consider both IRM and ERM. They must also pay attention to many areas of relationship management, such as representation of relationship components. In other words, they must be adaptable when it comes to project-based relationship management. This is mostly due to the fact that IRM has a bigger influence on project performance in terms of time, cost, and quality than ERM, and time, cost, and quality are three important objectives of project management. Client satisfaction, unlike time, cost, and quality performance, is more impacted by ERM than IRM. The greater the relevance of ERM to client happiness, the more effort project managers should put into ERM since customer satisfaction is as critical as meeting schedule, cost, and quality targets. Project managers' efforts for IRM help to form and grow project teams. Their ERM effort, on the other hand, adds to supply chain collaboration and external stakeholder involvement. Better internal and external settings provide additional opportunity to increase project performance and success.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

This research looked at the practices and challenges of project stakeholder management. In this study, Covid-19 Emergency Response Project was used as a case study. Despite the fact that the empirical inquiry was effective, the quantity of questionnaire responses was insufficient. Another limitation of this study might be its emphasis on Covid-19 response project. For future studies, more comprehensive data gathering is advised. Relationship management differs from project to project. Each project has its unique approach to relationship management. As a result, future research can use case study technique and perform within and cross case analysis.

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APPENDIX

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MBA PROGRAM IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Dear Respondents,

This is an academic research for the completion of MA in project management at St. Mary's University, the research is titled as "***PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES OF STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT: THE CASE OF COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROJECT***". The purpose of this study is to assess the stakeholder management practice and to identify the challenges faced throughout the process.

I respectfully request that you join in this project by completing the accompanying questionnaire. To maintain the paper's confidentiality, do not provide any identify of the respondent, including your name. I also genuinely request that you answer the questions honestly and return the completed surveys.

I'd like to thank you for your willingness and time; the information you submit will be used for academic purposes only and will be kept totally secret. If you have any questions or comments about this research topic, please contact me at:

Mobile: +251 93 226 5046

Regards,

Tedela Tefera

General Instructions

Please tick '√' for your answers in the given box. You can use a space provided, for answers that are not fully covered by the choices and to add additional information.

Part 1: Demographic information

1. Gender

- Male []
- Female []

2. Age

- Less than 25 years []
- 26-35 years []
- 36-45 years []
- Above 45 years []

3. Educational background

- Degree []
- Masters []
- PhD []

4. Position in the Project

- Project manager []
- Project Team leader []
- Project Team member []
- Other, please specify []

Part two: Stakeholder management practice

1. General stakeholder management Practice

No		Strongly disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	There was a standardized stakeholder management Practice in your project.					
2	The project is implemented as it is planned.					
3	A project stakeholder management can make difference in the performance of a project?					
4	Project Stakeholder Management were an important and priority activity for your project					
5	Formal stakeholders 'management (the interaction among each stakeholder) is sufficient enough to achieve the objectives					

2. Stakeholder Identification and planning

No		Strongly disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	All key stakeholders identified properly at the planning stage of the project.					
2	Stakeholder power and influence have been well defined					
3	Project team members have participated in identifying stakeholders					
4	Key stakeholders are integrated well in the project					
5	Key stakeholders share a common understanding in the project.					
6	There is a conflict resolution plan to Manage different competing stakeholder interest in the project					
7	There are any key stakeholders who are being missed in stakeholder identification					

3. Stakeholder engagement and analysis

No		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Stakeholder engagement is considered vital for project success and sustainability					
2	Engage all people internally/externally linked with your project as stakeholders					
3	Stakeholder engagement helps to manage relationships by aligning mutual interests, which mitigate project risk/uncertainty					
4	The project reduces the risk of each interaction by successfully involving stakeholders.					
5	Their expectation is understood, acknowledged and managed.					
6	Stakeholder analysis is useful to ensure the quality of the decision making processes					

4. Manage stakeholder Communication

No		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Communicating with stakeholders early at the project initiation stages.					
2	Keep stakeholders informed as the project progresses by sending updated information is an important approach of engaging with them					
3	communicate with stakeholders through formal meeting					
4	Stakeholders are updated on the project's progress on a regular basis.					
5	All stakeholders aware of project goal					

Part three: Stakeholder management challenge

What challenges are there in managing Stakeholders in Covid-19 Emergency Response Project?

No		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Effectively managing expectations of stakeholders is a challenge					
2	Building trust on a project by stakeholders is a challenge.					
3	Stakeholder power and influence have been well defined					
4	Creating empathy among stakeholders is a challenge in Stakeholders management.					
5	Identifying Stakeholders properly is challenge at the planning stage of the project.					
6	Lack of good communication is a challenge in stakeholders' management.					
7	Project stakeholders have conflicting interests					
8	Understanding the unique characteristics of each stakeholder group					

Part Four: Role of Project Managers

A. Internal Relationship Management

No		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Creating good communication channels with team members					
2	Developing trust between project manager and team members					
3	Encouraging open and effective communication between team members					
4	Fostering trust between different team members					
5	Listening carefully and responding actively to team members					

B. External Relationship Management

No		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Developing trust between own team and other project parties					
2	Facilitating open and effective communication between own team and other project parties					
3	Developing long-term business relationship with client					
4	Establishing a good dialogue with local social communities					
5	Developing long-term business relationships with suppliers					