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Stakeholders Management Practices And Project Success Of Construction Companies In South – South Nigeria

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ABSTRACT : This study explored how stakeholder management practices affect project success in South-South Nigeria, focusing on construction industry professionals such as project managers, site supervisors, and stakeholder management officers. A cross-sectional, quantitative approach was used, with a stratified random sample of 384 participants determined through Cochran's formula. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire that covered demographics, stakeholder management practices, and perceived project outcomes, rated on a Likert scale.To ensure quality, the instrument was validated through expert reviews and pilot testing, with reliability confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha (≥ 0.7). Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and multiple regression, using a 0.05 significance level.The results showed that stakeholder identification ($\beta = 0.267$), communication approach ($\beta = 0.184$), expectation management ($\beta = 0.205$), and stakeholder mapping ($\beta = 0.359$) all had significant positive impacts on project success. The study concluded that strong stakeholder management contributes meaningfully to delivering projects on time and within budget, while also improving decision-making and execution.Key recommendations include strengthening stakeholder identification processes, improving communication strategies, managing expectations effectively, and applying stakeholder mapping to guide engagement priorities.

Keywords: Stakeholder identification, Communication approach, Stakeholder expectation, Stakeholder mapping, Project success and Construction companies.

Background to the Study

The construction industry plays a significant role in driving economic development, especially in countries like Nigeria, where infrastructure is closely linked to improved living conditions and national growth. Despite its importance, construction projects are often complex and involve a wide range of stakeholders—project managers, site supervisors, contractors, clients, community members, and regulatory agencies. These stakeholders typically have diverse and sometimes conflicting interests, making effective stakeholder management a vital aspect of project delivery. One of the key responsibilities of project managers is to understand and balance these interests in order to reduce conflict, delays, and miscommunication. Failure to do so often leads to common challenges such as cost overruns, project delays, and substandard results. Research shows that stakeholder participation, when approached deliberately, allows for broader input during planning and execution, making projects more inclusive, sustainable, and aligned with user needs.

Stakeholder engagement is more than a one-time activity—it is an ongoing process of identifying, understanding, communicating with, and involving individuals who influence or are affected by a project. Scholars such as Klijn, Eshuis, and Braun (2020) have emphasized that the main aim of stakeholder participation is to minimize resistance and encourage cooperation. Similarly, Locatelli et al. (2017) argue that a lack of stakeholder involvement often results in poorly developed strategies and resistance during execution. Effective engagement fosters mutual understanding, promotes transparency, and builds long-term relationships that support smooth project implementation. Tools like stakeholder registers and mapping are crucial for organizing stakeholder data and prioritizing engagement based on influence and interest. Since it's not practical to give equal attention to all stakeholders, project managers must focus on key actors who have the power to either support or derail a project. Addressing concerns early, especially from high-priority stakeholders, helps avoid misunderstandings and ensures smoother collaboration.

This study explores the impact of stakeholder management practices on project success within construction companies in South-South Nigeria. It specifically examines four core areas: stakeholder identification, communication strategies, expectation management, and stakeholder mapping. By investigating how these practices influence project outcomes such as timely delivery, budget adherence, and overall effectiveness, the study highlights the importance of structured and proactive stakeholder engagement. In an environment where project failure rates remain high, building strong stakeholder relationships and aligning project goals with stakeholder expectations offer a pathway toward more successful project implementation and long-term value creation.

Statement of the Problem

In the construction industry, project success largely depends on effective stakeholder management, as stakeholders—including clients, contractors, regulators, and local communities—directly influence outcomes. In South-South Nigeria, many construction companies continue to face difficulties in this area, resulting in delays, cost overruns, and poor-quality delivery. Common issues include ineffective stakeholder identification, poor communication, mismatched expectations, and weak stakeholder mapping, all of which contribute to conflict, misalignment, and reduced stakeholder commitment. These challenges are heightened by the inherently complex nature of construction projects, which involve multiple parties with varied and sometimes conflicting interests. Without a structured approach to managing stakeholders, many companies are unable to meet critical project requirements or build the necessary support for smooth execution. Despite the importance of stakeholder engagement, there remains a gap in understanding how specific practices such as identification, communication, expectation management, and stakeholder mapping impact project success in the region. This study addresses that gap by examining the influence of stakeholder management practices on construction project outcomes in South-South Nigeria. The goal is to offer practical insights that construction firms can apply to strengthen stakeholder relationships, enhance collaboration, and improve overall project performance.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of stakeholders' management practices on project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria. The specific objectivesare to:

i. establish the effect of stakeholder identification on project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria.
ii. determine the effect of communication approach on project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria.
iii. investigate the effect of stakeholder expectation on project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria.
iv. establish the effect of stakeholder mapping on project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

$H0_1$: Stakeholder identification has no significant relationship with project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria.
$H0_2$: Communication approach has no significant relationship with project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria.
$H0_3$: Stakeholder expectation has no significant relationship with project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria.
$H0_4$: Stakeholder mapping has no significant relationship with project success of construction companies in South-South Nigeria.

Conceptual Review

Stakeholders' Management Practices

Stakeholder management practices refer to the structured methods construction companies use to identify, engage, and manage the interests and influence of individuals or groups involved in a project. These practices include stakeholder identification, communication, expectation management, and mapping, all aimed at ensuring project success. A stakeholder is anyone who can influence or be influenced by a project (Dooms, 2019), and their involvement is essential for reducing resistance, avoiding conflict, and enhancing project outcomes (Klijn et al., 2020). According to the Association for Project Managers (2019), stakeholder management involves the systematic planning and implementation of actions to engage with stakeholders effectively. Several studies, including those by Lehtinen et al. (2019) and Oliveira &Rabechini (2019), support the view that proper stakeholder analysis and engagement reduce disruptions and promote project performance, especially in complex sectors like construction.

Research shows that high stakeholder involvement contributes to better decision-making, improved planning, and sustainable project outcomes. For instance, Locatelli et al. (2017) found that stakeholder interaction positively impacts project sustainability, while Nederhand and Klijn (2019) identified benefits such as stronger support for organizational vision and enhanced recovery after setbacks. Stakeholders contribute useful ideas and perceptions, influencing outcomes either positively or negatively (Umugwaneza& Kule, 2016). Effective engagement also fosters loyalty, shared commitment, and long-term relationships (Martín et al., 2021). Furthermore, customizing stakeholder strategies based on complexity, uncertainty, and context—as discussed by Aaltonen and Kujala (2016)—helps project teams better navigate challenges. Overall, well-managed stakeholder engagement translates stakeholder needs into organizational goals, improving project efficiency and success.

Stakeholder Identification: Stakeholder identification is the process of recognizing all individuals, groups, or organizations with an interest in a construction project and understanding their roles, influence, and expectations. It is essential at the project's inception to ensure no key stakeholder is overlooked, as this can negatively affect outcomes (Khan et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2011). Effective

stakeholder classification—into internal and external categories—helps project managers manage interactions and align goals. Addressing potential conflicts and fostering collaboration are also vital, as cultural and behavioral differences among stakeholders can hinder progress if not properly managed (Peter, 2017; Cuppen et al., 2016).

Communication Approach: Communication approach in construction refers to the strategies and channels used to share information and engage stakeholders throughout a project. Effective communication fosters transparency, trust, and alignment, helping to manage expectations and improve outcomes (Oliveira &Rabechini, 2019; Chow &Leiringer, 2020). Early and consistent dialogue allows stakeholders to voice concerns and collaborate on solutions, building commitment even when interests differ (Lehtinen & Aaltonen, 2020). Relational stakeholder management—based on strong communication and trust—has been shown to enhance project performance, supporting timely and cost-effective delivery by promoting understanding, empathy, and active stakeholder involvement (Maddaloni & Davis, 2018; Yang & Shen, 2015).

Stakeholder Expectation: Stakeholder expectation refers to the specific needs, interests, and outcomes that stakeholders hope to achieve from a construction project. These expectations often vary based on stakeholders' backgrounds and affiliations, making alignment with project goals essential to avoid conflict and dissatisfaction (Ismayilova & Silvius, 2021; Malik et al., 2020). While it's not always possible to meet all expectations, understanding and managing them helps maintain productive relationships and improves project outcomes (Boiral& Heras-Saizarbitoria, 2020). Effective expectation management clarifies stakeholder needs, reduces misunderstandings, and enhances collaboration, ultimately increasing the chances of project success (Laura, 2015; Ika & Donnelly, 2017).

Stakeholder Mapping: Stakeholder mapping involves identifying, categorizing, and prioritizing individuals or groups based on their influence, interest, and impact on a project. It helps construction firms focus on key stakeholders, tailor engagement strategies, and improve communication. Methods like the Power/Interest Grid and Salience Model aid in visualizing stakeholder roles and planning effective involvement. Mapping also supports risk management and change initiatives by anticipating concerns and minimizing resistance. Widely used in project management, CSR, and policy development, stakeholder mapping ensures informed decision-making, fosters collaboration, and aligns organizational actions with stakeholder expectations for more sustainable and successful outcomes.

Project success

Project success in developing economies is shaped by local challenges like limited infrastructure, political instability, and financial constraints. While timely completion and budget adherence remain low—e.g., only 40–55% of projects in Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Kenya meet deadlines or budgets—stakeholder satisfaction often remains relatively high, ranging from 65% to 90%. Studies from countries like India, Brazil, Ghana, and South Africa show similar trends: delays and budget overruns are common, but stakeholder engagement and satisfaction show resilience, suggesting strong adaptability in project management. For instance, Kenya and Ghana report satisfaction rates of 80% despite modest on-time completion. These findings point to a need for context-specific strategies focused on improving financial management, infrastructure planning, and governance to boost overall project outcomes while maintaining or enhancing stakeholder trust and participation.

ConstructionCompaniesinSouth-SouthNigeria

South-South Nigeria hosts several leading construction companies that play a vital role in the region's infrastructural development and economic growth. Among them, Julius Berger Nigeria Plc is widely recognized for its expertise in large-scale engineering projects, such as the construction of the East-West Road, which links key states including Rivers, Bayelsa, and Delta. The company's adherence to international standards and use of advanced technology have made it a trusted name in both government and private-sector contracts. Setraco Nigeria Limited also maintains a strong presence in the region, especially in civil engineering works. Its projects, such as the Ogbia-Nembe Road in Bayelsa State, have helped bridge rural-urban divides and improved accessibility for remote communities. Similarly, Reynolds Construction Company (RCC) is known for extensive work in road development and rehabilitation, including the dualization of the Warri-Benin Road, which enhances transport and commerce across state borders.

Other major players include Dantata&Sawoe Construction Company Nigeria Ltd, which is known for executing large public infrastructure projects with a focus on quality and durability. The company's ability to manage complex engineering tasks makes it an important contributor to state-led development initiatives. China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) brings international expertise to the South-South region, engaging in road and railway construction that aligns global standards with local needs. Monier Construction Company (MCC), an indigenous firm, is also active in both private and public sectors. MCC has made significant contributions to residential and commercial development, particularly in Port Harcourt, and is noted for its commitment

to sustainable building practices. Collectively, these companies form the backbone of infrastructure delivery in South-South Nigeria, influencing not only physical development but also regional economic progress.

Theoretical Review

Theory of Stakeholder Identification

Building on stakeholder identification typologies, Inuwa and Kunya (2015) introduced a theory of stakeholder salience, emphasizing a dynamic model that accounts for situational uniqueness and managerial perception in prioritizing stakeholder relationships. Peng, Cheng, and Liwen (2017) further explain how this typology enables predictions about managerial behavior toward different stakeholder classes and how stakeholder roles can shift over time, impacting project management. John, Faremi, and Lowal (2016) clarify that project managers respond to certain stakeholders not out of obligation but due to strategic or perceptual factors, reinforcing the importance of understanding stakeholder types and responses. Koops et al. (2016) argue that salience involves more than identification, as it requires accounting for the complexities in stakeholder dynamics. Davis (2014) adds that stakeholder salience is defined by three key attributes: power, legitimacy, and urgency. Stakeholders possessing one or more of these attributes are likely to gain managerial attention. This salience theory creates a structured way to evaluate stakeholders, supporting the view that not all stakeholders require equal attention. It also underpins the stakeholder identification process by addressing which groups deserve managerial focus, and under what circumstances, thereby strengthening stakeholder theory in project management.

The Salience Model

Ortega, Hernandez, Marti, and Vallejo-Martos (2019) explain in their stakeholder salience model that stakeholder satisfaction is closely tied to how involved they are in a project. They categorize stakeholders into distinct groups, each requiring specific management strategies. "Dormant" stakeholders typically remain silent unless major issues arise; they can be kept satisfied with timely updates and project dashboards without overwhelming communication. "Demanding" stakeholders often believe their issues are urgent, though they lack power or legitimacy; assigning an assistant to handle their concerns and giving them more access to project information can help manage them without draining resources. "Discretionary" stakeholders may also require more attention and benefit from increased transparency and team interaction, which could resolve issues before reaching the project manager. It's important to review the communication plan to ensure they receive necessary reports. Importantly, not all individuals are true stakeholders—time and energy spent on "non-stakeholders" will have no meaningful impact on the project. By understanding and responding appropriately to each stakeholder type, project managers can maintain stakeholder satisfaction and avoid unnecessary distractions that might derail progress (Ortega et al., 2019).

Empirical Review

Haar (2024) explored how stakeholder engagement strategies influence project success in Cameroon using a desk research approach, which relies on secondary data for its cost-effectiveness. The study emphasized the importance of collaboration, trust, and aligning with stakeholder expectations. It found that effective communication and cultural awareness significantly enhance stakeholder relationships. Challenges like limited resources and bureaucratic delays hinder engagement, but inclusive methods, training programs, and strong accountability structures can improve outcomes and contribute to project success.

Fajri, Wahyuni, and Saputra (2024) studied stakeholder roles in West Sumatra's renewable energy development, motivated by the low contribution of renewables in 2021. Using the Delphi method and interviews, they identified four highly influential stakeholders: the Ministry of Energy, local energy agencies, PLN, and Pertamina. The study highlighted an imbalance in stakeholder influence and suggested increasing transparency, collaboration, and engagement to overcome this gap and encourage progress toward national energy goals.

Haile and Mekonnen (2024) investigated stakeholder engagement in curriculum implementation at Ethiopian Defense University using a mixed-method design. Surveys and interviews revealed that instructors and students found stakeholder involvement beneficial for improving learning outcomes. The study emphasized the importance of partnerships, stakeholder motivation, and decision-making in education. Strong engagement was positively linked to effective curriculum execution, encouraging more interactive and inclusive educational strategies.

Musyoka, Shitseswa, and Wanjere (2023) analyzed how stakeholder participation in planning affected Kenyan alcohol manufacturing firms' performance from 2017 to 2021. Using a descriptive cross-sectional design and statistical analysis, they found that stakeholder involvement significantly boosted organizational performance. The study recommended routine stakeholder

engagement by management to sustain and enhance firm success, supporting the importance of inclusive planning in driving performance.

Mehdi, Zalfaqar, and Asad (2023) assessed external stakeholder engagement (ESE) strategies in Pakistan's IT sector through a mixed-method study combining literature reviews and interviews. Their findings showed a strong link between effective stakeholder engagement and project success. They recommended a participatory, collaborative approach and highlighted the importance of communication strategies tailored to organizational and local cultural contexts to improve external stakeholder relations.

Gladstone and Irechukwu (2023) examined the effect of stakeholder management on project performance in Rwanda's Kivu Watt Project using a mixed-method approach. Findings showed a high positive correlation between stakeholder management and performance, especially in areas like team management and community participation. The study concluded that stakeholder involvement significantly enhances satisfaction and recommended improved working conditions and community engagement to boost overall project outcomes.

Ndekile, Ugwuanyi, and Okoh (2023) studied strategic stakeholder engagement at Habrick Architecture in Nigeria, focusing on stakeholder expectations and identification. Using descriptive design and regression analysis, they found that stakeholder participation significantly influences successful project delivery. The study emphasized the value of identifying stakeholder roles early and actively involving them throughout project implementation to improve execution and results.

Samwel, Nyamiaka, Wamaitha, and Waichigo (2023) investigated the impact of stakeholder management on public project success in Kenya. Their cross-sectional survey of government workers found that stakeholder analysis and expectation management played key roles in achieving project success. The study concluded that effective identification and involvement of stakeholders positively affect public projects and recommended strengthening stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle.

Alamoudi, Abidoye, and Lam (2022) analyzed the relationship between stakeholder management measures and citizen participation in Smart Sustainable Cities (SSC). Using regression analysis, they found strong correlations between stakeholder collaboration, regulation, legitimacy, and citizen engagement. The study identified these factors as essential for boosting citizen involvement and proposed them as strategic tools for increasing public participation in SSC initiatives.

Rabechini, Abarca, Salcedo, Saldaña, and Paiva (2022) examined the role of stakeholder management and project management offices (PMOs) in Peru. Through logistic regression analysis of responses from project professionals, they found that effective stakeholder management improves time and cost outcomes. The study also confirmed that PMOs enhance this effect, reinforcing the idea that both practices are essential for project success.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study used a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design to collect and analyze numerical data, aiming to assess how stakeholder management practices relate to project success in construction companies (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Population of the Study

The study focused on stakeholders from South-South Nigerian construction firms, including community leaders, government agencies, project managers, site supervisors, and stakeholder officers, all directly involved in managing stakeholder interactions—an essential factor for successful, timely, and cost-effective project delivery in the region.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A stratified random sampling method was used to represent senior managers, mid-level supervisors, and stakeholder officers. A sample size of 384, calculated using Cochran's (1977) formula, ensured adequate representation and statistical power for detecting significant relationships in this quantitative study.

Method of Data Collection

A structured survey questionnaire was used to gather data on four stakeholder management practices and their impact on project success. Distributed across construction firms in South-South Nigeria, the survey enabled efficient data collection from a broad and geographically diverse group of respondents.

Instrument for Data Collection

The study used a structured questionnaire with sections on demographics, stakeholder management practices, and project success. Items were close-ended and rated on a 5-point Likert scale to assess views on stakeholder identification, communication, expectation management, and mapping in relation to project timelines, budgets, and outcomes.

Reliability of the Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of Likert-scale items, with a reliability threshold set at 0.7 or higher. A pilot study was also conducted to confirm the instrument's reliability by evaluating the consistency of responses across participants.

Method of Data Analysis

The study used both descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as ratios, summarized respondents' demographic data and perceptions of stakeholder management practices. Multiple regression analysis tested the effect of stakeholder identification, communication, expectations, and mapping on project success. This analysis determined the statistical significance and strength of each relationship using p-values and regression coefficients. A 0.05 significance level was applied to evaluate the hypotheses and identify which stakeholder management practices had a meaningful impact on the success of construction projects in South-South Nigeria.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Response rate

S/N	Description	Frequency	Percentages
1	Copies of questionnaire administered	384	100
2	Questionnaire returned and properly filled	337	88

Source: Field Survey 2024

A total of 384 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, 337 copies of the questionnaire were returned and properly filled. Therefore, 88% of the response rate were useable.

Table 2: Analysis of Respondents Profile

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender:		
	Male	259	77
	Female	78	23
	Total	337	100
2	Age Range:		
	Below 30 years	85	25
	31-40 years	185	55
	41years and above	67	20
	Total	337	100
3	Marital Status:		
	Single	115	34
	Married	222	66
	Total	337	100
4	Educational Qualification		
	OND/NCE	135	40
	HND/B.Sc	185	55
	Postgraduate	17	5
	Total	337	100
5	Years of Job Experience		
	Below 5years	108	32
	5-10years	152	45
	11 years and above	77	23
	Total	337	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 2 presents respondents' background characteristics. Males made up 77% of the sample, while females accounted for 23%. In terms of age, 25% were under 30, 55% were aged 31–40, and 20% were over 41. Marital status showed 34% single and 66% married. Educationally, 40% held OND/NCE, 55% had HND/B.Sc, and 5% held postgraduate degrees. Regarding work experience, 32% had less than 5 years, 45% had 5–10 years, and 23% had over 11 years of experience.

Table 3: Effect of stakeholder management practices on project success

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-.914	1.007		-.908	.364
	Stakeholder identification	.275	.042	.267	6.508	.000
	Communication approach	.203	.047	.184	4.324	.000
	Stakeholder expectation	.224	.045	.205	4.925	.000
	Stakeholder mapping	.342	.041	.359	8.374	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Project success

Table 3 shows that stakeholder identification (β = 0.267), communication approach (β = 0.184), stakeholder expectation (β = 0.205), and stakeholder mapping (β = 0.359) each have a positive and significant effect on project success (P < 0.05). The regression equation predicting project success (PS) is: PS = -0.914 + 0.275(SI) + 0.203(CA) + 0.224(SE) + 0.342(SM).

Table 4 Analysis of Variance

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	325.170	4	81.293	102.559	.000[b]
	Residual	263.156	332	.793		
	Total	588.326	336			

a. Dependent Variable: Project success

b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder mapping , Stakeholder identification , Stakeholder expectation , Communication approach

The *F*-ratio in table 4 test whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. The table showed that the dimensions of stakeholder management practice significantly predict project success, F =102.559, $p = 0.000$< 0.05. This means that the regression model is a good fit and significant for the study.

Table 5 Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.743[a]	.553	.547	.890

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder mapping, Stakeholder identification, Stakeholder expectation, Communication approach

Table 5 indicates that the dimensions of stakeholder management practices explained 55% of the variation in project success, as shown by an Adjusted R Square value of 0.547. This suggests that over half of the changes in project success can be attributed to stakeholder identification, communication, expectation management, and mapping.

Stakeholder Identification

Table 3 shows that stakeholder identification had a significant positive effect on project success (β = 0.267, P < 0.05). This supports hypothesis one, confirming a strong relationship between stakeholder identification and project success in South-South Nigeria.

Identifying stakeholders early allows project managers to understand their needs, interests, and influence, which enhances planning and reduces conflict (Khan et al., 2017; Aaltonen et al., 2008). Accurate stakeholder identification ensures timely engagement, helping to manage expectations and build support, especially in dynamic project environments.

Communication Approach

Table 3 shows that the communication approach had a positive effect on project success ($\beta = 0.184$, $P < 0.05$), confirming hypothesis two. In construction firms in South-South Nigeria, effective communication significantly improves project outcomes ($P = 0.000 < 0.05$). Transparent, empathetic communication fosters collaboration, trust, and stakeholder engagement (Lehtinen & Aaltonen, 2020; Oliveira &Rabechini, 2019). When stakeholders feel heard and informed, project teams can better manage expectations and resolve issues promptly. Strong communication strategies help create a cooperative environment, which supports smoother project implementation and increases the likelihood of achieving project goals.

Stakeholder Expectation

Table 3 shows that stakeholder expectation had a positive effect on project success ($\beta = 0.205$, $P < 0.05$), supporting hypothesis three. In South-South Nigeria's construction sector, managing stakeholder expectations significantly improves project outcomes ($P = 0.000 < 0.05$). Understanding diverse stakeholder needs and aligning them with project goals enhances success (Ismayilova & Silvius, 2021; Boiral& Heras-Saizarbitoria, 2020). Projects that ignore expectations often fail (Laura, 2015). Clearly defined expectations help reduce dissatisfaction, build trust, and encourage stakeholder support. Proactively managing expectations also minimizes delays and conflict, ensuring smoother execution throughout the project lifecycle.

Stakeholder Mapping

Table 3 indicates that stakeholder mapping positively influenced project success ($\beta = 0.359$, $P < 0.05$), with hypothesis four confirming a significant relationship ($P = 0.000 < 0.05$) in South-South Nigeria's construction sector. Stakeholder mapping helps project managers identify and prioritize stakeholders based on influence, interest, and impact (Martín, Reinhardt, & Gurtner, 2021). This process supports targeted engagement, ensuring key stakeholders are effectively involved. By aligning strategies with stakeholder relevance, project teams can manage expectations more efficiently, reduce conflict, and strengthen support—factors essential for achieving successful outcomes and long-term project sustainability.

Conclusion

The study revealed that stakeholder management practices, including stakeholder identification, communication approach, stakeholder expectation management, and stakeholder mapping, all have significant positive effects on the success of construction projects in South-South Nigeria. These findings underscore the importance of actively managing stakeholder relationships to ensure that projects are completed on time, within budget, and to the satisfaction of all parties involved. Effective stakeholder management contributes to better decision-making, smoother project execution, and a higher likelihood of project success.

Recommendations

i. Construction companies should invest in robust stakeholder identification processes at the early stages of the project. This will enable project managers to engage the right stakeholders and mitigate potential risks associated with overlooked stakeholders.

ii. Project teams should adopt clear and consistent communication strategies that facilitate open dialogue with stakeholders. Regular updates, transparent reporting, and feedback loops should be established to keep stakeholders informed and engaged throughout the project lifecycle.

iii. Construction companies should develop tools and frameworks for managing stakeholder expectations. This could involve early meetings to clarify expectations, regular status reports, and ongoing dialogue to ensure that expectations remain aligned with project realities.

iv. Project managers should incorporate stakeholder mapping tools to assess stakeholder influence and prioritize engagement efforts. This will allow for a more strategic approach to managing relationships with key stakeholders and ensuring their active participation in the project.

v.

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