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ASSESSMENT OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES AND THE PROJECT PERFORMANCE OF PRIME CEMENT LTD, MUSANZE DISTRICT, RWANDA.

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ABSTRACT

Project performance depends on a number of factors. Stakeholder engagement practices at different stages of the project life cycle might have effects to the performance of the project. This study aimed to assess stakeholder engagement practices on the project performance of Prime Cement Ltd located in Musanze District, Rwanda. The study's aim was reached through the assessment of the relationships between stakeholder engagement practices and the four performance parameters namely; project quality, cost efficiency, timeliness and profitability. The research methods that adopted in this study were quantitative and qualitative with descriptive research design. The target population for this study includes employees of Prime Cement Ltd and its stakeholders including employees, contractors, customers, suppliers, government officials. Stratified random sampling technique was employed in order to determine the sample size. Both primary and secondary data were gathered. Questionnaire and interviews were used as instruments for data collection. Data was analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Simple descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were determined to analyze the findings. The regression analysis was used to describe correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The research instrument reliability test showed a Cronbach Alpha of 0.862. The findings of the study confirmed that there is a moderate negative correlation between Stakeholder engagement practices in project identification and project performance (project quality) as represented by Pearson coefficient ($r = -.412$, $n = 223$, $p = 0.01$). The findings also showed that there is a strong positive correlation between Stakeholder engagement practices in project planning and project performance (project profitability) as evidenced by ($r = .705$, $n = 223$, $p = 0.01$). The findings indicated that there is a strong positive correlation between Stakeholder engagement practices in project implementation and project performance (project completion time) as represented by ($r = .720$, $n = 223$, $p = 0.01$). It was also noticed that there is a strong positive correlation between Stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and project performance (cost efficiency) as represented by ($r = .580$, $n = 223$, $p = 0.01$). The study recommends that stakeholders should be effectively engaged at all project stages to enhance project performance.

Key words: Project, Project implementation, Project Monitoring , Project performance, Project planning and Stakeholder engagement.

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INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Stakeholder engagement has the possibility of securing a wide range of benefits to any organization, from protecting the organization's license to operate to gathering information on improved market or product performance. However, if an engagement process is poorly managed, it has the potential to undermine stakeholder relations resulting in mistrust and tension, as well as making the possibilities for future successful relations much more difficult (Jeffrey, 2009).

Early stakeholder engagement in New Zealand construction projects was identified to be the main contributor of the efficiency and effectiveness in project performance (Einur, *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, Heravi (2015) in Australia highlighted that contractor involvement tends to be low just when the project starts thus resulting into low performance.

Munns and Bjeirmi (2016) highlight some of the common challenges faced by projects in Africa. These include dissatisfaction and disharmony among stakeholders, lack of an adequate stakeholder consultation system, archaic projects created without clear and purposeful direction/ goals, failure to meet established timelines and costs, poor staff recruitment and training, the lack of proper monitoring and evaluation structures, inability to respond effectively to unexpected crises, incompetent, undertrained project managers and leaders who are politically driven, unchecked power and politics within organizations, general lack of a sense of urgency and value of time and conflicts.

In Uganda, development efforts to engage local stakeholders often consisted of infrequent information gatherings held at schools or district headquarters. While commendable, such efforts are insufficient (Munns & Bjeirmi, 2016). Local stakeholder involvement is most useful when arranged around the schedules and meeting norms of the hardest working and poorest community members. A survey on ecosystem management in Sri Lanka and India (Irvin & John, 2015) found that the involvement of key stakeholders is the most important factor in determining project outcomes.

In Rwanda, Nzayirambaho, (2015) conducted a study on stakeholders' involvement and success of health projects in Kirehe District. He found that inadequate planning, communication and risk management result from ineffective stakeholders' involvement and affect the success of the project. Mushimiyimana, (2014) studied stakeholders' involvement and project success. The findings showed that stakeholders know about their involvement and their roles in making a project successfully thought their involvement is still critical. She concluded that stakeholders' involvement contributes more in project success.

Problem statement

For every project, either small or large, there is always a need of stakeholder engagement, being public or community members who are impacted or to be impacted by the project. Yet, many organizations do not put enough emphasize on how to effectively engage with these groups in their projects to ensure better performance.

Engaging stakeholders at a very early stage in the project is key to successful outcomes. If project stakeholders are not committed to the project, they may become a source of risk within the project (Windsor, 2021).

A large number of projects all over the world failed not because the project managers were not skilled enough and experienced or necessary resources were not ready but because stakeholders were not effectively engaged at the right time and stage of the project life cycle. This was supported by Rahman and Alzubi (2015) who pointed out that, ineffective stakeholder engagement significantly contributed to construction projects cost overruns which resulted into project failure.

The success of any project derives its roots from the combined or joint efforts from within the organization and from the project stakeholders. According to Mark (2012), many projects fail because there are many problems or unresolved issues due to a lack of stakeholders' involvement in the beginning phases of the project planning (in many cases, the individuals involved in the initial planning of a project neglect to involve key stakeholders or users and this leads to gaps or problems in the project plans and quality issues with the subsequent implementation).

Some of the project managers do not know the effects of poor or lack of stakeholders' engagement and lack of effective communication on the project performance. Mark & Naresh (2008) added that poor communication and lack of stakeholder involvement are recipes for misunderstanding, distrust and a lack of support and ownership by all those most affected by the project. In this context, stakeholder engagement activities imply activities where the organization involves a selected group of individuals, groups, or representatives of those individuals and groups to work directly on specific issues, but many organizations fail, which affects the realization of their projects.

In Rwanda, also some of the projects especially those initiated and executed by Non- governmental organizations (NGOs) fail because of ineffective considerations of stakeholders' involvement in the project life cycle (Mushimiyimana, 2014). That is the reason why this study aimed to assess the stakeholder engagement practices and the project performance of Prime Cement Ltd, Rwanda.

Justification

The research findings enabled the researcher to gain academic reward/degree through the fulfillment of my partial academic requirements for the Degree of master of Project Management at University of Kigali. The study also enabled the researcher to reinforce knowledge and skills in research.

The study findings will enable the management of Prime Cement Ltd to effectively engage stakeholders at all project stages for enhancing the performance of its projects. The findings would also be an effective way of reducing the frequent incidences of failures in projects resulting from the lack of stakeholders' involvement.

The study results will improve the capacity and responses of management and stakeholders in general, leading to the improvement in performance of their projects. Research knowledge will also contribute to project managers as well as heads of project to have a better understanding on the role that diverse stakeholder engagement practices play and how they can be integrated into the project life cycle for enhancing project performance.

With the study findings, recommendation as well as the tools and method that will be used to gather data in this study can help researchers to identify potential areas for further research and serve as point of reference in the field of project management.

Research objectives

The main purpose of this study was to assess stakeholder engagement practices and the project performance in Prime Cement Ltd.

The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

- i. To establish the influence of project identification on project quality at Prime Cement Ltd.
- ii. To determine the effect of project designing and planning on project profitability at Prime Cement Ltd.
- iii. To examine the influence of project implementation on project timeliness at Prime Cement Ltd.
- iv. To establish the effect of project monitoring and evaluation on cost efficiency at Prime Cement Ltd.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual review

Stakeholder engagement

Projects are very sensitive to the decisions and actions of all those involved (Aaltonen, 2010). Almost all projects operate in a context in which the relevant stakeholders play a key role in fulfilling the tasks (Hammad, 2013). Project stakeholders are any individual, organization or group that influences, is affected by, or could be affected by a decision, activity or outcome of a project (Project Management Institute, 2014).

Project identification

Project identification is a process whereby individual projects or groups of projects are evaluated and then selected to meet organizational goals (Meredith and Mantel, 2003). Projects should be linked to the right goals and address at least one of the key concerns of the stakeholders, e.g. Growth acceleration, cost reduction, social impact or cash flow improvement. (Kumar, et al., 2007).

Project Planning

Project planning is widely recognized as an important contributor to project performance. According to Gyorkos (2011), planning is a process of decision-making, derived before execution, to shape a desired future with ways of implementation, where in planning questions like what, how, by whom, with what and when are answered. The purpose of planning is to support organizational management in fulfilling its primary functions of directing and controlling the implementation of project components and in coordinating and communicating with project stakeholders (Kelly and Magongo, 2014).

Project Implementation

The essential measure of project implementation is that it has delivered a successful product/service for the organization and other stakeholders. Successful project implementation requires managing the project within the approved scope, timeline, budget and quality (Houston, 2008). Therefore, the measure of project implementation success includes that the project requirements and deliverables are positively met and delivered within the expected time in terms of improved revenue or reduced costs. Successful projects also contribute to the long-term success of the company in terms of competitive advantages; improving the company's reputation; increasing market share; along with attaining certain earnings as well as profits (Al-Tmeemy, 2011).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation practices encompass various aspects such as design and planning, capacity building and information dissemination, budgeting, organization, monitoring and control of activities involved in a project, as well as involving all parties to achieve the project's goals within a set time to achieve (Turner, 2016). According to Adeyemi (2013), all stakeholders appreciate the idea of project implementation due to an organized flow of project control and it is the best practice to get reliable project results during the implementation of a new project. Monitoring and evaluation practices are powerful tools that could enhance an organization's ability to perform better.

Project performance

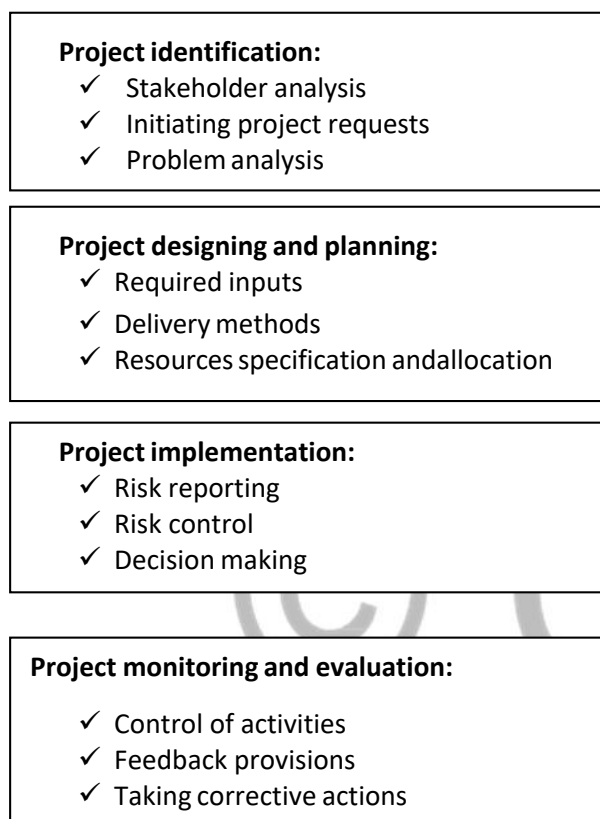
Project performance ensures that companies maximize their profitability, minimize the consequences of risky and uncertain events in terms of achieving project goals, and take advantage of the chances of risky events occurring (Kululanga, 2010). Quality is the set of properties that a product needs in order to meet the desired need and fulfill the purpose. Project performance is evaluated differently by different project stakeholders based on their expectations of actual quality, cost, and time. Project performance can be measured by the qualitative value that the project has to the implementing organization, or quantitatively by the earned value systems for utility and large government projects (Kelbessa, 2016).

Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework represents the researcher’s synthesis of literature on how to explain a phenomenon. The conceptual framework links the independent variables to dependent variable to indicate the relationship between stakeholder engagement practices and the project performance. The independent variables in the study conceptual framework will be stakeholder engagement practices in project planning, implementation and monitoring while project performance is the dependent variable.

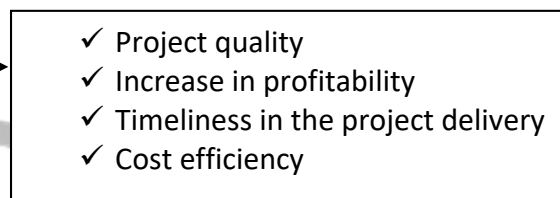
Independent variables

Stakeholder engagement practices



Dependent variable

Project performance



Source: Researcher’s Conceptualization, 2022

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Figure 1 above indicates the linkage between independent variables which are project identification, planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation and the dependent variable which is the project performance. It also shows the sub-variables under both independent and dependent variables under study.

Theoretical Review

The study was supported by the following theories, namely: stakeholder theory, agency theory, theory of change and resource dependency theory.

Stakeholder Theory

The idea of stakeholder maximization developed through Freeman's Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach, which became the theoretical basis for further developments. Stakeholder theory is a theory of organizational management and ethics (Phillips, Freeman & Wicks, 2003). It defies the free market norm of shareholder capitalization and encourages stakeholder maximization.

For many decades, economists have defined a company's purpose as a vehicle for shareholder capitalization, also known as a legal corporate purpose. Stakeholder researcher Stout (2012) noted that this is a misinterpretation, as the law did not define a company's purpose as capitalizing on shareholders; Law simply says to do what is lawful. It can also reflect the purpose of a project as a tool set up to provide benefits to its stakeholders, which includes the project owner.

This theory was applicable to this current study that aimed to assess stakeholder engagement and the project performance at Prime cement Ltd.

Theory of Change

Unlike the stakeholder theory, the theory of change is considered suitable for understanding the present study. According to Stein (2012), theory of change emerged in the United States in the context of improving community initiative evaluation theory and practice of community initiatives. Connell et al. (2009) stated that the theory of change is a specific type of methodology for planning, participation and evaluation used in the philanthropic, non-profit and government sectors to promote social change. The theory defines long-term goals and then maps backwards to identify the necessary conditions for change. The theory of change explains the process of change by outlining causal in an initiative that is shorter term, immediate of longer-term outcomes.

The theory of change lends itself in the context of this study to identify the methodology to be used by the project managers in involving stakeholders in all phases of project life cycle management in order to influence the completion of urban road transport infrastructure projects. The theory of change contextualized in the present study provides an understanding of stakeholder management during project implementation and innovative approaches that project managers can take to reduce resistance to change.

Agency Theory

Agency theory is based on a set of assumptions about the man. The most widely held view is that Agency theory is based on the human economic model (Shapiro, 2015). Although the influence of principal-agent theory cannot be denied (Asher, Mahoney & Mahoney, 2015), recent studies of the practical and empirical nature and impact of positive-agent theory on stakeholders are of great concern. This theory is widespread in business and economics studies. It is also known as the stewardship theory. According to the theory, stewards of discretionary assets are expected to act in the best interests of those who have appointed or elected them (Components). They are the agents while the constituent is the principal. This implies that the whole project should be carried out in a way that benefits the constituents.

This theory is relevant to project management and indeed emphasizes the need to consider stakeholder interests in all project management decisions. Agency theory was therefore applicable in this study of stakeholder engagement practices and the project performance of Prime cement Ltd.

Resource Dependency Theory

Resource dependency theory pointed out that organizations do not operate independently as they depend on other actors in the business environment (Pfeiffer and Salancik, 1978). This trust gives the external factors an edge in controlling how the organization conducts its operations. In resource dependency theory, stakeholders who own the resources needed by the firm are considered valuable. However, capacity does not only reflect stakeholder importance. Organizational theories see legitimate stakeholders as the ones who really matter. The external environment needs to be clearly assessed in line with stakeholder expectations and incorporated into corporate goals. In dealing with its stakeholders, a company must recognize that not all stakeholder needs are met. Some decisions create conflicts of interest and others may align the interests of a particular stakeholder group (Phillips, 2013).

This theory was adopted in this study because it helped to assess the role played by suppliers on project performance as key stakeholder of Prime Cement Ltd.

Empirical review

From literature reviewed, it is clear that the success of every project depends on effective engagement of both internal and external stakeholders. In this regard, past and current empirical studies have been reviewed with the aim of assessing the effects of stakeholder engagement practices and the project performance.

Project identification and Project Performance

According to Mulwa (2008), needs assessment is important for developing the capacity of stakeholders. Any project begins with needs assessment. When they do this together, the shareholders can share the vision and work to make it a reality. Sessions follow in which the identified problems are critically discussed and factually analyzed. This aims to clearly understand the problem and assess the magnitude of the problems. Scope and clarity of the problem and cause and effect relationships are identified in this phase. Resources that are available to meet the demand are also identified. During this phase, stakeholders will identify a number of issues, but should be able to prioritize and rank them from most urgent to least urgent. Similarly, beneficiaries should assess needs by identifying cause-effect relationships and considering their resource endowment (Mulwa, 2008).

Project Planning and project performance

Billie (2014) emphasized stakeholder involvement in the project planning phase. He found that the benefits of involving stakeholders in the planning process include a reduction in distrust of the project process or outcome, an increase in commitment to the project goals and processes, and increased credibility of the project outcome, identifying the project goal, specifying the required Project resources and their allocation and the determination of the methods to be used to deliver the project end product, to respond to critical events and to evaluate activities and results. Benefits of involving stakeholders in the planning process include a reduction in distrust of the project process or outcome, increased engagement with the project goals and processes, and increased credibility of the project outcome.

Project implementation and project performance

According to Jeffery (2009), organizations can no longer choose whether or not to engage with stakeholders. The only decision they have to make is when and how to engage successfully. Stakeholder engagement is based on the idea that those groups that can influence or are affected by the achievements of an organization's purpose should be given opportunities to comment and participate in the development of decisions that affect them. Involving stakeholders in project implementation is an important exercise in project management. The implementation of the project helps coordinate people and other resources to carry out the plan. According to Duncan (1996), stakeholder involvement in project implementation is necessary to translate a project's planned goals and policies into well-organized activities, the allocation of resources, the efficient use of those resources, and the efficient and effective completion of specific tasks in a well-coordinated team and resources to achieve project goals.

Project review (monitoring and evaluation) and project performance

The effects of stakeholder engagement are also reflected on the performance of projects. According to Madeeha & Imran (2014), stakeholder engagement in the monitoring of the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan pipeline project by national NGOs was a recommendation that arose during the construction phase of the project. BTC, with the support of IFC and EBRD, has taken up this recommendation, believing that constructive and well-informed NGO monitoring is useful for the company as it enhanced the performance of the project, appropriate monitoring measures and evaluation exercises further the

objective of promoting participatory development. He goes on to say that an effective way for stakeholders to contribute to the achievement of program or project goals is to be directly engage in the monitoring and evaluation process, in the formulation of critical questions, and in the collection and analysis of data. This allows them to participate directly in assessing the relevance, performance and success of the program or project and making recommendations to improve the quality of current and future interventions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of research design, target population, sampling design, research methods/instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Research Design

This study was explanatory research that aimed to examine the relationship between stakeholder engagement practices and the project performance. It employed descriptive research design with quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Target Population

A population is defined as an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The target population for this study includes employees of Prime Cement Ltd and its stakeholders including employees, contractors, customers, suppliers, government officials, etc.

Table 1 : Target population

S/N	Category	Number
1	Employees	200
2	Contractors	10
3	Customers	250
4	Suppliers	20
5	Government officials	20
	Total population	500

Source: Primary data, 2022

Sample Size and sampling technique

The sample size for this study was determined using Slovin's formula, which is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: N= Population size, n= Sample size, e= Margin of error with 95% confidence interval. Using the above-mentioned formula, the sample size became 223 respondents as shown in the table below.

Table 2 : Sample size

S/N	Category	Number
1	Employees	100
2	Contractors	2
3	Customers	110
4	Suppliers	3
5	Government officials	8
	Total sample size	223

Source: Primary data, 2022

Stratified random sampling technique was employed in order to determine both the sample size and respondents who represented the entire population. Kombo and Tromp (2013) define stratified sampling as involving segmenting a population into subgroups that are homogenous in nature through the selection of a simple random sample from each group.

Simple random sampling technique was used after identifying strata of the target population in order to ensure equal chance of respondents' selection.

Data Collection Tools

The research method for this study was a mixed method which involves both quantitative and qualitative data. Among the research instruments that were used in gathering data, a questionnaire and interviews were developed to conduct a study.

The questionnaire design was guided by the theories, conceptual framework and the research questions. Tull and Hawkins (1990) objective-based and Sekaran and Bougie (2010) closed questions approach were also be adopted. For the purpose of measurement, the study used five- point liker-type scale questions to measure variables. According to Krieg (1999), the five-point liker-type scale provides less bias in mean, variance, covariance, correlation coefficient and there liability of scores.

A number of steps were performed to ensure quality questionnaire. The steps included the review of literature, construct of the questionnaire, review of the questionnaire by the expert/supervisor, and finally conducting reliability test to ensure validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Reliability test prior to the distribution of the questionnaire to respondents was done for internal reliability.

The researcher conducted personal interviews. The aims of this interview was to obtain explanations from respondents and the information that may not be obtained from questionnaires. An interview guide containing a set of questions directed to answer the research questions were prepared which acted as a guide during the interview process. Therefore, the structured interviews are useful instrument in data collection because it allows researcher to seek for further clarification of the answer given by the interviewees

Documentation is the method that aims at the analysis of the existing documents such as books, journals, reports, dissertations of other researchers on related topics, reading materials, and other published documents. This involves identification of written or electronic documentations (reports, journals, etc.) containing information on issues to be explored and researchers review documents and identify relevant information (Charles Lusthaus, 1999). The researcher reviewed various documents regarding stakeholder engagement practices and project performance.

Observation involves the physical presence of the researcher on a field to observe and record events both verbal and non-verbal as they occur. The observation of daily activities of the participants enabled the researcher to identify whether or not there is consistency with the data gathered from other data collection methods.

Data analysis

This study used quantitative research method. Therefore, data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Simple descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentage and mean were determined for moderating variables. The regression analysis was used to describe relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The relationships between stakeholder engagement practices (independent variables) and project performance (dependent variable) was measured using Pearson correlation coefficient (r) and standard deviation (SD).

Ethical considerations

Research ethics refer to the appropriateness of the researcher's behavior in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of his/her work or are affected by the work including himself and other researchers. Data access and ethics are critical aspects for any research project to be conducted successfully. Ethical issues in research have grown dramatically over past decades. The researcher has

to pay more attention on how to gain data access and carrying out the research ethically. By complying with ethical considerations, the researcher started after obtaining the letter of authorization from the university permitting to carry out the research.

After obtaining permission, the next step was the negotiation of access to data. During data collection and analysis, the researcher ensured the privacy and protection of respondents' information. Maintenance of the confidentiality of data provided by respondents and their anonymity was also ensured.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter presents the data gathered and from the sample population. It indicates the findings of the study and interprets them based on the results from analysis. Descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analysis were employed to analyze the data presented in this chapter.

Table 3 : Stakeholder engagement practices in project identification

Practices	Mean	Std. Deviation
All key project stakeholders attended the kick –off meeting	2.79	.993
The duties and responsibilities of each stakeholder are spelt out during the kick –off meeting	2.89	.971
Stakeholders are consulted in setting and deciding the project Scope	2.87	1.004
The community is engaged in consultative meetings for environmental and social impact assessment studies.	2.91	1.008
Stakeholders' expectations in the project are determined when identifying the project	2.83	1.012
Stakeholders were engaged in problem analysis for better project understanding	2.79	1.071
Stakeholder analysis is conducted to assess their interest, power and influence on the project	2.87	1.090
Overall	2.85	1.021

Table 3 shows that the community is engaged in consultative meetings for environmental and social impact assessment studies (Mean = 2.91, SD = 1.008), the duties and responsibilities of each stakeholder are spelt out during the kick –off meeting (Mean = 2.89, SD = 0.971) and the least represented was that stakeholders were engaged in problem analysis for better project understanding (Mean = 2.79, SD = 1.071). Mulwa (2008) envisioned that needs identification is important in developing the capacity of grassroots communities. Community development as a process begins with needs identification. When they do this together the community is able to share the vision and commit to seeing it become a reality. The findings agree with the findings of Njogu (2016) that stakeholders' involvement in the process of project identification enabled the project managers to identify individuals who are most likely to be affected by the projects.

The first objective of this study was to establish the influence of project identification on project quality at Prime Cement Ltd. As illustrated by the above table 3, the responses from respondents had the overall mean of 2.85 and the standard deviation of 1.021 showing that stakeholder engagement practices in project identification had not influenced the quality of the project at Prime Cement Ltd.

Table 4 : Stakeholder engagement practices in project planning

Practices	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stakeholders are involved in formulation of project objectives and policies	3.76	1.145
Stakeholders participate in project budgeting process	3.89	1.064
Stakeholders influence the choice of project implementation Methods	3.84	1.159
Stakeholders participate in project scheduling by setting realistic time frame to complete the project	3.79	1.160
Stakeholders are involved in fixing roles and responsibilities of the project team	3.79	1.213
Stakeholders participate in establishing project deliverables	3.88	1.109
Key stakeholders' qualification and experience in developing the project's action plan	3.87	1.047
Overall	3.83	1.128

Table 4 illustrates that stakeholder engagement practices in project designing and planning attracted the means ranging from 3.97 to 3.76 with standard deviation from 0.826 to 0.694. The study results showed that stakeholders participate in project budgeting process (Mean = 3.89, SD = 1.064), stakeholders participate in establishing project deliverables (Mean = 3.88, SD = 1.109), and the least represented was that stakeholders are involved in formulation of project objectives and policies (Mean = 3.76, SD = 1.145).

The second objective was determining the effect of project designing and planning on project profitability at Prime Cement Ltd. The findings confirmed that engagement practices of different stakeholders contributed greatly to the improvement in project profitability of Prime Cement Ltd as evidenced with the findings presented in table 4 which shows the overall mean of 3.83 and the standard deviation of 1.128. The findings agree with the findings of Ondieki (2016) that involvement of stakeholders in the process of resource specification resulted to identification of quality materials required for project development thus led to improvement of road construction projects. The findings concur with the findings of Heravia, Coffeya and Trigunarsyah (2015) that involvement of stakeholders in resource planning and budgeting result to effective utilization of resources, thus lead to stakeholders' satisfaction. The findings also are in line with the finding of Ondieki (2016) that involvement of stakeholders in the process of resource specification resulted to identification of quality materials required for project development thus led to improvement of road construction projects.

The results of the study suggested that stakeholders were involved in numerous practices of project designing & planning and hence creating a sense of ownership which finally influenced the project performance in terms of profitability.

Table 5 : Stakeholder engagement practices in project implementation

Practices	Mean	Std. Deviation
The project goals are discussed and understood by stakeholders during the kick-off meeting before embarking on any project work	3.92	.799
Stakeholders participate in the day-to-day operations of the project as planned to ensure their expectations are taken care of.	3.95	.724
Key stakeholders are consulted whenever there is a need to change planned activities.	3.97	.694
Stakeholders assess the probability and impact of the risks during project execution.	3.76	.772
Stakeholders are consulted before taking crucial decisions during project implementation	3.87	.733
As key stakeholder, I always participate in the review of the project activities	3.86	.826
Division of labor and specialization are ensured for efficient and effective use of project resources	3.88	.810
Overall	3.88	.765

Table 5 indicates that stakeholder engagement practices in project implementation showed the overall mean and standard deviation of 3.88 and 0.765 respectively. The findings illustrated that key stakeholders are consulted whenever there is a need to change planned activities (Mean = 3.97, SD = 0.694), stakeholders participate in the day-to-day operations of the project as planned to ensure their expectations are taken into consideration (Mean = 3.95, SD = 0.724) and the lowest distribution was represented that stakeholders assess the probability and impact of the risks during project execution (Mean = 3.76, SD = 0.772).

The third objective of the study was to examine the influence of project implementation on project timeliness at Prime Cement Ltd. The results above indicated that stakeholder engagement practices in the implementation or execution of the project significantly contributed to the achievement of the project deliverables on time. The study findings agree with Kobusingye (2017) who suggested that stakeholders' involvement in project implementation influences project success. The results are also in line with Gitonga (2010) findings that involvement of stakeholders in the process of team development lead to selection of the most competent individuals in their areas of specialization hence resulted to improvement of performance of road construction projects.

By completing the project within the planned schedule due to the effective and efficient engagement of stakeholders, greatly influenced the project performance of Prime Cement Ltd. Therefore, stakeholder engagement practices in project execution phase were beneficial because it significantly improved or increased the performance of the project at Prime Cement Ltd.

Table 6 : Stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and evaluation

Practices	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stakeholders are involved in controlling project activities by checking on project costs deviation	3.81	.851
Stakeholders participate in project monitoring and evaluation activities	3.94	.763
Stakeholders provide project progress feedback regularly	3.66	.891
Stakeholders are involved in taking action to correct errors identified (corrective actions)	3.87	.913
Stakeholders participate in reporting on risks and taking actions to ensure improvement of the project	3.93	.838
The project management team requests and receives feedback from the other stakeholders regarding the quality of work	3.96	.709
All stakeholders receive feedback on the project progress regularly and on time.	3.53	.958
Overall	3.81	.846

Table 6 illustrates that respondents suggested that stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and evaluation had effects on project cost efficiency. It is evidenced by the overall mean and standard deviation which are 3.81 and 0.846 respectively. The study results indicated that the highest number of respondents confirmed that the project management team requests and receives feedback from the other stakeholders regarding the quality of work (Mean = 3.96, SD = 0.709), followed by those who agreed that stakeholders participate in project monitoring and evaluation activities (Mean = 3.94, SD = 0.763), and the least represented distribution responded that all stakeholders receive feedback on the project progress regularly and on time (Mean = 3.53, SD = 0.958). The findings agree with Fageha and Aibinu (2016) findings that stakeholders' involvement in the process of monitoring and evaluation leads to improvement of projects' performance. The findings are in line with the findings of Ruwa (2016) that stakeholders' involvement in controlling of project activities lead to road construction projects' sustainability. The results are in accordance with Fageha and Aibinu (2016) results that involvement of stakeholders in reporting ensured that the stakeholders received integrated information in an effective and efficient manner to drive proactive making of decision and enhancing road construction projects' performance.

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the effect of project monitoring and evaluation on cost efficiency at Prime Cement Ltd. The findings of the study confirmed that effective stakeholder engagement practices had greatly contributed to the efficient use of resources by cutting off costs as results of monitoring and evaluation practices. Therefore, stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and evaluation had effects on cost efficiency at prime Cement Ltd.

Table 3 : Project performance

Practices	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stakeholders' expertise is considered in project identification which contribute to the quality of the project	3.79	.852
Stakeholder engagement practices during project execution reduce and mitigate risks in the project leading to cost efficiency	4.02	.707
Stakeholders' inputs and expectations contributed to the quality of the project deliverables	3.93	.726
Stakeholder engagement practices in planning contribute to the completion of the project on time	3.74	.866
Effective stakeholder engagement practices in all project life cycle improve profitability of the project	4.12	.753
Stakeholder engagement in project monitoring and evaluation activities assists in reducing project costs.	4.10	.700
Effective communication with all project stakeholders ensures that the project schedule is respected.	4.05	.724
Collaborative budgeting with all project stakeholders ensures efficiency in project costs.	4.15	.729
Stakeholders' feedback enables the project team to improve the quality of the project, thus, stakeholder satisfaction is ensured.	4.60	.567
Overall	4.05	.736

Table 7 indicates that stakeholder engagement practices significantly influenced project performance. The findings from respondents attracted the mean and standard deviation of 4.5 and 0.736 respectively. Stakeholders' feedback enables the project team to improve the quality of the project, thus, stakeholder satisfaction is ensured (Mean = 4.60, SD = 0.567), collaborative budgeting with all project stakeholders ensures efficiency in project costs (Mean = 4.15, SD = 0.729), Stakeholder engagement practices in planning contribute to the completion of the project on time (Mean = 3.74, SD = 0.866). As per the results, stakeholder engagement practices have significant influence on project performance in terms of quality, cost, time and profitability.

Table 8 : Correlation between stakeholder engagement practices on project performance

Stakeholder engagement practices in project identification	Stakeholder engagement practices in project planning	Stakeholder engagement practices in project implementation	Stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and evaluation	Project performance		
Stakeholder engagement practices in project identification	Pearson Correlation	1	.698**	.860	.790	-.412**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.201	.242	.490
	N	223	223	223	223	223
Stakeholder engagement practices in project planning	Pearson Correlation	.698**	1	.615	.740	.705**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.645	.269	.000
	N	223	223	223	223	223
Stakeholder engagement practices in project implementation	Pearson Correlation	.860	.615	1	.727**	.720**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.201	.645		.001	.000
	N	223	223	223	223	223
Stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and evaluation	Pearson Correlation	.790	.074	.727**	1	.580**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.242	.269	.001		.000
	N	223	223	223	223	223
Project performance	Pearson Correlation	-.412**	.705**	.720**	.580**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.490	.000	.000	.000	
	N	223	223	223	223	

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

Table 8 shows the respondents' stands on stakeholder engagement practices on project performance at prime Cement Ltd.

The findings of the study confirmed that there is a moderate negative correlation between Stakeholder engagement practices in project identification and project performance (project quality) as represented by Pearson coefficient ($r = -.412$, $n = 223$, $p = 0.01$). The findings also showed that there is a strong positive correlation between Stakeholder engagement practices in project planning and project performance (project profitability) as evidenced by ($r = .705$, $n = 223$, $p = 0.01$). The findings indicated that there is a strong positive correlation between Stakeholder engagement practices in project implementation and project performance (project completion time) as represented by ($r = .720$, $n = 223$, $p = 0.01$). It was also noticed that there is a strong positive correlation between Stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and project performance (cost efficiency) as represented by ($r = .580$, $n = 223$, $p = 0.01$). The findings match with Mahmoud-Jouini, Midler and Silberzahn (2016) who said that stakeholder's involvement in project identification influence performance of projects.

As discussed in the literature, stakeholders' engagement practices through identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and control contribute to a very great extent to project performance. Stakeholder engagement practices in project identification, planning, implementation and monitoring improved the chance of project performance and it is an appropriate way towards achieving project deliverables.

Therefore, information gathered and analyzed on stakeholders' engagement practices in this study indicated the strong relationship between stakeholder engagement practices (planning, implementation and monitoring) and project performance (cost, time and profitability) of Prime Cement Ltd.

CONCLUSION

The first research objective was to examine the influence of stakeholder engagement practices in project identification on the quality of the project at Prime cement Ltd. The findings from the study deduced that stakeholder engagements practices in project identification had not contributed to the quality of the project of Prime Cement Ltd at a very great extent. The second research objective was to assess how the stakeholder engagement practices in project planning influenced project profitability at Prime Cement Ltd. The findings from the study showed that stakeholder engagement practices in project planning was essential and crucial to Prime Cement Ltd as it highly reduced costs incurred in the project and improved the project performance. The third research objective was to investigate how stakeholder engagement practices in project implementation influenced project timeliness at Prime Cement Ltd. The findings illustrated that the regular communication among project stakeholders reduced uncertainties and enabled the project to be completed on time.

The fourth objective was to establish the effect of project monitoring and evaluation on cost efficiency at Prime Cement Ltd. The study results showed that stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and evaluation contributed to costs saving during project execution, thus cost efficiency was ensured.

As conclusion, stakeholder engagement practices played a great role on the project performance at Prime Cement Ltd as evidenced by the findings from the study.

Recommendations

Prime Cement Ltd should put in place effective strategies to engage stakeholder in project identification so as to ensure increased project quality.

In addition, the study also established that stakeholders, involvement in project have a positive and significant influence on project profitability. Therefore, the study recommends that stakeholders should be involved in various aspects of project planning in order to increase the profitability of the project.

The study recommends Prime Cement Ltd to reinforce strategies of engaging stakeholders in project implementation stage due to the fact that stakeholder engagement promotes the completion of the project within the timeline set.

The study recommends that effective and efficiency stakeholder engagement strategies in project monitoring and evaluation should be emphasized because it was found that they assist in preventing project costs overruns, hence cost efficiency.

Suggestions for Further Studies

This study used quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data. It investigated the relationship between different project parameters including project identification, planning, execution and monitoring. Future studies should carry out further investigation on individual project parameter on project performance. As said also few studies had been conducted using qualitative method. So, further research could be done by applying qualitative method for future literature.

In addition, future research on the relationship between project team skills and experience on project performance could contribute to the field of project management.

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