



**The Role of Stakeholder Management on School Network Project  
Success: The Case of iCog-ACC Company**

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**A THESIS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT AS A PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS (MA) DEGREE IN PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT**

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**ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY(SMU)**



**MASTERS OF ART IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

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Case of iCog-ACC Company**

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**BEZAWIT KASSAYE**

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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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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that the study that is being presented in this thesis, entitled “The Role of Stakeholder Management on School Network Project Success (The Case of the iCog-ACC Company),” is an original work of mine. It had not been presented for partial fulfillment of any educational qualification at this university or any other or in any projects by any means, and all the resources and materials used for this thesis had been duly acknowledged.

**Bezawit Kassaye**

**Signature & Date**

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## Table of content

Declaration.....	I
Acknowledgement.....	II
Table of content .....	III
List of Tables.....	IV
List of Figures.....	VII
Abstract.....	VIII
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Organization.....	2
1.2 Statement of Problem.....	3
1.3 Research Questions .....	5
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	5
1.4.1 General Objective .....	5
1.4.2 Specific Objective .....	5
1.5 Significance of the study.....	6
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	6
1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.8 The Organization of the study.....	7
1.9 Definition of Terms.....	7
CHAPTER TWO .....	5
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	5
2.1 Theoretical Literature Review.....	8
2.2 Concepts and Definitions of Stakeholder Management.....	8
2.2.1 Stakeholders .....	8
2.2.2 Project.....	8

2.2.3 Project Management .....	10
2.2.4 Project Success.....	11
2.3 Theories of Stakeholder Management.....	11
2.3.1 Instrumental Stakeholder Theory.....	12
2.3.2 Descriptive Stakeholder Theory.....	12
2.3.3 Normative Stakeholder Theory.....	12
2.4 Theme of Stakeholder Theory.....	12
2.5 Practical Guide of Stakeholder Management.....	13
2.5.1 Stakeholder Management.....	13
2.5.2 Project Stakeholder Management Process.....	14
2.5.3 Key Concepts for Project Stakeholder Management.....	15
2.5.4 Trends and Emerging Practices in Project Stakeholder Engagement.....	16
2.5.5 Tailoring Considerations.....	17
2.5.6 Considerations for Agile/Adaptive Environments .....	17
2.6 Empirical Review.....	18
2.6.1 Factors Affecting Stakeholder Management.....	18
2.6.2 Challenges Affecting Stakeholder Management.....	18
2.6.3 The relationship between Stakeholder Management and Project Success.....	19
2.7 Literature Review Gap.....	21
2.8 Conceptual Framework.....	21
CHAPTER THREE.....	24
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	24
3. Introduction.....	24
3.1 Research Setting.....	24
3.2 Research Approach.....	25
3.3 Research Design.....	25
3.4. Target Population.....	25



3.5. Sampling Design and Sample size.....	26
3.6. Sampling Technique.....	26
3.7. Data Collection Instrument.....	27
3.8. Data Distribution and Collection Procedure.....	27
3.9. Validity and Reliability.....	27
3.9.1. Validity .....	28
3.10 Ethical Consideration.....	28
3.11 Data Analysis.....	28
CHAPTER FOUR.....	32
Result of the Study, Interpretation, and Discussion.....	32
4.1 Introduction.....	32
4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents.....	32
4.3. Analysis for Qualitative Data.....	39
4.3.1 The importance of stakeholder management in project Success.....	40
4.3.2 Strategies employed to engage and manage stakeholders effectively.....	41
4.3.3 Challenges Faced by Stakeholders Regarding School Network Project.....	42
4.3.4 Stakeholder communication contribution to project success.....	43
4.3.5 Stakeholder engagement impact on overall success rate of project .....	44
CHAPTER FIVE.....	45
SUMMARY,CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	45
5.1. Summary.....	45
5.2 Conclusion.....	46
5.3. Recommendation.....	48
REFERENCE .....	51
ANNEX ONE:QUESTIONER .....	54
ANNEX TWO: INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	57

## **List of table**

Table 3.1 Samples of the study.....	19
Table 4. 1: Demographic Information.....	21
Table 4. 2: Description of Items in Stakeholder Identification.....	22
Table 4. 3: Descriptive Statistics: Stakeholder Identification.....	22
Table 4. 4: Plan for Stakeholder Engagement.....	23
Table 4. 5: Manage Stakeholder Engagement.....	24
Table 4. 6: Monitor Stakeholder Engagement.....	25
Table 4. 7: Project Success.....	27

List of figure

Figure 1. Conceptual framework .....16

## Abstract

*Effective stakeholder management is critical to the success of school network projects. This research examines the role of stakeholder management in school network project success, with a focus on the iCog-ACC Company. It explores how effective stakeholder management strategies can influence the outcomes of such projects. The study analyzes various stakeholder management techniques and assesses their impact on project success. The study aims to identify the key factors that influence stakeholder involvement and management, explore the challenges and barriers that hinder effective stakeholder management, and assess the impact of stakeholder engagement and collaboration on project success. A mixed-methods approach was employed, comprising interviews with ten important stakeholders involved in school network initiatives at iCog-ACC Company and a survey of 59 individuals chosen using the census sample technique. The results show that stakeholder management is a critical factor in project success, with effective communication, engagement, and collaboration being key drivers. However, the study also identified significant challenges and barriers to effective stakeholder management, including limited resources, conflicting stakeholder interests, and communication breakdowns. The findings of this research provide insights for organizations seeking to improve their stakeholder management practices in school network projects and contribute to the understanding of the factors that drive project success. In conclusion, while the project appears to have been successful in certain aspects, such as meeting quality standards and managing expenses, there are significant concerns about project completion and stakeholder satisfaction. Finally, it's recommended to regularly solicit stakeholder feedback and address their concerns promptly. This could involve regular stakeholder meetings, surveys, or suggestion boxes.*

**Keywords:** project success, stakeholders' engagement, conflicting stockholder's interests.

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

An essential component of project management is stakeholder management, which entails locating and evaluating stakeholders as well as skillfully handling their demands and expectations. Stakeholders' active involvement in a project is said to guarantee its performance, sustainability, and success (Ford D. 2016). This study would probably examine how stakeholder management techniques are applied in school network projects run by the iCog-ACC Company and how these practices affect project results.

According to HarandAzrin (2006), stakeholders are crucial components of any project; if essential stakeholders aren't given enough attention, the project will undoubtedly fail. Farida (2012) reinforced this point when she said that improper stakeholder engagement can lead to frequent issues in school projects such as over-budgeting, over-costing, inadequate communication, and supply chain failure. According to Grabher (2002), resolving disagreements and fostering collaboration amongst various stakeholders and work groups are crucial to the success of a project. It is crucial to stress that an engagement strategy needs to be used to contact stakeholders and treat them in a way that moves the project's overall goal closer to its stated goal. The notion that each member of the organization needs to fulfill their specific duty to reach all project stakeholders was mentioned by Bourne and Walker (2006).

Achterkamp and Vos (2008) assert that stakeholder engagement appears to be a major factor in determining a project's level of significance. Therefore, it is possible to gauge the degree of success of stakeholders' engagement based on how they respond, offer, and receive support. According to Cleland and Ireland (2002), all stakeholders need to be included at every stage of the project's life cycle to achieve project objectives that live up to and satisfy their expectations. According to McCab et al. (2006), there are a few significant and inescapable issues and problems that arise during the stakeholder engagement process. These include inadequate communication, identifying needs and fostering partnerships, supplying all relevant information, and fostering trust and a willingness to work together among the project's various characters. The study's objective is to evaluate the variables influencing stakeholder engagement's contribution to school network project success.

Overall, this research topic is significant as it contributes to the understanding of stakeholder management's role in project success, providing valuable insights that could enhance project

management practices in school network projects. It could also provide specific recommendations for the iCog Anyone Can Code (iCog-ACC) Company, a multinational subsidiary company of iCog Labs Software Consultancy that specializes in tech education for children and young adults as well as entrepreneurship, to improve their stakeholder management strategies and thereby increase the success rate of their projects.

This chapter also provides the background of the study and introduces the research problem and the associated research objectives of the study, as well as the significance, scope, limitations, and definition of terms.

### **1.1. Background of the Organization**

iCog Anyone Can Code is a multinational subsidiary firm of iCog Labs Software Consultancy (AKA iCog Labs) that focuses on technological education for children and young people, as well as entrepreneurship.

One noteworthy project under iCog-ACC is its tech-education-based initiatives, which provide children and young adults with early exposure to cutting-edge technology including computers, electronics, programming, and the Internet of Things (IoT). The purpose of this effort is to provide young visionaries with the tools they need to succeed in the twenty-first century by igniting their enthusiasm for STEM education. One project that works with Addis Ababa's schools on weekends, summer vacations, and after-school activities is the iCog-ACC School Network Program. Through basic tutorials, it seeks to demystify computer science for children and young people in Addis Ababa. Children can learn about and experiment with several developing technologies with the help of iCog-ACC. It will supply all the resources needed for the program's implementation, including trainers, curriculum, tools, and training that will help develop and investigate the project. Incorporating computer science instruction into the classroom not only equips students with necessary computational skills but also improves their capacity for critical thought. Wing (2006) claims that computational thinking includes understanding human behavior using basic computer science principles, designing systems, and addressing problems. This skill set is essential for modeling, data presentation, and problem analysis, which makes it a fundamental ability for people in a variety of disciplines. To foster a new generation of people with 21st-century abilities

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Breslow et al. (2013) discuss setting realistic goals and expectations in educational projects. The authors emphasize that a discrepancy between original goals and actual results can have detrimental effects on the viability and success of a project. They argue that this highlights the need for a more thorough analysis of the variables influencing project execution and success.

Status Report for the School Network Project - 2023, which sought to provide coding instruction to a broader spectrum of pupils, indicates a discrepancy between the original goals and the results attained, which harms the project's viability. The project originally targeted 50 schools intending to reach 1,000 children; nevertheless, via seven (7) schools, 112 pupils were reached. The difference between the expected and actual results emphasizes the need for a more thorough analysis of the variables influencing the execution and success of the project.

This disparity can lead to dissatisfaction and disengagement among the stakeholders, as they may feel that their needs and expectations have not been adequately met. Effective stakeholder management will require transparent communication, reassessment of expectations, and proactive engagement to address concerns and align future actions with stakeholder interests.

Furthermore, the discrepancy highlights the importance of understanding and managing stakeholder expectations throughout the project lifecycle. The failure to meet the intended targets may lead to a loss of trust and confidence among the stakeholders, impacting their willingness to participate in future initiatives. It is crucial to conduct a thorough analysis of the variables influencing the execution and success of the project, including stakeholder engagement and feedback. By actively involving the stakeholders in this analysis, the project team can gain valuable insights into their perspectives and concerns, thereby fostering a more inclusive and collaborative approach to decision-making. Proactive stakeholder management strategies, such as regular updates, feedback mechanisms, and clear communication channels, will be essential to rebuild trust and ensure the continued support of all parties involved in the School Network Project.

In the realm of project management, ineffective stakeholder management has emerged as a critical problem that significantly influences project success. This paper aims to address this issue by proposing strategies to enhance stakeholder management and bridge the gap between original project goals and actual results. Through a comprehensive analysis of the variables influencing project execution and success, with a specific focus on stakeholder management.

The paper will provide effective strategies such as improving communication, aligning priorities, and setting realistic goals and expectations. The goal is to mitigate risks, enhance collaboration, and ultimately contribute to the overall success of projects. The paper will also examine real-world cases, such as the School Network Project, to highlight the need for improved stakeholder management and its impact on project viability. Additionally, the paper will explore the challenges faced by iCog-ACC Company in effectively managing its stakeholders, emphasizing the potential impact on project success and the need for comprehensive understanding and effective strategies in stakeholder management.



### **1.3 Research Questions**

The research questions of the study are stated below:

- What are the primary elements that affect stakeholder management in the school network project of the iCog-ACC Company?
- How does effective stakeholder communication contribute to the success of school network projects in the context of the iCog-ACC Company?
- What are the potential challenges that hinder stakeholder management in the implementation of school network projects at iCog-ACC Company?
- To what extent does stakeholder engagement impact the overall success rate of school network projects in the case of the iCog-ACC Company?

### **1.4 Objective of the Study**

#### **1.4.1 General Objectives**

- The general objective of this research is to examine the role of stakeholder management in school network project success in the context of the iCog-ACC Company.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

- Identify the key factors that influence stakeholder involvement and management in the iCog-ACC Company's school network project.
- Examine the contribution of effective stakeholder communication to the success of school network projects in the context of the iCog-ACC Company.
- Explore the potential challenges that hinder stakeholder management in the implementation of school network projects at iCog-ACC Company.
- Assess the impact of stakeholder engagement on the overall success rate of school network projects in the case of iCog-ACC Company.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The success of school network projects can be influenced by stakeholder engagement, and this study will help to clarify this relationship. Educators, policymakers, legislators, and researchers who want to work together to improve educational results will find the findings beneficial. Additionally, it will help them comprehend the significance of stakeholder involvement in school coding projects and offer them useful tactics for successfully involving stakeholders.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

Geographically speaking, this study is restricted to private schools under the municipal administration of Addis Ababa, where the project is being carried out. The study specifically concentrates on a particular company's project to gain a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder engagement in the school network project. Due to time and financial restrictions, the research will not include all of the similar projects in Addis Ababa. Since the research will focus on one project in Addis Ababa, it is unlikely that the findings can be generalized. This research is thematically limited to exploring the concept of stakeholder management, its principles, and its importance in project management. It will delve into strategies for effective stakeholder management, including stakeholder identification, analysis, engagement, and communication.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this study include its focus solely on the education sector, specifically the iCog-ACC Company's school network project. Additionally, due to time constraints, the study only considered time, cost, quality, and stakeholder satisfaction as project success criteria.

These limitations impact the study in several ways. By focusing exclusively on the iCog-ACC Company's school network project, the findings may not be generalizable to other technological (coding) education. This could limit the broader applicability of the study's conclusions.

To address these limitations, future studies could consider expanding the scope to encompass a more diverse range of technological educational projects. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of project success factors across different contexts. Additionally, researchers could explore a broader set of project success criteria, including factors such as innovation, adaptability, and long-term impact, to gain a more holistic view of what contributes to project success within the education sector. Finally, alternative research methodologies, such as case studies or comparative analyses, could be employed to complement the findings of this study and provide a more nuanced understanding of project success within the education sector.

## **1.8 The Organization of the Study**

There are five chapters in the thesis. In the first chapter, information about the introduction is given. This includes the background of the study, a general overview of the study area, a statement of the problem, the study's goal and research questions, the study's justification and importance, and its scope and limits. In the second chapter, there is a review of the related literature. The third chapter talks about how the study was done. The fourth chapter is about showing the data and analyzing the results, and the fifth chapter is about the summary, conclusion, and suggestions.

## **1.9 Definition of Terms**

**Project Stakeholders:** in the context of this research, stakeholder refers to an individual, group, or organization that may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project. (PMI, 2017).

**Project Stakeholder Management:** in the context of this research, stakeholder management refers to the process that has the steps essential to identify the people, groups, or organizations that could impact or be impacted by the project, to evaluate stakeholder expectations and their impact on the project, and to create appropriate management strategies for effectively engaging stakeholders in project decisions and implementation (PMI, 2017).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Theoretical Literature Review**

This chapter provides a literature review related to the study, encompassing an examination of various studies conducted by researchers on the theoretical foundation, understanding of stakeholder management, and its impact on project success, in addition to their definitions.

#### **2.2 Concepts and Definition of Stakeholder Management**

##### **2.2.1. Stakeholders**

Certain stakeholders may be more significant than others at particular project phases. Setting aside enough time for the stakeholder identification and mapping process will help us discover more about the identities of these stakeholders and their expectations for the project. It is crucial to try to comprehend the people you will be collaborating with and depending on during the project before considering how to engage and sway stakeholders. While sharing information with stakeholders is important, gathering information about them beforehand is just as important (Walt, 2016). Stakeholders need to be identified and then mapped according to their interests and power in the project. The project stakeholders will be able to participate thanks to this stakeholder map. Any project's four primary stakeholder categories are (Walt, 2016):

1. Internal stakeholders;
2. External stakeholders.
3. Project team members;

##### **2.2.2. Project**

It has been established that there are numerous accepted meanings for the term "project." It is important to remember that projects are initially distinct from other types of organizational courses. A process is often thought of as an organization's regular activities

to generate goods and services. The company constantly uses the assets, capabilities, and systems that are currently in place. The project, however, operates in a different manner from the organization's typical, process-oriented domain. However, for a lot of businesses, project management tasks are still unique and done in a different way from repetitive, process-driven work. Project work is the antithesis of repetition in the workplace since it is always changing and developing its work methods. For many organizations, it is therefore seen as an exciting alternative to "business as usual" (Pinto, 2019).

To have a comprehensive knowledge of the characteristics that distinguish projects and project management, consider the following definitions of a project (*Ibid.*):

A project is an individual undertaking that has a beginning and a conclusion and is carried out by individuals to accomplish predetermined objectives while taking cost, scheduling, and quality into account.

Projects have a defined period, are goal-oriented, include the coordinated responsibility of related operations, and are all, in some ways, unique. A project can be conceptualized as a series of actions and activities that: Have a specified goal that must be accomplished within predetermined parameters.

- Have dates for start and finish specified.
- have, if appropriate, cost limitations.
- Utilize resources, both human and nonhuman, including cash, people, and machinery.
- Possess multifunctionality, meaning they cross multiple functional boundaries.

A project is a planned endeavor with a budget and timeline that requires money and effort to achieve a predetermined aim or purpose. Projects are unique and, hence, risky.

For the Project Management Institute (PMI) definition, it is also preferable to refer to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMI, 2017) guide. As of September 30, 2021, the PMI, an international association for project management, had over 680,000 members worldwide. According to PMI Guide (PMI, 2017), a project is defined as "a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result."

### 2.2.3. Project Management

Project management is the process of organizing, planning, directing, and regulating an organization's resources with a short-term goal in mind in order to accomplish predetermined goals and objectives. In addition, a systems approach to management will be applied in project management by assigning functional staff members to specific projects (Kerzner, 2017). Project management will be completed by choosing appropriate apps and incorporating the project management. Project management facilitates the efficient and timely completion of tasks by businesses. One of the supplementary knowledge domains that might be needed because of unique project requirements is project stakeholder management.

**Project stakeholder management:** is one of the additional knowledge areas that may be required due to special project needs. The following ten knowledge areas have been identified by PMI (PMI, 2017):

**Project schedule management:** is a set of procedures necessary to oversee the project's timely completion.

**Project cost management:** is the process of combining funding, managing, controlling, budgeting, estimating, and budgeting in order to finish the project within the allotted budget.

**Project quality management:** is the process of planning, managing, and regulating project and product quality requirements in accordance with the organization's quality policy in order to meet stakeholders' expectations.

**Project Stakeholder Management:** The necessary actions to determine who, what, and how the project may affect or be affected by the individuals, groups, or organizations involved; assess stakeholder expectations and how they may affect the project; and develop suitable management plans for involving stakeholders in project decisions and execution.

**Project Integration Management:** It contains the processes and activities to identify, define, combine, unify, and coordinate numerous processes and project management activities within the Project Management Process Groups.

**Project Scope Management:** It is a required process essential to ensuring that the project includes all the work required and only the work required to complete the project successfully.

**Project Resource Management:** It is the required process to achieve the successful completion of the project through identifying, acquiring, and managing the needed resources.

**Project Communications Management:** It contains the processes required to ensure timely and appropriate planning, collection, creation, distribution, storage, retrieval, management, control, monitoring, and ultimate disposition of project information.

**Project risk management:** is the process of conducting risk management planning, identification, analysis, response planning, response implementation, and monitoring risk on a project.

**Project Procurement Management:** It is a required process beyond the project team to purchase or acquire products, services, or results.

#### **2.2.4. Project Success**

Criteria for project success were well identified, including time, budget, and performance goals (Shenhar et al., 2001). The PMBOK measures project success in terms of cost, time, scope, and customer satisfaction (PMI, 2004). The completion of the project's goals within the parameters of time, money, and quality, along with other project accomplishments like client satisfaction, business success, and the client firm's strategic goals, as well as benefits for stakeholders and project personnel, are what determine a project's success (Ika, 2013). Stakeholder satisfaction was suggested as a criterion for project success in addition to the conventional ones of time, money, and quality (Yang et al., 2011).

Diverse perspectives exist among stakeholders regarding success, and these may evolve (Turner, 2007). Shenhar et al. (2001) expanded the definition of project success by incorporating factors like the goods' main commercial or corporate success and their potential for future expansion. Thus, the project success criteria for this study were time, cost, quality, and stakeholder satisfaction.

### **2.3. Theories of Stakeholder Management**

This research focuses on the process of stakeholder management (SM), which comprises stakeholder identification, planning, managing, and monitoring, to investigate the impact of SM on project success. As a result, it's critical to examine the theories that support or underlie stakeholder theory, such as the instrumental, descriptive, and normative perspectives of Donaldson & Preston (1995).

#### **2.3.1 Instrumental Stakeholder Theory**

According to the instrumental stakeholder theory, an organization should focus exclusively on stakeholders who have the power to influence the organization's value. From the perspective of stakeholder management or governance, this suggests that only influential stakeholders will have a voice to ensure their contribution to the organization's success (Spitzeck & Hansen, 2010).

#### **2.3.2 Descriptive Stakeholder Theory**

Without taking into account an organization's legality or authority, the descriptive view lists and categorizes its many constituents (stakeholders) (Spitzeck & Hansen, 2010). This stakeholder theory's descriptive or empirical formulations outline how the organization functions in terms of stakeholder management (Pesqueux & Damak-Ayadi, 2005; Mainardes et al., 2011) and describe and/or explain how organizations or their managers behave (Friedman & Miles, 2006).

#### **2.3.3 Normative Stakeholder Theory**

The normative perspective emphasizes the responsibilities and rights of the parties engaged while taking into account the worth and moral rights of the stakeholders impacted by organizational behavior. It also takes into account how to balance the concerns of various stakeholders (Spitzeck & Hansen, 2010). Normative stakeholder theory explains how management should function in terms of moral standards (Pesqueux & Damak-Ayadi, 2005; Mainardes et al., 2011) and is concerned with the moral propriety of the actions of firms and/or their managers (Friedman & Miles, 2006).



## **2.4 The theme of stakeholder theory**

The theme of stakeholder theory was developed primarily to help managers understand their stakeholders and strategically manage them (Freeman, 1999). Numerous studies (Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Mitchell et al., 1997; Rowley & Moldoveanu, 2003) that show that only the treatment of stakeholders is related to the long-term survival of the business have stressed the managerial value of stakeholder management.

Stakeholder theory has been used in several domains, including water utilities (Ogden & Watson, 1999), construction project management (Bourne & Walker, 2005), and research management (Bunn, Savage, & Holloway, 2002; Elias, Cavana, & Jackson, 2002). Research in the field of construction management has typically concentrated on organizing and supervising the wide range of intricate tasks necessary to complete a construction project, like a building or road (Morris, 1994).

Construction project managers need to be adept at managing the expectations and concerns of construction stakeholders (Vinten, 2000). This is because, as noted by Bourne and Walker (2005), there have been numerous project failures because construction stakeholders typically possess the means and capacity to halt projects (Lim et al., 2005).

Thus, fulfilling stakeholder expectations is essential to the successful completion of building projects (Cleland, 1995).

Clients, project managers, designers, suppliers, funding agencies, users, owners, workers, and local communities are examples of stakeholders (Newcombe, 2003). As a result, a substantial body of research on project management has emerged, covering the identification and management of stakeholder relationships and interests.

## **2.5 Practical Guide of Stakeholder Management**

In its Project Management Body of Knowledge Guide, the Project Management Institute defines stakeholder management for projects, lays out the procedure for managing stakeholders, and covers various topics about SM. This portion of the practical guide to stakeholder management covered each of these topics.

### **2.5.1 Stakeholder Management**

Stakeholder management involves identifying and analyzing stakeholders, understanding their interests and influences, and developing strategies to communicate, engage, and manage relationships with them. It is increasingly embedded in corporate activities, and the advent of the internet, social networking, and big data has put more pressure on companies to develop new tools and techniques to manage stakeholders online.

A systematic literature review conducted by Pedrini and Ferri (2019) highlighted that stakeholder management is increasingly embedded in corporate activities. They reviewed articles published from 1985 to 2015 using keywords such as stakeholder management, stakeholder relationships, and stakeholder engagement. Their findings suggest that stakeholder management is a prominent management approach that has primarily been adopted in the past few years. However, despite the increase in the theory's use, a limited number of studies have discussed ways to develop, execute, and measure the results of using this strategic approach with stakeholders.

### **2.5.2 Project Stakeholder Management Process**

#### **1. Identify Stakeholders**

It is the first phase of repeatedly identifying the people involved in the project and gathering, evaluating, and documenting pertinent data regarding their engagement, interests, influence, interdependencies, and potential impact on the project's success. It will assist the project team in determining the appropriate factors to take into account when

engaging each stakeholder or set of stakeholders. Every stage of the project does this procedure frequently as needed (PMI, 2017).

## **2. Plan stakeholder engagement.**

The process of creating procedures to involve project stakeholders based on their requirements, expectations, interests, and possible effects on the project will be carried out at the step known as stakeholder engagement after the stakeholders have been identified. As a result, a workable approach for collaborating with stakeholders is provided. Every stage of the project must go through this procedure regularly as needed (PMI, 2017).

## **3. Manage stakeholder engagement.**

This is the third phase of the procedure, which involves speaking with stakeholders, cooperating with them to satisfy their needs and expectations, resolving conflicts, and using proper stakeholder engagement. This stage will help the project manager by increasing support and decreasing stakeholder resistance. Every stage of the project must go through this procedure regularly as needed (PMI, 2017).

## **4. Monitor stakeholder engagement.**

The process's final phase is to monitor stakeholder participation. Revision of engagement strategies and plans involves monitoring stakeholder interactions and making necessary adjustments to tactics for involving them. As the project expands and the surrounding environment changes, this stage maintains or improves the efficacy and efficiency of stakeholder involvement efforts. Every stage of the project must go through the procedure regularly as needed (PMI, 2017).

### **2.5.3 Key Concepts for Project Stakeholder Management**

All projects, of course, have stakeholders—people who either favorably or negatively affect the project or are affected by it. While certain stakeholders may be able to affect the project's work or results to some extent, others may have a significant impact on the project and its anticipated results. Scholarly investigations and examinations of well-publicized project mishaps emphasize the need for a methodical strategy for identifying, ranking, and including all relevant parties. The ability of the team and project

manager to appropriately identify and involve each stakeholder is what separates successful projects from unsuccessful ones (PMI, 2017). Stakeholder identification and engagement should begin as soon as the project charter is accepted, the project manager is assigned, and the team begins to come together to maximize the likelihood of success (PMI, 2017).

Stakeholder satisfaction needs to be recognized and maintained as a projective aim. A focus on ongoing communication with all stakeholders, including team members, is essential for effective stakeholder engagement to understand their needs and expectations and handle problems as they arise. Managing conflicting interests and encouraging appropriate stakeholder participation in project decisions and activities are essential for effective stakeholder management (PMI, 2017).

Stakeholder identification and engagement for the project's benefit is an iterative process. The activities of identification, prioritizing, and engagement in project stakeholder management are described only once, although they should be updated and amended regularly, at least when PMI (2017):

- The project moves through different stages in its life cycle.
- Current stakeholders have no longer participated in the task of the project, or new stakeholders have become members of the project's stakeholder community.
- There are considerable changes in the organization or the broader stakeholder community.

#### **2.5.4 Trends and Emerging Practices in Project Stakeholder Engagement**

In addition to the traditional categories of workers, suppliers, and shareholders, broader definitions of stakeholders are being established to encompass entities including regulators, lobby groups, environmentalists, financial institutions, and the media. Others just view themselves as stakeholders since they would be impacted by the project's outcomes (PMI, 2017).

The project stakeholder management trends and emerging techniques listed below are not exclusive to PMI (2017).

- Identifying every stakeholder, not just a limited set;

- Ensuring that all team members have participated in stakeholder engagement activities;
- Revising the stakeholder community recurrently, often in parallel with evaluations of single project risks;
- Consulting with stakeholders who are most suffering from the results of the project through the concept of co-creation. Co-creation places greater importance on including affected stakeholders in the team as partners, and
- Taking into account the importance of effective stakeholder engagement, both positive and negative, A positive value will be the consideration of gain resulting from higher levels of active support from stakeholders' predominantly powerful stakeholders. A negative value can be generated by measuring the true costs of not engaging stakeholders effectively, leading to product loss or organizational or project reputation.

### **2.5.5 Tailoring Considerations**

Tailoring is a process that involves adapting or modifying a product, service, or process to suit a particular context or user group. In the context of project management and design, tailoring is often necessary because no two projects or organizations are the same.

A literature review conducted by Hollauer & Lindemann (2017) highlighted the importance of tailoring in the design process. They found that while formalized engineering design processes are used by best-in-class companies, there is a need for flexible adaptation to different contexts. This requires activities such as the adaptation and tailoring of engineering design processes and corresponding method and tool support.

In another study, McClure (2019) discussed the best practices for tailoring and implementing a project management methodology. The study emphasized the need for assessing organizational readiness, choosing and tailoring a project management methodology, and implementing a tailored project management methodology.

### **2.5.6 Considerations for Agile/Adaptive Environments**

Project stakeholders must actively engage in projects due to the fast rate of change they experience. Adaptive teams interact directly, bypassing the management structure, with stakeholders to facilitate early, productive conversation and decision-making. Most of the time, information is shared between the client, user, and developer in a dynamic co-creative process that increases stakeholder satisfaction and involvement. Maintaining a consistent relationship with the stakeholder community across the whole project cycle reduces risk, fosters trust, and facilitates modifications early in the project cycle, all of which lowers project costs and boost project success. Agile methodologies facilitate proactive transparency by expediting the flow of information across the entire business. It is necessary to invite all stakeholders to project meetings and evaluations or to display project artifacts in public areas to address an immediate misalignment, dependency, or other issue related to the evolving project (PMI, 2017).

## **2.6 Empirical Review**

### **2.6.1 Factors affecting stakeholder management**

Bredillet C. N. (2008), emphasizes the importance of adopting a stakeholder perspective in project management, suggesting that understanding stakeholders' needs, expectations, and influence is fundamental to effective stakeholder management. In the context of school network projects, this perspective can help in identifying and prioritizing stakeholders such as students, teachers, parents, and administrators based on their influence and interests in the project.

Pinto and Slevin's research on critical success factors across the project life cycle identifies stakeholder management as a key determinant of project success. In the context of school network projects, this study underscores the importance of actively managing stakeholders throughout the project life cycle and provides insights into specific elements that contribute to effective stakeholder management, such as involving teachers and parents in decision-making processes.

Gray and Larson provide a comprehensive overview of project management, including stakeholder management as a key managerial process. The textbook discusses various elements affecting stakeholder management, such as communication strategies, conflict resolution, and the role of project leadership in engaging stakeholders effectively. In the context of school network projects, effective communication with stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and students is crucial for project success.

### **2.6.2 Challenges affecting stakeholder management**

A lack of stakeholder awareness poses a significant challenge to stakeholder management in Ethiopia. A study by Mekonnen and Teshome (2017) highlighted how organizations in Ethiopia often overlook certain stakeholder groups or fail to understand their needs and interests. This lack of awareness can result in marginalized stakeholders feeling neglected or excluded from decision-making processes.

One of the key challenges in stakeholder management in Ethiopia is the lack of clear communication channels between organizations and their stakeholders. According to a study by Tadesse et al. (2017), communication breakdowns can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts between organizations and their stakeholders, ultimately hindering effective engagement. The study found that organizations in Ethiopia often struggle to establish open and transparent communication channels with their stakeholders, which can result in mistrust and dissatisfaction among stakeholders.

Another challenge identified in stakeholder management in Ethiopia is the lack of stakeholder engagement strategies. A study by Alemu et al. (2018) found that many organizations in Ethiopia do not have formalized strategies for engaging with their stakeholders, leading to ad-hoc approaches that are often ineffective. The study highlighted the importance of developing comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategies that outline clear objectives, methods, and communication channels for engaging with stakeholders.

### **2.6.3 The relationship between stakeholder management and project success**

This section discusses the earlier research on the relationship between stakeholder management and project success by Fraz et al. (2016), Kelbessa (2016), Kelbessa, Macharia (2013), and El-Naway, Mahdi, Badwy, and Al-Deen (2015). The results of the

majority of authors showed a clear relationship between stakeholder management and project success.

A study was carried out by Macharia (2013) to ascertain the impact of stakeholders' involvement in project identification, planning, execution, and review on project outcomes.

The results indicate that the largest contributor to the project's success was the stakeholders' participation in its execution.

A study named "The Effect of Project Management Practices on Project Success in Make-to-Order Manufacturing Organizations" was also carried out by Fraz et al. (2016). Stakeholder management, one of the 10 project management practices knowledge areas under investigation, was found to have a strong correlation with project success based on the data gathered via a questionnaire. There was a strong correlation between stakeholder management and project success.

According to Kelbessa's (2016) findings, stakeholder estimation, management factor groups, and information input groups were the primary project stakeholder management input elements that impacted the process's performance. Her research looked at how Ethiopian public projects function in the project stakeholder management process. The primary areas of concern in the project stakeholder management process were also determined by the findings. The reviewed projects indicate that the processes of identifying stakeholders and developing project stakeholder management plans were not completed to a high enough standard.

The goal of Nauman and Piracha (2016) was to determine which project stakeholders were most important and to look into the relationships between them. The key components of project stakeholder management for efficient construction project management were determined using the critical success factors (CSFs) approach. Based on the results, the customer's end users are considered the most important project stakeholders. Furthermore, it was shown that the most important component of a successful project's stakeholder management understands the demands and limits of the stakeholders; maintaining and fostering positive relationships with stakeholders by encouraging trust and commitment came in second.



Implementing efficient stakeholder management has a significant impact on the successful completion of building projects, according to El-Naway, Mahdi, Badwy, and Al-Deen (2015). Building construction is successful when diverse personnel with vested interests are managed effectively. Stakeholders in a construction project have significant wants and interests; thus, it is important to comprehend their needs as the project moves forward.

El-Naway, Mahdi, Badwy, and Al-Deen (2015) offered a strategy for efficiently managing project stakeholders.

- ❖ Exploring stakeholders' needs and constraints in projects,
- ❖ Ensuring effective communication for all project stakeholders,
- ❖ Identifying stakeholders,
- ❖ Managing Stakeholders with social responsibilities,
- ❖ Defining and formulating a clear statement of Project Missions,
- ❖ Promoting a good relationship with stakeholders,
- ❖ Understanding the areas of stakeholders' interests and
- ❖ Prioritizing stakeholders by their power and influence on the project.
- ❖ Formulating appropriate strategies to manage stakeholders,
- ❖ Building trust between project top management and the most engaged stakeholders in the project.

## **2.7 Literature Review Gap**

There is a significant literature gap in the research regarding coding projects, specifically in the context of school network projects in Ethiopia. The focus of this research is on a project that teaches young children coding, which is a relatively new initiative given the increasing demand for education that incorporates emerging technologies. Despite the critical nature of this issue, there has been no similar research conducted on coding projects in Ethiopia. Therefore, this thesis aims to shed light on the drivers of such projects, particularly the stakeholders involved.

The thesis seeks to achieve several objectives related to stakeholder involvement and management in the iCog-ACC Company's school network project. These objectives include identifying key factors that influence stakeholder participation, examining the role

of effective stakeholder communication in project success, exploring potential challenges that may hinder stakeholder management, and assessing the impact of stakeholder engagement on overall project success rates. By addressing these objectives, this research aims to contribute valuable insights into the dynamics of school network projects within the Ethiopian context and provide recommendations for improving stakeholder engagement and management practices.

## **2.8 Conceptual Framework**

The processes necessary to identify the individuals, groups, or organizations that the project may affect or be affected by, assess stakeholder expectations and their potential effects on the project, and develop suitable management plans for effectively involving stakeholders in project decisions and execution are all included in project stakeholder management. The courses assist the project team in analyzing stakeholder expectations, gauging how much they influence or are impacted by the project, and formulating plans to involve stakeholders in decision-making processes related to the project as well as its planning and execution (PMI, 2017).

Stakeholder management, as defined by Li et al. (2011), is the efficient handling of interactions between project stakeholders. According to differing definitions provided by Karlsen (2002) and Bourne and Walker (2006), stakeholder management is the management of activities related to project stakeholders. In contrast, the latter suggests that the management process promotes the employment of proactive project managers to mitigate the adverse effects of stakeholder activities and ensure stakeholder participation in achieving project objectives.

Implementing efficient stakeholder management in project delivery has a significant impact on the project's successful conclusion, according to El-Naway, Mahdi, Badwy, and Al-Deen (2015). The capacity to lead diverse people who are invested in the project is what makes it successful. It is important to comprehend the needs and substantial interests of project stakeholders throughout the construction phase.

According to the research that is currently available, a project's success should take into account not just the triangle factors—cost, time, and quality—but also the efficient

management of the involved stakeholders (Jepsen & Eskerod, 2013). Stakeholder management, which establishes a relationship between a project and its stakeholders, is critical to the project's success (Scolobig & Späth, 2017). Furthermore, Späth and Scolobig (2017) emphasize that a project's motivation is to serve its stakeholders.

According to research by Kevin Ogonji Muluka et al. (2021) published in the International Journal of Project Management, stakeholder management procedures were seen as independent factors, while project performance was regarded as a dependent variable. The Tero (2014) study found that the stakeholder management procedures that affect project success include stakeholder identification, engagement, and empowerment in project review, results, and stakeholder engagement in project implementation. A study was also carried out by Macharia (2013) to ascertain the impact of stakeholders' involvement in project identification, planning, execution, and review on project outcomes. The results indicate that the largest contributor to the project's success was the stakeholders' participation in its execution. According to Macharia's (2013) research, a project is considered successful if it fulfills its timeline, stakeholder satisfaction, and budgetary restrictions.

A conceptual framework has been provided as follows, based on the aforementioned ideas and studies that have been carried out, including the Project Management Institute PMBOK Guide, sixth edition, 2017: The primary focus of the study was the PMI-based project stakeholder management methodology (2017).

Figure 1. Conceptual framework



*Source researcher's construction 2023*

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3. Introduction**

The research design, study location, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, questionnaires, validity and reliability, data collection processes, and data analysis techniques were all covered in this chapter's discussion of the methodology utilized to carry out the study. The purpose of this research is to collect the information needed to measure the role of stakeholder management in project success. To realize the objectives and answer the basic research questions, the following research design and methodology have been used.

#### **3.1 Research Setting**

The study was carried out at schools that are affiliated with the School Network Project in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This also holds for private schools that have committed to the program. This clarifies the physical places, resources, and technical infrastructure that these institutions provide, all of which are necessary for carrying out the coding education program.

Examining and analyzing the interactions and exchanges amongst the many stakeholders in the school network project was the aim of the study. This group of stakeholders includes the project implementation team, private schools (teachers, PSTA, directors), and education bureau officers. Understanding social dynamics, communication channels, and cooperation amongst various stakeholders is necessary to get insight into the opportunities and challenges of stakeholder engagement. By examining these variables, the study seeks to further knowledge of how stakeholders' management impacts project success during the project, exchange information, and determine how their cooperation—or lack thereof—affects the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

The study employed a mixed-methods strategy, which collects and analyzes data using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. This strategy makes use of the advantages of both approaches to offer a more thorough grasp of a research issue. A mixed-methods strategy combines the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative methods to offer insightful answers to challenging research problems.

In this study, a quantitative research approach was adopted because, according to Saunders (2009), it facilitates the exploration, presentation, description, and examination of linkages and trends in the data. In addition, a qualitative method was selected for the construction of this investigation. Research that uses methods to offer detailed interpretations of market events without relying on numerical measurement is known as qualitative research (Zikmund, 2008).

### **3.3 Research Design**

A descriptive research approach was employed in the study to evaluate the variables influencing management stakeholder participation in school network project success. Finding out "what is happening, seeking new insights, asking questions, and assessing phenomena in a new light" can be accomplished with the help of a descriptive research design (Robson, 2002). Clarifying your knowledge of a problem is especially helpful in situations where we are unaware of its exact nature. An issue that is not well defined might be investigated using an exploratory research approach, which also improves comprehension of the current issue.

### **3.4. Target Population**

The group of individuals or items to which the researcher wishes to apply the research's findings is known as the target population (Borg and Gall, 1989). Stakeholders in the School Network Project comprise the ten target groups for this research project. Teachers, school principals, PTAs, administrators and focal persons in private schools were also included in the study's target group; they were the investigation's particular focus. The stakeholders who comprise the target population include 63 individuals from the project implementation team, which includes the trainer, project manager, salesperson, curriculum

developer, marketing manager, trainer officer, project coordinator, admission officer, and social media content creator.

The study has investigated and evaluated the linkages and interactions among this wide variety of stakeholders. Accordingly, gaining insight into the possibilities and difficulties associated with stakeholder involvement requires an understanding of the social dynamics, lines of communication, and cooperation among different stakeholders. Furthermore, learning more about the facilities, equipment, and technological prowess of these schools would help determine how best to conduct coding education projects.

### **3.5. Sampling Design and Sample Size**

According to Babbie, E. (2016) Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers intentionally select participants or cases based on specific characteristics or criteria relevant to the research question. This method is often used when researchers aim to gain in-depth insights or understand a particular phenomenon. As a result, Purposive sampling was used to choose all 63 individuals from the implementation team for the school network project and ten private schools that are actively involved with iCog ACC's school network project.

### **3.6. Sampling Technique**

In this research, census sampling was used. According to Lohr, S. (2019), Census sampling is a method of data collection in which a subset of the population is selected to represent the entire population and to gather information about the entire population. This type of sampling is used when it is feasible and practical to collect data from every individual in the population. It provides a comprehensive and accurate representation of the entire population, as opposed to traditional sampling methods which only gather information from a subset of the population.

The questionnaire was meticulously designed and crafted to gather insights from the implementation team of the school network project, with specific roles and numbers of the project team outlined in the table below:

**Table 3. 1. Samples of the study**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Population size</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Trainer</b>	28
<b>2</b>	<b>Project manager</b>	1
<b>3</b>	<b>Project coordinator</b>	5
<b>4</b>	<b>Chief operating officer</b>	3
<b>5</b>	<b>Trainer officer</b>	5
<b>6</b>	<b>Curriculum developers</b>	5
<b>7</b>	<b>marketing manager</b>	1
<b>8</b>	<b>Social media and content creators</b>	2
<b>9</b>	<b>Sells</b>	13
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>63</b>

Source field Survey 2023

### **3.7. Data Collection Instrument**

In this study, two-part structured questionnaires were developed. The demographic composition of the respondents was examined in the first phase of the research instrument. A questionnaire developed for Part II was inspired by an iCog-ACC project.

### **3.8. Data Distribution and Collection Procedure**

The iCog-ACC Company was made aware of the study that was being conducted there. The investigator visited the designated schools to carry out interviews. To guarantee a seamless procedure and prevent any disruption for the participants, appointments were scheduled in advance with the schools. It was emphasized throughout the research that all the supplied information would only be used for the study.

### **3.9. Validity and Reliability**

#### **3.9.1. Validity**

Refers to how accurate an instrument is at measuring what it is trying to measure. To this end, the content or validity of the data collection instrument was determined through discussion with the research advisor.

#### **3.9.2 Reliability of the Measurement**

Reliability is all about consistency. It measures the consistency of responses across either all the questions or a subgroup of the questions from your questionnaire (Saunders, 2009).

The coefficient of reliability was measured through Cronbach’s alpha. The value of the test was between zero and one. The higher value indicates high internal consistency in the items. According to George and Mallery (2003), the reliability test scale is Excellent (1–0.9), Good (greater than 0.8), Acceptable (greater than 0.7), Questionable (greater than 0.6), Poor (greater than 0.5), and Unacceptable (less than 0.5).

**Table 3.2 Reliability test scale**

<b>Alpha Value</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>1-0.9</b>	Excellent
<b>&gt;0.8</b>	Good
<b>&gt;0.7</b>	Acceptable
<b>&gt;0.6</b>	Questionable
<b>&gt;0.5</b>	Poor
<b>&lt;0.5</b>	Unacceptable

Source by George and Mallery (2003)

### **3.10 Ethical consideration**

A key element in the successful completion of this study is the participants' willingness to supply the required data. Consequently, it was determined to carry out the study with honesty and decency toward the participants and the information they gave. The following are some significant moral precepts that were adhered to: (a) Do No Harm: preventing research subjects from acting in ways that might be harmful. (a) Anonymity and privacy are guaranteed to study participants. (c) confidentially: Every piece of information that a study participant submits is treated with the highest confidentiality.

### **3.11 Method of Data Analysis**

The processes involved in emphasizing relevant information, generating recommendations, and supporting decision-making are data gathering, modeling, and conversion (Sharma, 2005). Thematic analysis and structural coding were used to decrease the amount of data. After gathering the relevant data, the findings were adequately totaled,



tabulated, evaluated, interpreted, and summarized to generate suggestions and conclusions. To analyze percentages, a variety of techniques and the SPSS/2021 version were employed. This is justified by the possibility that the% will be sufficient for both data analysis and concise and clear information transmission. The responses were edited and filtered before analysis. Technical knowledge was found by analyzing the data with descriptive statistics. The results of the data were displayed in tables.

### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

The collected data were analyzed through the SPSS version 2021 software package. In doing the quantitative analysis, the research was conducted by descriptive data analysis such as frequencies, percentages, the mean, and standard deviation to assess the effect of project stakeholder management on project success.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Utilizing transcription techniques that mostly rely on word meanings, the qualitative data for this study was collected. Translation and interpretation of expressions' meanings are thus required, as is their categorization based on sub-themes pertaining to the study's goals. In order to comprehend the subjects of study more fully, qualitative research emphasizes verbal descriptions of phenomena. The focus of this kind of research is on the subjective evaluation of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors; the collected data are not subjected to comprehensive quantitative analysis.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Result of the Study, Interpretation, and Discussion

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected during the research process and the findings derived from that analysis. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed account of the methods used in the analysis, the results obtained, and the interpretation of those results as well as discussion in the context of the research objectives. The data collected from the stakeholders involved in the iCog-ACC Company's school network project forms the basis of this analysis. The data has been processed and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools and techniques, ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings

#### 4.1. Response Rate

Out of the total 63 questionnaires that were distributed to respondents, 59 (93.65%) were properly filled out and returned. Only 4 (6%) questionnaires were unreturned, and the analysis was conducted based on the returned 59 questionnaires, which had a 93.65% response rate. The response rate is enough for further analysis.

#### 4.2. Demographic characteristics of Respondents

Table 4. 1 Demographic Information

Demographic Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	37	62.7
	Female	22	37
Age	26-30	39	66
	31-35	11	18.6
	36-40	9	15
	Above 40	0	0
Education level	Undergraduate	43	72.88
	Postgraduate	16	21
Current Position	Trainer	28	47

	Project manager	1	1.69
	Project coordinator	5	8
	Chief operating officer	3	5
	Trainer officer	5	8
	Curriculum developers	5	8
	marketing manager	1	1.69
	Social media and content creators	2	3
	Sells	13	22
<b>Work experience</b>	1-5 years	30	50.8
	6-10 years	13	22
	11-15 years	6	10

Source field Survey 2023

#### 4.3 Analysis of Demographic Data:

The data provided reflects the demographic distribution of a certain group. The majority of respondents are male (62.7%), while 37% are female; most respondents fall within the 26–30 age range (66%), followed by the 31–35 age range (18.6%), and the 36–40 age range (15%); and there are no respondents above 40 years of age. The data is heavily skewed towards younger respondents, with 66% falling within the 26–30 age range. This means the findings may not fully capture the perspectives and experiences of older individuals, particularly those above 40 years of age.

In terms of education, the majority of respondents are first-degree holders (72.88%), while 21% have postgraduate degrees. The majority of respondents are first-degree holders (72.88%). This suggests that the findings may be more reflective of the experiences of individuals with a certain level of education, potentially limiting the applicability of the findings to individuals with different educational backgrounds.

Regarding the position of respondents, 47% of them are trainers, followed by sales (22%), project coordinators, trainer officers, and curriculum developers (each 8%), chief operating officers (5%), social media and content creators (3%), and project managers and marketing managers (each 1.69%).

Half (50.8%) of the respondents have 1–5 years of work experience, followed by those with 6–10 years of experience (22%), and 11–15 years of experience (10%). The data shows a diverse range of positions and work experience. However, with half of the respondents having 1–5 years of work experience, the findings may be more reflective of the perspectives of individuals early in their careers.

Table 4. 2. Description of Stakeholder Identification Process

Item code	Description of Items
SIQ 1	Stakeholders' needs and expectations were investigated.
SIQ 2	At the start of the project, stakeholder areas of interest were identified.
SIQ 3	Influences from stakeholders were anticipated when the project started.
SIQ 4	Key stakeholders were correctly identified.
SIQ 5	Establishing stakeholder identification early on in the project is critical to its success.

Source: Field Survey 2023

Table 4. 3 Descriptive Statistics: Stakeholder Identification

Descriptive Statistics	SIQ 1	SIQ 2	SIQ 3	SIQ 4	SIQ 5
Valid N	59	59	59	59	59
Mean	3.71	3.75	3.27	3.58	3.90
Std. Deviation	1.071	.978	1.086	1.088	1.077
Minimum	1	2	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Average Mean Value = 3.6417</b>					
<b>Overall Std. Deviation =.53944</b>					

Source: Field survey 2023

The information given reflects the answers to the five survey items (SIQ 1 through SIQ 5). Probably on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest score, the responses were given. Accordingly, the question of whether "stakeholders' needs and expectations were investigated" at project initiation was posed to the respondents. The average score was 3.71, with a standard deviation of 1.071, as shown in Table 4.3. This suggests that respondents are generally satisfied or in moderate agreement, yet there is some variation in their answers.

Accordingly, during the project's beginning, respondents were asked to provide their opinions on whether or not "stakeholder areas of interest were identified at the start of the project."

Table 4.3 shows that the average score was 3.75, marginally higher than the previous average, and the standard deviation was 978, marginally lower. This indicates a slightly lower degree of response variability and a comparable degree of agreement or satisfaction to SIQ 1. Accordingly, upon project initiation, respondents were asked to share their opinions on whether or not "influences from stakeholders were anticipated when the project started." Table 4.3 shows that the average score was 3.27, with a 1.086 standard deviation. This indicates a lower level of agreement or satisfaction compared to SIQ 1 and SIQ 2, with a similar level of variability in responses.

In line with this, respondents were asked to express their views on whether the "key stakeholders were correctly identified." during project initiation. As indicated in Table 4.3, the average score was 3.58, with a standard deviation of 1.088. This suggests a moderate level of agreement or satisfaction, with some variability in responses. In line with this, respondents were asked to express their views on whether "establishing stakeholder identification early on in the project is critical to its success." during project initiation. As indicated in Table 4.3, the average score was the highest at 3.90, with a standard deviation of 1.077. This indicates a high level of agreement or satisfaction among respondents, with some variability in responses.

The overall average mean value across all items was 3.6417, suggesting a moderate level of agreement or satisfaction across all survey items. The overall standard deviation was 53944, indicating a moderate level of variability in responses across all items. The scores suggest there is room for improvement in these areas. The lower score for anticipating stakeholder influence suggests this is an area that could benefit from more focused attention. The high score for the importance of early stakeholder identification underscores this as a critical factor for project success. The moderate variability in responses across all items suggests differing opinions among respondents, indicating the need for a nuanced approach to stakeholder management. These insights can guide improvements in project initiation practices, particularly around stakeholder management.

Therefore, it is possible to say that effective stakeholder management in the iCog-ACC Company's school network project involves a thorough understanding of stakeholders' needs and expectations, identification of their areas of interest, the anticipation of their influences, correct identification of key stakeholders, and early stakeholder identification. These factors

are interrelated and collectively contribute to the successful management of stakeholders in the project.

Table 4. 4: Stakeholder Engagement planning

Statement		SA %	A%	N %	SD %	D %
<b>Plan for Stakeholder Engagement</b>						
<b>Stakeholders engagement plan provides an actionable plan to interact effectively with stakeholders</b>	Frequency	41	13		2	3
	Percentage	69	22		3	5
<b>A strategy has been devised to address the interests and constraints of all stakeholders.</b>	Frequency	13	34	8	4	2
	Percentage	22	57.6	13.5	6.77	3
<b>The project's impact on stakeholders is identified through the plan for stakeholder engagement.</b>	Frequency	28	17	5	3	6
	Percentage	47	28.8	8	5	10
<b>Planned stakeholder engagement helps the project manager to organize several methods for managing stakeholders' expectations and involving them in the project.</b>	Frequency	39	14			6
	Percentage	66	23.7			10
<b>A plan for engaging stakeholders helps the project reach its goals.</b>	Frequency	35	11	2	8	3
	Percentage	59	18.6	3	13.5	5

Source: Field Survey 2023

The data displayed demonstrates the reactions of stakeholders to various statements made about a plan for stakeholder engagement. Most respondents (69%) who strongly agree with this statement say that a stakeholder engagement strategy provides an effective method to connect with stakeholders. The remaining responders, in a small minority, disagree (3%) or strongly disagree (5%).

Most (57.6%) strongly agree that a strategy has been devised to consider the interests and limits of all stakeholders. Of those, 22% strongly agree. However, a significant fraction (13.5%) does not agree or disagree, and a negligible minority (6.77%) severely disagrees or disagrees (3%).

The stakeholder engagement strategy identifies the project's impact on stakeholders, according to nearly half of the respondents (47%) and 28.8% of those who agree. Nonetheless, a sizable percentage (8%) disagrees, 5% strongly disagree, and 5% neither agree nor disagree.

Planned stakeholder engagement helps the project manager organize multiple techniques for managing stakeholders' expectations and involving them in the project, according to a significant majority (66%) who strongly agree with this statement (23.7%), and the remaining ten percent of respondents, however, don't agree.

A plan for involving stakeholders helps the project achieve its goals, according to the majority of respondents (59%) who strongly agree with this statement (18.6%). Nonetheless, a sizable percentage disagree (13.5%), strongly disagree (5%), and do not agree or disagree (3%).

Thus, these findings strongly suggest that effective stakeholder communication, through strategies for engagement, consideration of interests, identification of impacts, management of expectations, and involvement, contributes significantly to the success of school network projects in the context of the iCog-ACC Company.

However, there is a minority that either neither agrees nor disagrees or outright disagrees with certain statements related to the impact of the project on stakeholders and the effectiveness of planned stakeholder engagement in achieving project objectives.

**Table 4. 5: Manage Stakeholder Engagement**

Statement		SA %	A %	N %	SD %	D%
<b>Manage Stakeholder Engagement</b>						
<b>You were encouraging stakeholders to communicate with you.</b>	Frequency	48	11			
	Percentage	81	18.6			
<b>Stakeholders were actively involved in project demos, workshops, and events.</b>	Frequency	35	19	2		3
	Percentage	59	32	3		5
<b>Creating partnerships is a good way to involve stakeholders.</b>	Frequency	51	8			
	Percentage	86	13.59			
<b>Engaging stakeholders is thought to be essential to a project's success.</b>	Frequency	39	15	3	2	
	Percentage	66	25	5	3	
<b>Engagement of stakeholders in recognizing, mitigating, and reassessing risks leads to project success.</b>	Frequency	42	13			4
	Percentage	71	22			6.77

Source: Field survey 2023

The data provided reflects the responses of stakeholders to various statements about managing stakeholder engagement. An overwhelming majority (81%) strongly agree that encouraging stakeholders to communicate is a good practice, with an additional 18.6% in agreement. In terms of active involvement in project demos, workshops, and events, most respondents (59%) strongly agree, while 32% agree. However, a small percentage neither agrees or disagrees (3%), and 5% disagree.

In creating partnerships to involve stakeholders, a significant majority (86%) strongly agrees, and 13.59% agree. There were no respondents who disagreed or were neutral.

Regarding the essentiality of stakeholder engagement to a project's success, the majority of respondents (66%) strongly agree, with an additional 25% in agreement. However, a small percentage neither agrees or disagrees (5%), and 3% disagree.

In terms of stakeholder engagement in risk management, the majority (71%) strongly agree that involving stakeholders in recognizing, mitigating, and reassessing risks leads to project success, while 22% agree. However, 6.77% of respondents disagree.

These findings suggest that stakeholders recognize the importance of communication, active involvement, and creating partnerships in managing stakeholder engagement. The majority of respondents strongly agree that these practices are beneficial and essential for project success.



However, there are still smaller percentages of stakeholders who either disagree or neither agree nor disagree with certain statements, particularly regarding the role of stakeholder engagement in mitigating risks. This indicates that while overall support for these practices is high, there may be areas that require further attention or improvement to ensure full stakeholder buy-in and positive project outcomes. This suggests that these practices are seen as key to project success.

**Table 4. 6: Monitor Stakeholder Engagement**

Statement		SA %	A%	N%	SD %	D%
<b>Monitor Stakeholder Engagement</b>						
<b>You know the status of engagement among stakeholders.</b>	Frequency	4	5	9	23	18
	Percentage	6.77	8	15	38.9	30.5
<b>Corrective and preventive activities were incorporated to increase stakeholder engagement.</b>	Frequency	11	7	2	31	8
	Percentage	18.6	11.86	3	52.5	13.5
<b>It is vital to keep information about the stakeholder community up to date.</b>	Frequency	48	11			
	Percentage	81	18.6			
<b>The stakeholders' register was updated with information as a result of monitoring stakeholder engagement.</b>	Frequency	7	2	3	39	8
	Percentage	11.8	3	6	66	13.5
<b>Throughout the project's life cycle, keeping an eye on stakeholder engagement will help to maintain or improve its efficacy.</b>	Frequency	24	23	5	7	
	Percentage	40.6	38.9	8	11.8	

Source field survey 2023

Stakeholder responses to various statements regarding monitoring engagement by stakeholders are represented in the data that is provided. A sizable majority (38.9% disagree, 30.5% strongly disagree) don't think they are aware of the stakeholders' level of engagement. Merely 8% of participants agree, while 6.77% strongly agree, and 15% stay undecided.

More than half respondents (52.5%) do not think that corrective and preventive activities were put in place to improve stakeholder participation. Merely 11.86% of respondents agree, 18.6% strongly agree, and 3% are neutral. The overwhelming majority (81% strongly agree, 18.6% agree) think it's important to maintain up-to-date information for stakeholders in the community. On this point, none of the respondents disagreed or stayed neutral.

The majority of respondents (66% disagree, 13.5% strongly disagree) don't think that information from stakeholder engagement monitoring was added to the stakeholders' register. Just 3% of respondents agree, 11.8% strongly agree, and 6% are neutral.

Regarding the claim that tracking stakeholder participation throughout a project's life cycle will help sustain or improve its efficacy, responses are more evenly distributed. 38.9% of respondents agree, and 40.6% strongly agree. Nonetheless, a sizable portion either disagrees (11.8%) or neither agrees nor disagrees (8%).

The findings suggest that the key challenges hindering stakeholder management in the iCog-ACC Company's school network project include communication or transparency about stakeholder engagement levels, implementation of corrective and preventive activities, maintaining up-to-date stakeholder information, updating the stakeholder register, and continuous monitoring of stakeholder engagement. These insights can guide improvements in stakeholder management practices.

**Table 4. 7: Project Success**

Statements		SA%	A%	N%	SD%	D%
<b>Project Success</b>						
<b>The project was completed as planned.</b>	Frequency	2	6	4	34	13
	Percentage	3	10	6.77	57.6	22
<b>The project expense was incurred in the manner specified.</b>	Frequency	18	27	7	2	5
	Percentage	30.5	45.7	11.86	3	8
<b>The project met the quality and standard requirements.</b>	Frequency	23	29	1	4	2
	Percentage	38.9	49	1.6	6.77	3
<b>Stakeholders were pleased with the project.</b>	Frequency	10	9	15	17	8
	Percentage	16.9	15	25	28.8	13.5

Source: Field survey 2023

The data provided shows how stakeholders responded to different statements about the project's success. The project was completed according to plan, according to the majority of

respondents (57.6%) who strongly disagreed (22%) with this statement. Merely 10% of respondents agree, 3% strongly agree, and 6.77% are neutral.

Regarding the project expense, the majority of respondents agrees (45.7%) or strongly agrees (30.5%) that it was incurred in the way described. Still, a minor fraction disagree (3%), strongly disagree (8%), and neither agree nor disagree (11.86%). According to the majority of respondents, the project complied with the quality and standard standards (49%) or strongly disagreed (38.9%). Still, a tiny fraction disagree (6.77%), strongly disagree (3%), and neither agree nor disagree (1.6%).

Here, the replies are dispersed more fairly. 28.8% of respondents disagree, 16.9% strongly agree, 15% agree, 25% are neutral, and 13.5% strongly disagree that stakeholders were happy with the project. Therefore, these findings indicate that while there are positive aspects of stakeholder engagement and collaboration, such as agreement on project expenses, there are also areas for improvement, particularly in managing expectations regarding project completion, quality standards, and overall stakeholder satisfaction. These insights can guide iCog-ACC Company in enhancing stakeholder engagement and collaboration in future projects to increase their overall success rate.

#### **4.3. ANALYSIS FOR QUALITATIVE DATA**

The transcription of the interviews was the first step in the analysis process. This entailed writing up the entire transcript of the taped interview and recording which words were said by whom. The process of coding, which entailed finding themes in the interview material, came after transcribing. The analysis provided highlights the importance of stakeholder management in the context of a school network project. The ten focal persons selected from the project's target schools are responsible for overseeing the entire project and ensuring its successful completion.

#### **4.3.1. The importance of stakeholder management in School network project success**

(Metcalf and Sastrowardoyo, 2013, McKenna and Baume, 2015) have offered methods for stakeholder groupings, the aim of this study is to offer an instrument based on a rigorous approach, to examine multiple stakeholder perception of project success, from stakeholders other than the project manager. This will determine the reasons for the apparent high failure rate of projects. Specifically it will achieve a greater understanding of how senior management, project core team and project recipient stakeholder groups perceive project success and how this perception contributes to its achievement. This understanding aims to enable those, who embark on projects, to manage multiple stakeholder expectations more effectively, and thereby increase the number of successful projects.

The above research findings highlighted in the analysis align with the thesis's perspective on the significance of stakeholder management in achieving project success. However, the thesis provides a contextual perspective by focusing on specific findings related to a coding project (School network) within the Ethiopian context as mentioned below:

The analysis points out that stakeholder management plays a critical role in the success of the project. Stakeholders, who may have direct or indirect influence over the project outcomes, can contribute significantly to achieving the project objectives if they are properly managed.

The analysis concludes that stakeholder management is not just a best practice in project management but also a strategic necessity. It fosters positive relationships, enhances communication, and promotes collaboration among stakeholders, which ultimately leads to successful project delivery. Overall, the analysis emphasizes the importance of effectively managing stakeholders in the context of the school network project. By doing so, project managers can maximize the likelihood of achieving project objectives and ensuring the project's success.

The analysis provided reflects on the inadequate stakeholder management practices within iCog-ACC Company's school network projects. The focal person acknowledges that the stakeholder identification and prioritization processes have been unsatisfactory, resulting in miscommunication and misalignment of project goals.

### **4.3.2. Strategies employed to engage and manage stakeholders effectively**

A study by Smith (2018) investigated stakeholder engagement strategies in projects and their impact on project outcomes. The research identified the importance of involving diverse stakeholders, including clients, policymakers, and community members, in project planning, decision-making, and implementation. Strategies such as co-design workshops, focus groups, and stakeholder forums were found to enhance stakeholder participation, collaboration, satisfaction and leading to improved services.

While the research findings by Smith highlight the importance of stakeholder engagement strategies in projects and their influence on project outcomes. This thesis specifically focuses on ineffective strategies for engaging and managing stakeholders, as well as addressing the challenges that exist with stakeholders in the context of the School Network project in Ethiopia.

The analysis further highlights the ineffective strategies for engaging and managing stakeholders. Regular communication has been a challenge, leading to a lack of transparency and trust between the company and its stakeholders. Additionally, managing stakeholder expectations has been unsuccessful, resulting in dissatisfaction and conflict.

The analysis concludes by acknowledging that the current stakeholder management practices are inadequate and require significant improvement. The focal person suggests investing more resources in stakeholder identification and prioritization, improving communication strategies, and better managing stakeholder expectations to ensure the success of school network projects.

Overall, the analysis points out the specific areas where improvements are needed to enhance stakeholder management within iCog-ACC Company. By addressing these shortcomings, the company can foster better communication, transparency, and trust with stakeholders. Furthermore, effectively managing stakeholder expectations would help in preventing conflicts and ensuring the success of school network projects.

In conclusion, the analysis provides a roadmap for iCog-ACC Company to improve its stakeholder management practices. By implementing these recommendations, the company can enhance stakeholder engagement and collaboration, thereby increasing the overall success rate of its school network projects.

#### **4.3.3 Challenges Faced by Stakeholders Regarding School Network Project**

A research done by Ika (2009) examines the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project success. The author argues that projects with high levels of stakeholder engagement are more likely to achieve success in terms of meeting objectives, delivering value, and satisfying stakeholders' expectations. Ika's review of project management literature underscores the positive impact of stakeholder engagement on project performance and emphasizes the need for continued research in this area. While the statement by Ika (2009) on the connection between stakeholder engagement and project success. It emphasizes that high levels of stakeholder engagement contribute to achieving project objectives, delivering value, and meeting stakeholders' expectations. Furthermore, Ika's review stresses the positive influence of stakeholder engagement.

On the other hand this thesis provides practical insights into challenges faced by iCog ACC company regarding stakeholder management in school network projects as mentioned below: The analysis provided highlights several key challenges and barriers faced by iCog-ACC Company in stakeholder management within the context of school network projects. These challenges include stakeholder identification, communication, managing expectations, and stakeholder engagement.

According to the respondents to the interview, one of the primary challenges is identifying all relevant stakeholders. Given the complexity of school network projects, there are often numerous stakeholders involved, some of whom may be overlooked during the initial stages of the project. Ensuring effective and timely communication with all stakeholders is another significant challenge. Overall, the analysis identifies these challenges and barriers to stakeholder management within iCog-ACC Company's school network projects. The recognition of these challenges is crucial for the development of tailored strategies and actions to overcome them. By addressing stakeholder identification, communication, managing expectations, and stakeholder engagement, iCog-ACC Company can enhance its

stakeholder management practices and increase the likelihood of achieving successful outcomes in school network projects.

Therefore, it is possible to say that the analysis provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by iCog-ACC Company in stakeholder management. Addressing these challenges is crucial for the company to enhance its stakeholder management practices and increase the likelihood of achieving successful outcomes in its school network projects. This will require a concerted effort on the part of the company, involving strategic planning, resource allocation, and continuous monitoring and improvement of stakeholder management practices.

#### **4.3.4 Stakeholder communication contribution to school network project success**

A study by Lee (2020) identified common barriers such as conflicting stakeholder interests, power dynamics, resistance to change, and lack of stakeholder engagement as challenges in effective stakeholder management. Overcoming these challenges requires project managers to adopt inclusive communication practices, address stakeholder concerns proactively, and foster a culture of collaboration and shared decision-making among stakeholders.

Respectively this thesis emphasizes the importance of effective stakeholder communication for project success, ensuring clarity and engagement among stakeholders. Project managers should prioritize communication and stakeholder engagement to enhance project outcomes mentioned below:

The analysis of the respondents' feedback reveals the critical role of effective stakeholder communication in project success. They firmly responded that, firstly, clear communication ensures that all stakeholders have a comprehensive understanding of the project's objectives, plans, and progress. This is crucial because it aligns expectations and prevents misunderstandings that could derail the project. When everyone involved in the project has a clear understanding of what is expected, it reduces the chances of conflicts or confusion arising later in the project lifecycle. Secondly, regular communication keeps stakeholders engaged and invested in the project. Stakeholder engagement is a key factor in project success because it ensures that everyone involved feels valued and heard. When stakeholders are regularly updated and consulted, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and commitment towards the project, which can lead to increased motivation and productivity.

In conclusion, effective stakeholder communication plays a pivotal role in project success by ensuring a clear understanding of project objectives and keeping stakeholders engaged. This highlights the need for project managers to prioritize communication and stakeholder engagement in their project management strategies.

#### **4.3.5 Stakeholder engagement impacts the overall success rate of school network projects**

A study by Li . (2019) investigated the relationship between stakeholder satisfaction and project success in the context of information technology projects. The results indicated that stakeholder satisfaction significantly influences project success, with satisfied stakeholders more likely to support the project, provide valuable feedback, and contribute to its successful implementation. Effective stakeholder engagement strategies were identified as critical for enhancing stakeholder satisfaction and project outcomes.

The research findings by Li.C corroborate the thesis's assertion about the influence of stakeholder engagement on school network projects overall. This research provides a comprehensive analysis of recent data from the year of 2023, elucidating the significance of stakeholder engagement and collaboration in the success of school network projects at iCog-ACC Company within the Ethiopian context.

The analysis of the respondents' feedback underscores the pivotal role of stakeholder engagement and collaboration in the success of school network projects at iCog-ACC Company. Stakeholders, with their diverse perspectives, expertise, and resources, significantly contribute to the success of a project. Their support and buy-in not only facilitate smoother project implementation but also increase the likelihood of achieving project objectives. This is particularly important in the context of school network projects, which often involve multiple parties with varying interests and objectives. Moreover, stakeholder engagement fosters a sense of ownership among stakeholders. This sense of ownership can lead to increased commitment and active participation, which are crucial for the successful execution of a project. In conclusion, stakeholder engagement and collaboration are not just beneficial but essential for the success of school network projects. They create a conducive environment for effective project execution and lead to improved project outcomes.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1. SUMMARY**

The findings presented in the provided text emphasize the critical importance of stakeholder management in the success of school network projects within iCog-ACC Company. The analysis highlights the role of stakeholder management in fostering positive relationships, enhancing communication, and promoting collaboration among stakeholders, ultimately leading to successful project delivery. It also identifies specific areas where improvements are needed, such as stakeholder identification, communication, managing expectations, and stakeholder engagement.

The analysis underscores the need for iCog-ACC Company to invest more resources in stakeholder identification and prioritization, improve communication strategies, and better manage stakeholder expectations to ensure the success of school network projects. Furthermore, it emphasizes the pivotal role of effective stakeholder communication in project success, as clear communication ensures a comprehensive understanding of project objectives and keeps stakeholders engaged and invested in the project.

Stakeholder engagement and collaboration are highlighted as essential for the success of school network projects, as stakeholders significantly contribute to project success through their diverse perspectives, expertise, and resources. Their support and buy-in facilitate smoother project implementation and increase the likelihood of achieving project objectives. Additionally, stakeholder engagement fosters a sense of ownership among stakeholders, leading to increased commitment and active participation, while collaboration facilitates the pooling of resources and expertise, ultimately leading to better project outcomes.

In conclusion, the analysis provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by iCog-ACC Company in stakeholder management and emphasizes the need for strategic planning, resource allocation, and continuous monitoring and improvement of stakeholder management practices to enhance the likelihood of achieving successful outcomes in school network projects.

## 5.2. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the stakeholder engagement plan reveals a generally positive perception among respondents. The majority recognize the value of such a plan, particularly in providing an actionable strategy for effective interaction with stakeholders, managing their expectations, and aiding in the achievement of project goals. However, the data also highlights areas that may benefit from further attention. These include addressing the interests and constraints of all stakeholders and identifying the project's impact on them. While these areas received a positive response overall, the variation in responses suggests that there may be room for improvement or a need for further clarification.

While the stakeholder engagement plan is seen as a valuable tool, continuous efforts to enhance its effectiveness and address stakeholder concerns can contribute to its success. This could involve more transparent communication, inclusive decision-making processes, and regular feedback mechanisms to ensure all stakeholders' interests and constraints are adequately addressed. By doing so, the stakeholder engagement plan can become an even more powerful tool for achieving project goals.

The result on managing stakeholder engagement reveals a strong consensus among respondents on the importance of key practices. These include encouraging communication, actively involving stakeholders in events, creating partnerships, and engaging stakeholders in risk management. The overwhelming majority of respondents strongly agree that these practices are beneficial, indicating their critical role in project success. However, it's worth noting that while there is strong agreement on the value of these practices, there are still a small number of respondents who disagree or are neutral. This suggests that while these practices are generally effective, there may be room for improvement or adaptation to specific project contexts. In conclusion, the data underscores the importance of active stakeholder engagement in project management. Encouraging open communication, fostering partnerships, involving stakeholders in events, and engaging them in risk management are seen as key strategies. However, continuous improvement and adaptation to specific stakeholder needs and project contexts are crucial to maximizing the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement.

The result of monitoring stakeholder engagement reveals some critical insights. Knowledge of Stakeholder Engagement Status: The majority of respondents disagree (38.9%) or strongly disagree (30.5%) that they know the status of engagement among stakeholders. This indicates a significant communication gap and suggests that stakeholders may not be adequately informed about the status of their engagement. This could potentially lead to misunderstandings and misalignments, impacting the overall project outcomes. Incorporating Corrective and Preventive Activities: Over half of the respondents (52.5%) disagree that corrective and preventive activities were incorporated to increase stakeholder engagement. This suggests that there may be a lack of proactive measures to address issues and improve stakeholder engagement. This could be a potential area for improvement. Keeping Stakeholder Information Up-to-Date: An overwhelming majority (81%) strongly agrees that it is vital to keep information about the stakeholder community up-to-date. This underscores the importance of maintaining current and accurate stakeholder information, which is crucial for effective stakeholder management.

Updating Stakeholder Register: Most respondents (66%) disagree that the stakeholders' register was updated with information as a result of monitoring stakeholder engagement. This suggests that the stakeholder register may not be effectively utilized or updated regularly, which could impact the accuracy of stakeholder information and the effectiveness of stakeholder management. Monitoring Stakeholder Engagement Throughout the Project Life Cycle: The responses are more evenly distributed here. 40.6% of respondents strongly agree that keeping an eye on stakeholder engagement throughout the project's life cycle will help to maintain or improve its efficacy, while 38.9% agree. This suggests a consensus on the importance of continuous monitoring of stakeholder engagement.

In conclusion, while stakeholders recognize the importance of keeping stakeholder information up-to-date and monitoring stakeholder engagement throughout the project life cycle, there are significant concerns about the lack of knowledge about the status of stakeholder engagement and the incorporation of corrective and preventive activities. This highlights the need for improved communication, regular updates to the stakeholder register, and proactive measures to enhance stakeholder engagement.

The result of the project reveals some key insights and areas of concern: **Project Completion:** The majority of respondents disagree (57.6%) or strongly disagree (22%) that the project was completed as planned. This suggests that there may have been deviations from the initial plan, leading to dissatisfaction among stakeholders. This could be due to a variety of factors, such as changes in project scope, unforeseen challenges, or ineffective project management. **Project Expense:** Most respondents agree (45.7%) or strongly agree (30.5%) that the project expense was incurred in the manner specified. This indicates that the project was largely successful in terms of financial management and budget adherence.

However, a small percentage of respondents expressed neutrality, disagreement, or strong disagreement, suggesting that there may have been some issues or concerns related to project expenses. **Quality and Standard Requirements:** The majority of respondents agree (49%) or strongly agree (38.9%) that the project met the quality and standard requirements. This is a positive indication of the project's success in delivering quality outcomes. However, a small percentage of respondents expressed neutrality, disagreement, or strong disagreement, indicating potential areas for improvement in meeting quality and standard requirements. **Stakeholder Satisfaction:** The responses are more evenly distributed here, suggesting varied perceptions of stakeholder satisfaction. While some stakeholders were pleased with the project, a significant percentage disagreed or was neutral. This highlights the importance of effective stakeholder engagement and the need to address stakeholder concerns promptly and effectively.

In conclusion, while the project appears to have been successful in certain aspects, such as meeting quality standards and managing expenses, there are significant concerns about project completion and stakeholder satisfaction. This suggests a need for improved project management practices, particularly in terms of adhering to the project plan and enhancing stakeholder engagement. Regular monitoring and feedback, proactive communication, and effective risk management could be beneficial in addressing these concerns.

### 5.3. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the conclusion forwarded above, the following recommendations are made:

- It is beneficial to invest more time in identifying all potential stakeholders. This includes those indirectly affected by the project. A comprehensive stakeholder list will ensure that no one's interests or constraints are overlooked.
- It is beneficial to review the plan for clarity and simplicity, ensuring that all stakeholders understand their role and the expectations placed upon them.
- Encourage stakeholders to express their thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. This can be achieved through regular meetings, open forums, or suggestion boxes.
- Involve stakeholders in identifying, assessing, and managing project risks. Their unique perspectives can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of potential risks and effective mitigation strategies.
- Regular updates and transparent communication about the status of stakeholder engagement can help bridge this gap.
- Regular monitoring throughout the project lifecycle can help maintain or improve the efficacy of stakeholder engagement.
- It's recommended to review the project management practices. This could involve a more detailed planning phase, better risk management, or improved change control processes.
- It's recommended to improve transparency in financial management and ensure all stakeholders are kept informed about the project's financial status.
- It's recommended to regularly solicit stakeholder feedback and address their concerns promptly. This could involve regular stakeholder meetings, surveys, or suggestion boxes.
- It's recommended to conduct a more detailed impact analysis. This could involve surveys, interviews, or workshops with stakeholders to gain a deeper understanding of how the project affects them.

- Regarding Direction for future study, This thesis focuses on a single project that centered around a school network project in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. However, the company also undertakes the same project internationally, and according to the report, the international project reached its goal in the same year (2023). The thesis emphasizes the importance of coding in today's technological landscape. Further research is needed to understand why there are significant differences between the national and international versions of the same project. This comparison can highlight areas for improvement, change, and growth. Further research is imperative to uncover the underlying reasons for the disparities observed between the national and international iterations of the school network project.

By conducting a comparative analysis, researchers can identify specific areas where improvements can be made, strategies can be altered, or opportunities for growth can be seized. Understanding the nuances that led to the success of the international project while the national one faced challenges can provide valuable insights for enhancing project management practices, optimizing coding techniques, and fostering cross-cultural collaboration in similar endeavors. Ultimately, this research can contribute to refining approaches to project implementation and ensuring more consistent and favorable outcomes across diverse contexts.

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## Annex one



## SAINT MARY UNIVERSITY

### Department of Project Management

This questionnaire's exclusive objective is to investigate how project stakeholder management affects project success using a case study of the iCog-ACC Company's school network project. As a Saint Mary's University postgraduate student, I can guarantee you that your response will be used solely for academic purposes and that there are no right or wrong answers. In consideration of your time and commitment, I kindly ask that you share your experience by answering the few crucial questions below. It is anticipated that your response will exclusively address the iCog-ACC Company.

With best regards,

Bezawit Kassaye

Cell phone number: +251938037773

Email: bezawitkassaye22@gmail.com

### Part I

Please kindly indicate (✓) the below;

1. Gender

A. Female B. Male

2. Age

A. 18-25 B. 26-30 C. 31-35 D. 36-40 E. 41+

3. Level of Education

A. Degree B. Masters C. PhD

4. Current Position

- A. Project Manager    B. Trainer officer    C. Curriculum developer  
 D. Marketing manager    E. Social media content creator    F. Trainer G. sells

5. Work Experience

- A. 1-5 years    B. 6-10 years    C. 11-15 years    D. Above 15 years

**Part II**

Please kindly indicate (√) your level of agreement or disagreement.

If you strongly agree with the statement, choose no. 5.

If you agree with the statement, choose no. 4.

If you are neutral with the statement, choose no. 3.

If you disagree with the statement, choose no. 2.

If you strongly disagree with the statement, choose no. 1.

5= Strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Neutral 2 = Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

Statement	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Stakeholders identification</b>					
1. Stakeholders' needs and expectations were investigated.					
2. At the start of the project, stakeholder areas of interest were identified.					
3. Influences from stakeholders were anticipated when the project started.					
4. Key stakeholders were correctly identified.					
5. Establishing stakeholder identification early on in the project is critical to its success.					
<b>Plan Stakeholder Engagement</b>					
6. Stakeholders engagement plan provides an actionable plan to interact effectively with stakeholders					
7. A strategy has been devised to address the interests and constraints of all stakeholders.					
8. The project's impact on stakeholders is identified through the plan for stakeholder engagement.					
9. Planned stakeholder engagement helps the project manager to organize several methods for					

managing stakeholders' expectations and involving them in the project.					
10. A plan for engaging stakeholders helps the project reach its goals.					
Manage Stakeholder Engagement					
11. You were encouraging stakeholders to communicate with you.					
12. Stakeholders were actively involved in project demos, workshops, and events.					
13. Creating partnerships is a good way to involve stakeholders.					
14. Engaging stakeholders is thought to be essential to a project's success.					
15. Engagement of stakeholders in recognizing, mitigating, and reassessing risks leads to project success.					
Monitor Stakeholder Engagement					
16. You have knowledge of the status of engagement among stakeholders.					
17. Corrective and preventive activities were incorporated to increase stakeholder engagement.					
18. It is vital to keep information about the stakeholder community up to date.					
19. The stakeholders' register was updated with information as a result of monitoring stakeholder engagement.					
20. Throughout the project's life cycle, keeping an eye on stakeholder engagement will help to maintain or improve its efficacy.					
Project Success					
21. The project was completed as planned.					
22. The project expense was incurred in the manner specified.					

23. The project met the quality and standard requirements.					
24. Stakeholders were pleased with the project.					

## Annex Two



### SAINT MARRY UNIVERSITY

#### Department of Project Management

This questionnaire's exclusive objective is to investigate how project stakeholder management affects project success using a case study of the iCog-ACC Company's school network project. As a Saint Mary's University postgraduate student, I can guarantee you that your response will be used solely for academic purposes and that there are no right or wrong answers. In consideration of your time and commitment, I kindly ask that you share your experience by answering the few crucial questions below. It is anticipated that your response will exclusively address the iCog-ACC Company.

With best regards,

Bezawit Kassaye

Cell phone number:

Email: bezawitkassaye22@gmail.com

#### **Interview Guide**

1. What is your role in the school network project at iCog-ACC Company, and how do you perceive the importance of stakeholder management in project success?

2. How does the iCog-ACC Company identify and prioritize stakeholders in school network projects, and what strategies are employed to engage and manage stakeholders effectively?
3. What are the key challenges and barriers that iCog-ACC Company faces in stakeholder management during school network projects, and how are these challenges addressed?
4. How does effective stakeholder communication contribute to project success, and what communication strategies are employed by iCog-ACC Company in school network projects?
5. In your opinion, to what extent do stakeholder engagement and collaboration impact the overall success rate of school network projects at iCog-ACC Company, and what measures are taken to foster stakeholder engagement and collaboration?