EFFECTIVE STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT VARIABLES AND THE SUCCESSFUL EXECUTION OF CAPITAL PROJECTS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY WITHIN THE GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

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Abstract

Capital projects are essential in boosting the country's economy (Naidoo & Chetty, 2023). Dean (2024) further emphasizes that capital projects hold long-run high value. The purpose of this research paper is to illustrate through literature and findings that effective stakeholder involvement variables, such as power and urgency, are significant for the successful execution of capital projects. The study utilised a quantitative approach for the collection of data, and an in-depth literature review was conducted. The study had 56 respondents from the Cape Region, and varying statistical methods were utilised in the analysis. The study concluded with recommendations that capital project constituents can utilise to achieve the successful execution of capital projects. The key findings pertaining to the variable power outlined that power is indeed key to enabling project success. Moreover, the participants in the operations department gave the highest rating for the two types of power. This further alludes to the recognition of power as a key variable for projects meeting their strategic intent. With regard to urgency as a variable, the key findings show that the participants in the operations department rated urgency the highest. Detailing that the level of urgency and the quickness to respond to project developments is a good measure for project success.

Keywords: Capital Projects, Capital Investment, Factor Analysis, Stakeholder Management, Project Success

Authors' individual contribution: Conceptualization — J.T.; Software — J.T.; Validation — J.T.; Formal Analysis — S.M.; Investigation — J.T.; Resources — S.M.; Data Curation — J.T.; Writing — Original Draft — S.M.; Visualization — S.M.; Supervision — S.M.; Project Administration — S.M.; Funding Acquisition — S.M.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ports serve as a means of trade between countries, becoming a gateway for transferring cargo. The surge in global trade places a demand on countries to become highly competitive, productive, and innovative (Dao et al., 2017). This increases the need for port terminals of countries to become

efficient in service, provide excellent customer service, and make infrastructural investments that will enable the achievement thereof.

The regulatory instruments for state-owned entities (SOEs) are determined based on the level of government responsible for their establishment and operation (Manyathi & Jarbandhan, 2024). Nevertheless, this study specifically examines two SOEs, namely Eskom and ACSA, which operate under the jurisdiction of the national government. Important legislative frameworks, including the Public Finance Management Act No. 1 of 1999 (PFMA), the Companies Act (Act 71 of 2008), and the founding legislation of their respective SOEs, regulate both corporations. Furthermore, the governance of Eskom and ACSA is influenced by non-legislative protocols and benchmarks such as the Protocol on Corporate Governance in the Public Sector, the King IV Report, the Guidelines on Corporate Governance of SOEs, and several other governance standards (Mpete & Maier, 2024).

As a contributor to the global market, a SOE in the transportation sector of South Africa functions as an integrated freight logistics company. This SOE operates five core operating divisions with three key corridors being rail, ports, and pipelines (Gumede et al., 2024). As part of their market demand strategy (MDS), in 2010, the SOE embarked on an accelerated capital investment programme for the upgrade of key infrastructure to stimulate economic growth, improve infrastructure, job creation, and increase competitiveness (Havenga et al., 2023). An amount of R81 billion was invested in the company's key business corridors as a robust intervention to increase capacity (Naidoo & Chetty, 2023). To realize the benefit of participating in the capital investment program, the SOE invested in its operating divisions. According to Mnyaka (2014), the parastatal's mandate includes the creation of employment for its citizens and infrastructural development for economic stimulation. The said operating division has a nationwide footprint along the South African coast with logistics ports in Richards Bay, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Cape Town, Port of Ngqura, and East London. These port terminals contribute significantly to the export and import of various commodities of bulk cargo, automotive, containers, and break-bulk.

The consequence of the study is a meaningful contribution to the body of knowledge on the role of stakeholders and the successful execution of capital projects in a port environment. The study also seeks to close the gap that currently exists in the literature regarding capital investment in a port environment. This study aims to explore the positive relationship between effective stakeholder involvement variables (power and urgency) and the successful execution of capital projects. Also, to find strategies to improve operational efficiencies in port operations in the Cape Region through the effective execution of capital projects for the same.

The aim of this research paper is to illustrate through literature and findings that effective stakeholder involvement variables, such as power and urgency, are significant for the successful execution of capital projects. To realise the aim of this research paper, the subsequent secondary research objectives have been identified and outlined. These are: the relationship between stakeholder power and the successful execution of a capital project, and the relationship between stakeholder urgency and the successful execution of a capital project. This research paper discusses the concept of stakeholder management, including stakeholder management and project success. The research paper articulates relevant theories in reference to the study, and variables are also discussed. Moreover, generic methods employed in the study are specified, and key findings along with recommendations are presented.

The structure of this paper is as follows. Section 2 reviews the relevant literature. Section 3 analyses the methodology that has been used to conduct empirical research. Section 4 provides an insight into the results and discussions of the study, which includes interpretations and key findings. To bridge the gap between the literature and the empirical study, Section 5 presents the conclusion of this research paper.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this study, theories such as the stakeholder influence theory (Rowley, 1997) and stakeholder agency theory (Hill & Jones, 1992) will be explored. The premise will be to draw the effects of stakeholder influence variables on project success and stakeholder management processes that act as mediators. Stakeholder theories recognise the varying roles that stakeholders play in the influence of the various strategies within an organisation. The study further looks at determinants of effective capital project stakeholder management in capital projects, focusing on power and urgency.

2.1. Stakeholder management

A stakeholder is referred to as any individual or group that has a vested interest in an organisation and the outcomes of its actions. Extensive literature research has been conducted about stakeholders, for example (Freeman, 2023). Freeman et al. (2018) define stakeholders as a group to whom an organisation is responsible. Effective stakeholder management enables corporations to effectively address the various challenges and expectations and align them with strategic and operational targets and objectives (Freeman et al., 2018). Stakeholder management consists of four key categories, and these include:

- members of the project team;
- primary stakeholders;
- contractors and suppliers;
- secondary stakeholders.

It is pivotal that the expectations of the various parties are appropriately managed to allow for the successful completion of a project (van der Walt, 2020). The benefits of successfully managed relations with stakeholders include an enhanced image or brand value, potential reduction in liabilities, improved resource management, compliance with governance protocols, and increased profitability (Ramachandran, 2015). In a project environment, a project is regarded as successful when it reaches its objectives and meets or exceeds the expectations of those with a vested interest (Francisco de Oliveira & Rabechini, 2019; Averbuch, 2023). To ensure project success it is imperative for the project team to identify and engage all its stakeholders, establish their requirements and manage their expectations as well as their influence in relation to their requirements (Buertey et al., 2023).

Primary stakeholders are those whose continuing participation the organisation cannot survive without. This group of participants includes shareholders, employees, customers, and the public sector. There is a co-dependency that exists between the organisation and its primary stakeholders; it is of paramount importance that value is created to sustain the relationship and for stakeholder retention (Litheko & Potgieter, 2021). In a project setting, primary stakeholders include the project sponsor, project manager, project customer or user, as well as functional managers.

Secondary stakeholders do not possess any authority or a contract with the organisation, and no co-dependency exists amongst the parties. This group includes competition, the media, government, inspectors/regulators, trade associations, and special interest groups. This group may focus on what the organisation is doing and how it may influence society (Luke, 2021). For the purpose of this study, we will be focusing on primary stakeholders. Within the category of stakeholder, various levels exist, and their prioritisation applies.

Success is defined as achieving desired results or outcomes hoped for (Werdhiastutie et al., 2020). Scholars have been attempting to study the key factors that influence project success. They believe that factors such as cost, time, quality (this is often referred to in the literature as the golden triangle), and the effective management of stakeholders lead to project success (Brown, 2021; Westland, 2025). A project is regarded as successful if it comprises two components, i.e., the success of the project itself, being completed on time, within cost, and achieving performance components, client success, and user satisfaction (Westland, 2025). A study that was conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), reviewing 10640 projects, indicated that only 2.5% of projects were completed 100% successfully. The results also highlighted that stakeholder management and the involvement of stakeholders are required at all stages, as an imperative in achieving project success (Pinhas, 2022).

For a project to be labelled as successful criteria/dimensions such as:

1. Operational efficiency speaks to the successful delivery of the project, meeting budget and cost outlines.
2. Impact on the customer, project outcome to immediate stakeholders, meeting functional performance and technical specifications.
3. Organisational benefits are an outcome that is to the benefit of the business. Achieving commercial success as well as a competitive advantage.
4. Preparing for the future relates to both the client and the organisation (Irfan & Hassan, 2018).

These criteria are also important and key to the realisation of effective capital projects in a port environment. Arguably, project success is relative, and for each criterion to be realised, all stakeholders who took part in the implementation of the project from the initiation phase need to have their specific needs met. Effective stakeholder management is considered an important management function for the attainment of project success, as it enables a successful outcome and avoids failures by managing stakeholders.

2.2. Stakeholder management theories

Two branches of stakeholder management theory are discussed these include the stakeholder influence theory and stakeholder agency theory (Freeman, 2023). The premise will be to draw the effects of stakeholder influence variables on project success and stakeholder management processes that act as mediators. Stakeholder theories recognise the varying roles that stakeholders play in the influence of the various strategies within an organisation (Freeman, 2023).

2.2.1. Stakeholder influence theory

In their attempt to build on the stakeholder theory, Beck and Storopoli (2021) detail the importance of asking questions such as who the stakeholders are, what they want, and how they are going to try to get it. This will aid in ascertaining where the balance of power lies in the relationship between the firm and its stakeholders. The types of strategies that can be employed to better manage the resource relationship between the two parties are direct withholding, direct usage, indirect withholding, and indirect usage (Barney & Harrison, 2018).

2.2.2. Stakeholder agency theory

The theory aids in explaining and resolving issues in the relationship between business principals and their agents. It resolves the difference between risk aversion and goals (Muldoon et al., 2024). According to Moloi and Marwala (2020), the agency theory studies the problem and the solutions linked to the delegation of tasks from the principal to the agent, where there is a conflict of interest between the two. A contract or agreement should be designed to eliminate or reduce the potential of the agent from acting optimistically (Yadav, 2022).

2.3. Capital projects

Capital projects refer to projects that are long-term initiatives which are aimed at expanding, maintaining, and improving a company's asset base. These projects necessitate extensive preparation, as they are large in scale (Ju et al., 2024). According to Mathew (2024), a capital project entails the acquisition of a new asset or the material enhancement of an already existing asset, which will produce increased capacity, quality of service, or useful life. Doing so will enable an organisation to fulfil its strategic objectives, such as capital expenditure targets, operational risk management, or even adopting market-leading capabilities (Klopper, n.d.). Despite high costs, the capital project has an innate requirement of multiple years of project planning and long-term financial commitment. Facilities under capital projects remain operational for many years after completion, having an impact on the physical environment, particularly on local economic growth and development (Wie Yusuf & Srithongrung, 2017). Failure to appropriately allocate funds in the identification of risk propensity and feasibility may decrease shareholder wealth and may jeopardise a firm's financial stability (Ndadza, 2024).

2.4. Capital investment

To ensure business continuity, organisations are to invest in the development of key assets through vigorous capital investment programmes. This can be achieved through various portfolios, such as the acquisition of new assets or venturing into new

markets, the expansion or/and refurbishment of existing infrastructure or market, diversification projects, replacement projects to continue with normal operations, or replacement projects to reduce business costs (Chiswa, 2024).

Capital investments have a long-term impact on the economies of countries and organisations. The advantages of embarking on such investments are depicted below:

- capital project attracts prominent levels of domestic and foreign investment;
- strengthen the international competitiveness of countries and establishments of the capital goods sector and allied industries;
- sustainable job creation;
- increased competitive market;
- create a long-term demand for capital goods and services;
- stimulation of project development;
- stimulate economic growth (Department of Trade, Industry and Competition [DTIC], n.d.; Soni, 2022).

As a result of the nature of capital projects, capital investment generally has a future-based investment benefit and a considerable amount of risk. It is therefore important that efforts are made in the evaluation of investment alternatives. This can be done by evaluating the economic profitability analysis as well as the financial feasibility analysis (Wang & Ran, 2023). The section below will look at the various economic profitability analyses that can be employed in evaluating the viability of an investment undertaking. To effectively implement change and make a solid investment in strategic assets with the potential for near-term revenue development, an organization must undergo a paradigm shift. To realise the set investment in key assets, organisations allocate a budget that will drive and provide funds for the project.

2.5. Determinants of effective capital projects stakeholder management in capital projects

The project critical success factor approach was first developed by Rockart (1979). The approach can be defined as areas where satisfactory performance will ensure successful competitive performance for the organisation. This can be realised by the effective management of stakeholders. Subsequent to the above, Aaltonen et al. (2008) reiterate that the key issue in project management is the effective management of the relationship between the project and its stakeholders. Detailed below are some of the key variables that play a pivotal role in the realisation of effectively executed capital projects.

2.5.1. Power

Power is referred to as the ability of those who possess the power to bring about the outcomes that they desire (Warner & Zhang, 2022). Power also means that a certain player can have more influence than other players; therefore, being able to do what they want to do despite resistance from other players (Lewis & Sahay, 2024).

Power has six dimensions, which are coercive power based on physical resources of force, violence, or restraint. Utilitarian power is based on material or financial resources. Normative power is based on symbolic resources such as prestige, esteem, love, and acceptance. Economic power, in the marketplace, is a result of the market share commanded. Political power is power gained by playing the political process to one's advantage. Voting power is the power bestowed by organisations (Warner & Zhang, 2022). This study will explore power as a key factor in stakeholder management

2.5.2. Urgency

The strict definition of "urgent" signifies very important needs to happen immediately, requiring speedy action in order to achieve a particular result, as presented in dictionaries (de Lima Teodoro da Penha, 2024). Urgent projects, as suggested in the literature search, demand immediate attention due to their critical nature and high uncertainty, as well as management challenges that often require accelerated momentum and rapid decision-making, coordination, and risk management (Batubara & Irayani, 2024). Challenges in urgent project management include short project durations, resource allocation, communication, and decision-making under time constraints. While there are some contradictions in defining urgent projects across different studies, the prevailing understanding is that they involve time-sensitive pursuits that may require immediate action and completion as quickly as reasonably possible (de Lima Teodoro da Penha & Schwengber ten Caten, 2023). In a simple combination of the terms "urgency" and "projects", it is possible to develop a stricter definition of an urgent project as: a temporary effort that needs to happen according to the degree of urgency, and be executed as fast as possible to create a product, service, or result (Ebirim et al., 2024).

Urgency refers to the degree to which a stakeholder's claim calls for immediate attention (Boutilier, 2024). The two criteria of urgency are time sensitivity and criticality (Suryana et al., 2024). The prioritization of issues is highly imperative. This, therefore, means high-priority items should be actioned promptly by decision-makers, as failure to act promptly may cause problems and dissatisfaction among stakeholders (Taimu, 2020). This study includes urgency as a key factor in stakeholder management.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative methods approach; thus, the following research designs were adopted:

- conduct a literature review for the study;
- distribute the research survey to the capital project execution stakeholders, targeting about 56 persons who are key to the execution of the capital project;
- data capturing and analysis;
- interpretation of results and the subsequent conclusion to findings; and
- make recommendations to the relevant stakeholders.

A survey questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used to gather the primary data, and the literature review of the study was gathered through secondary data from already existing literature. The questionnaire for this study was sent out to the participants of the study via email. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter

clearly outlining the purpose of the study. The data was used to generate statistical descriptions, analyse relationships, and perform data analysis.

The sampling procedure that was adopted for this study is the stratified sampling method, under probability sampling. It provides better accuracy, is reliable, and provides detailed information about the sample. Stratified sampling is often used to obtain a representation of good sample. Subgroups of the population that are more homogeneous than the total population are selected from each of the strata to generate a sample (Hossain, n.d.). The selected strata for this study constitute project participants on a strategic or tactical level within the organisation, based at the terminals in the Cape Region.

The study was conducted based on a sample of employees who work at the port terminals in the Cape Region. The Cape Region has in its employment project managers, engineers, procurement specialists, safety, health, environment, risk, and quality (SHERQ) managers, risk managers, information technology (IT) specialists, senior engineering managers, business case developers, senior project execution managers and terminal executive managers at the business units in the Cape Region. These are noted as the primary stakeholders. A sample size of approximately 56 participants was obtained for this.

As mentioned above, this study adopted a quantitative data collection method by making use of a survey questionnaire. This study utilised factor analysis for the phenomenon under study. This method is employed by reducing a larger set of variables to a smaller set. This data analysis method is key to uncovering hidden patterns through the condensing of large datasets into smaller and more manageable samples. Moreover, the data analysis was conducted by making use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Statistical procedures such as descriptive analysis (calculation of the mean, standard deviation), skewness, kurtosis, and correlation analysis, together with factor analysis, were applied. The literature was used as the secondary source of data to determine content validity, and the reliability will be tested by making use of Cronbach's alpha.

The research paper is extracted from a master's degree thesis; thus, the study required full thesis clearance. The data collection commenced only after the formal approval and ethical clearance by the University of South Africa's Research Review Committee, and the receipt of an approved gatekeeper's letter. Participants were assured of anonymity, and the purpose of the study was clearly explained to them. It is important to note that participation in the survey was voluntary, and their consent to participate could be withdrawn at any time with no repercussions.

Limitation of the sample size. With a population size of 60 at a 95% confidence level, the study gave us a sample size of approximately 56 participants for the survey. The stakeholder selection criterion is for capital projects that have a minimum estimated total cost of over R 2,5 million, for the acquisition of strategic assets. The challenge that is to be experienced with this study in achieving confidence levels of 95% is the limited scale of participants, as a large majority are terminal representatives who cut right across several projects across the region. The scope of the study was limited to the capital project team in the Cape Region, specifically those individuals who were actively involved in requests for capital funding and the delivery of the same. This meant that end users of the assets being procured were excluded from the study. Furthermore, this informed the empirical study that was adopted to study results from the responses from participants who were part of the project execution team. This study could, however, be extended to include other terminals across the coastal region.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The section below presents the key findings of the study through results and discussion. These are depicted in descriptive statistics in reference to the two variables that the study attempts to assess; these two variables are *Power* and *Urgency*. The section concludes by providing recommendations in the realm of the execution of successful capital projects.

Power: Empirical results for *Power* are reflected in Table 1 and Figure 1 below.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics on the question of stakeholder involvement in the successful execution of capital projects: *Power*

Code	*Variable*	*Percentages*			*Mean*
		Disagree	*Neutral*	*Agree*	
SMP1	Determining and assessing the power (capacity to influence the actions of other stakeholders) will aid in achieving project success.	9%	9%	82%	4.16
SMP2	Project sponsors are actively involved in projects.	29%	16%	55%	3.31
SMP3	Stakeholders take ownership of their projects.	24%	27%	49%	3.33
SMP4	The organisation has adequate financial resources to support capital projects.	26%	26%	49%	3.33
SMP5	Stakeholders have the influence to drive the successful execution of capital projects.	13%	18%	69%	3.84
SMP6	Stakeholders have the authority to make changes within a project.	33%	26%	42%	3.05

Average mean score — 3.50:

- 82% of respondents indicated that stakeholders have the power or influence to enable the successful execution of capital projects.
- 55% of respondents agreed that project sponsors are actively involved in project execution.
- 49% of respondents believe that stakeholders take full responsibility for their projects.
- At a response rate of 49% of respondents consider the organisation to have adequate financial muscle in support of projects.
- 69% of respondents indicated that stakeholders have significant power to drive project success.
- To enable project success, 42% of participants in the survey believe that stakeholders have the authority to make changes to projects.

Figure 1. Statistics on the measurement of the construct: *Power*

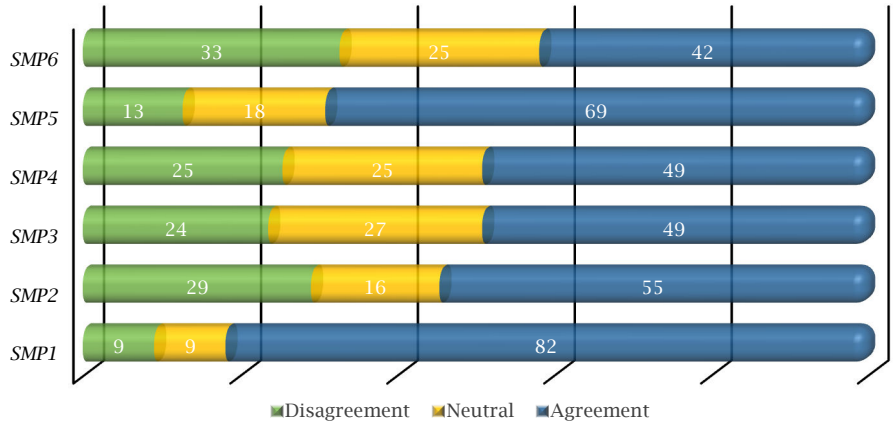


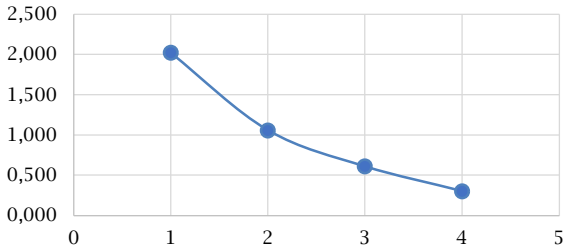
Table 2. The eigenvalue of factors and variances explained for *Power*

Factor	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction of sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total
SMP1	2.260	37.667	37.667	1.734	28.900	28.900	1.637
SMP2	1.426	23.760	61.428	1.057	17.618	46.519	1.263
SMP3	0.752	12.536	73.964				
SMP4	0.613	10.221	84.185				
SMP5	0.566	9.434	93.619				
SMP6	0.383	6.381	100.000				

It can be concluded that stakeholders possess the necessary power to influence the success of capital projects.

For the construct of *Power*, six linear components were tested within the data set, and only two had an eigenvalue of > 1. Extraction and rotation were conducted on the components and reflected in Table 2 above, as well as the screen plot test in Figure 2 below. The two factors that we extracted account for a combined 61% total variance. This is a reflection of the 0.7 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value, which can be regarded as good, and factor analysis is useful for the variables. The screen plot test for the *Power* variable levels out at *SMP2,* explaining the 61.42 cumulative percentage, which, according to Hair (2011), is above the 60% threshold of the total variance that is considered to be satisfactory.

Figure 2. Screen plot test: *Power*



A pattern matrix for the constructs was subsequently constructed. The results are reflected in Table 3 below, indicating two types of *Power*: passive power and active power. Factor 1 was named passive power as it included variables such as the availability of financial muscle and having authority and power to influence deliverables. This type of power can be harnessed to drive the desired outcome. Factor 2 was named active power as it denotes power participation in projects and taking ownership of deliverables.

Table 3. Pattern matrix for *Power*

Factor	Passive power	Active power
SMP1	0.499	
SMP2		0.948
SMP3		0.495
SMP4	0.748	
SMP5	0.678	
SMP6	0.561	

The literature indicated that those who hold *Power* within a project setting are able to influence the outcome of project deliverables. According to Thamma Reddi (2023), having powerful stakeholders in a project shapes the project at an early stage and its quality, and ultimately aids in obtaining resources that will drive success. The *Power* determinant of the study was meant to establish the amount of influence the various stakeholders have on driving project progress. The Cronbach's alpha score of 0.648 for the *Power* construct revealed a good measure of reliability with the dataset. The study further outlined that *Power* is indeed key to enabling project success; however, there are varying levels of *Power* that the diverse project stakeholders have. *Power* can either be direct in nature (mean score = 3.60) or passive power (mean score = 3.32). The participants in the operations department gave the highest rating for the two types of *Power*. This further alludes to the recognition of *Power* as a key variable for projects meeting their strategic intent.

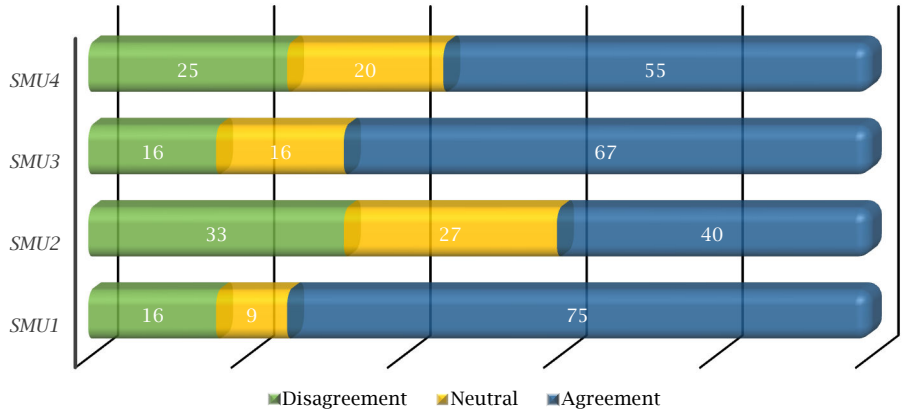
Urgency: Empirical results for *Urgency* are reflected in Table 4 and Figure 3 below.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics on the question of stakeholder involvement in the successful execution of capital projects: *Urgency*

Code	*Variable*	*Percentages*			*Mean*
		Disagree	*Neutral*	*Agree*	
SMU1	Determining and assessing the urgency (proposed urgency to respond to the dynamism of the situation) will aid in achieving project success.	16%	9%	75%	3.85
SMU2	Stakeholders take responsibility for their projects.	33%	27%	40%	3.05
SMU3	Project managers effectively communicate any changes to project schedules.	16%	16%	67%	3.67
SMU4	There is a strong sense of urgency for the execution of deliverables among stakeholders.	25%	20%	55%	3.29

- 75% of respondents indicated that stakeholders have the necessary sense of urgency to respond to situations that may arise in projects.
- 40% of respondents are of believe that stakeholders take responsibility for their projects.
- 67% of respondents believe that project managers communicate effectively.
- 55% of stakeholders believe that stakeholders within the project hold each other accountable and treat matters with a sense of *Urgency*.

Figure 3. Statistics on the measurement of the construct: *Urgency*



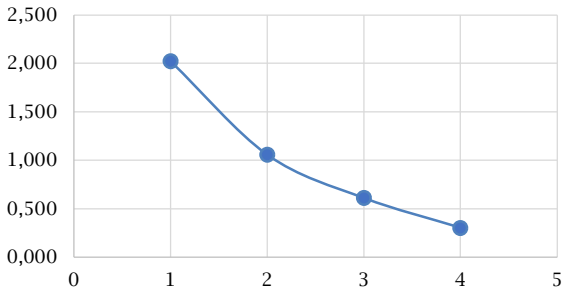
Average mean score: 3.47. Situations in capital projects are treated urgently.

Urgency: *Urgency* had four components, and only two had factor loadings of one; the two factors accounted for 77% of the total variance. Extraction and rotation were conducted on the two components and are reflected in Table 4 above and also in Figure 4 below. After an extraction and rotation exercise was undertaken, only one variable had an eigenvalue of more than one. A pattern matrix for the constructs was conducted, and the results are reflected in Table 5 below.

Table 5. The eigenvalue of factors and variances explained for *Urgency*

Factor	*Initial eigenvalues*			*Extraction of sums of squared loadings*			*Rotation sums of squared loadings*
	Total	*% of variance*	*Cumulative %*	*Total*	*% of variance*	*Cumulative %*	*Total*
SMU1	2.024	50.596	50.596	1.660	41.505	41.505	1.621
SMU2	1.060	26.489	77.085	0.492	12.292	53.797	0.828
SMU3	0.613	15.314	92.399				
SMU4	0.304	7.601	100.000				

Figure 4. Screen plot test: *Urgency*



A pattern matrix for the constructs was steered; the results are reflected in Table 6 below. Factor *SMU2* generated a cross-loading from the extraction.

Table 6. Pattern matrix for *Urgency*

Factor	*Urgency*
SMU1	0.617
SMU2	0.352
SMU3	0.769
SMU4	0.900

Stakeholder *Urgency*, according to Haarhoff (2019), is measured through time sensitivity as well as the criticality of the task at hand. The construct of *Urgency* was to determine the speed at which stakeholders could respond to developments within the project. The Cronbach's alpha score for *Urgency* resulted in a score of 0.722, revealing a measure of reliability. At a mean score (mean score = 3.34), *Urgency* scored relatively high. The participants in the operations department rated *Urgency* the highest. Detailing that the level of *Urgency* and the quickness to respond to project developments is a good measure for project success.

4.1. Research with results contradictory

This section presents the result contradiction by triangulating the result in the study using the literature reviews from scholars pertaining to *Power* and *Urgency* in a project's success. It is evident that there are possible negative effects of *Power* and *Urgency* when executing a project. In the results section, the study delimited the negative effects of the variables *Power* and *Urgency*.

As above-mentioned in Section 2, Lewis and Sahay (2024) mentioned that power also means that a certain player can have more influence than other players; therefore, being able to do what they want to do despite resistance from other players. According to Ziemianski (2022), in the context of a project, imposing too much authority or too frequently may cause people to obey instructions without developing their own drive, skills, or originality. At least in the medium or long run, the impact might be negative. People may become anxious, withdraw, or become ill from being around politics and power struggles as a result of having too much authority. Individuals may perceive the "taste of power" and abuse it for their personal gain, take unfair advantage of resources made accessible to them (such as people or money), or diminish the value of others because they believe they are better than them.

In Section 4, it is revealed that stakeholders have the necessary power to influence the success of capital projects, where 82% of the respondents showed that stakeholders have the power or influence to enable the successful execution of capital projects. Power enables project managers to successfully execute projects. However, the misuse of power can bring negative results. There are numerous forms of power at the disposal of project managers. Power and its use can be complex, given its nature and various factors at play in a project.

According to Batubara and Irayani (2024), projects now heavily emphasize agility and a sense of urgency. Managing these projects is a dangerous endeavour because of the demanding budget and schedule. The necessity for more careful and thorough preparation becomes essential as time and expense become increasingly difficult to manage. However, the quality of the plans created is frequently strongly impacted by how quickly these actions are planned. However, as above-mentioned, 75% of the respondents have indicated that stakeholders have the necessary sense of urgency to respond to situations that may arise in projects and have shown that the level of urgency to respond to project developments is a good measure of project execution success.

4.2. Recommendations

To bridge the gap between the literature and the empirical study, below managerial recommendations were articulated. Tabling these managerial recommendations will assist with effective stakeholder involvement for capital projects in order to attain project success for terminals in the Cape Region. The review of the literature and the subsequent results of the study support the observations and managerial recommendations below:

- Agility in project management.
- Depending on the nature of the project, processes need to be put in place to accelerate critical projects that may have a detrimental impact on business operations.
- Appoint a project-specific stakeholder manager.
- A structured methodology is to be developed to aid in the management of the relationship between project stakeholders and the project office.
- Training for the onboarding of stakeholders so they understand their role and get the strategic alignment of the project.
- A review and remodelling of the government process is necessary for the fast-tracking of capital project deliverables.
- Each project is to have a stakeholder modelling process in order to rank and prioritise stakeholders by the type of influence that they hold.
- Training on the various processes followed for project governance.
- Develop a communications plan that will include a project change management process. This will help to enhance communication between the various stakeholders.
- Provide training to the stakeholders on project management, the nature of the capital project, and the processes that guide it.

5. CONCLUSION

The research paper focused on the importance of stakeholder management to realise project success and how critical components such as power and urgency. The research problem: the capital project execution team in the Cape Region corridor has a challenge with the seamless execution of projects to aid in the attainment of business objectives, this also entails the participatory involvement of key stakeholders and its objective to explore the positive relationship between effective stakeholder involvement variables and the successful execution of capital projects. Also, strategies that will improve operational efficiencies in port operations through the effective execution of capital projects were addressed in the study. The following paragraph addresses limitations experienced during the study.

With a population size of 60 at a 95% confidence level, it will give us a sample size of approximately 56 participants for the survey. The stakeholder selection criterion is for capital projects that have a minimum estimated total cost of over R 2,5 million, for the acquisition of strategic assets. The challenge that is to be experienced with this study in achieving confidence levels of 95% is the limited scale of participants, as a large majority are terminal representatives who cut right across several projects across the region. The following paragraph provides an overview of future research based on what the study discovered.

A foundation for future research was established by the study. Also, revealing the lack of proper involvement and influence of stakeholders can hamper the completion of projects within cost, at the right quality, and within the required timeframe. Identified below are areas of future research for this study, and these include:

- The development of a stakeholder management strategy that is project-specific.
- development of a stakeholder management-specific benefits realisation road map;
- The development of a project close-out evaluation or feedback.
- Future research can be conducted to measure the proposed framework that was derived from this study at the various terminals across the country.

• A similar study is to be conducted for the various financing models, e.g., operating expenditure (OPEX) and capital expenditure (CAPEX).

• Future research is to be extended to the entire spectrum of stakeholders.

The research made managerial recommendations, a call for future research, and the various limitations of the study were discussed. With the execution of the recommendations that were detailed in the study, the terminals will be able to attain project success and, in turn, improve operational efficiency. Sections 2 and 3 revealed the importance of selecting the correct viability model, and an integrated and participatory involvement of stakeholders will aid in achieving project success in the various capital projects in the port. Ultimately, this will aid in economic growth and customer (local and international) satisfaction rates for all ports.

The findings of this research indicate that all the variables that make up the typology of stakeholder influence variables are key in determining capital project success for ports; however, the varying levels are to be considered. The sample population of the study was made up of 56 participants, constituting those actively involved in the wide array of projects in the Cape Region.

• Stakeholder management is yet to be fully adopted for adopted as an integral and deliberate strategy for capital projects.

• Collaborative efforts need to be made for stakeholders who are key during the developmental phase of the project.

• Properly channelled feedback structures need to be deployed to track changes and to keep stakeholders abreast of project developments.

The findings of the study can aid those involved in the execution of capital projects to develop strategies that will enable the acceleration of capital projects. An organisation that employs the appropriate type of project management tools and processes will be able to realise project success. The study proposed a conceptual model to be adopted as well, and quantitative data analysis was conducted to evaluate opportunities that exist and the applicability of the proposed framework for achieving effective stakeholder management for capital projects. The participatory involvement of these key constituents will aid in growing the country's export and import market and increase economic growth.

There is an urgent need for the formulation of a strategy or framework that will aid in the development of a comprehensive stakeholder management programme in the Cape Region to ensure the successful execution of capital projects. The implementation of such a framework would improve operational efficiency, cost management, and infrastructural development.

The Western Cape provincial government has been cited with concern regarding the ever-increasing challenges that are experienced at ports; there is an urgent need for infrastructural upgrades and enhanced staffing levels at these ports. The terminal in Cape Town is known for operating below stacking capacity, using ageing and out-of-service infrastructure, and experiencing overall terminal congestion (Baartman et al., 2021). This has had a dire impact on the cost and efficiency of the logistics and export industries. These factors have an impact on economic growth and job creation in the Western Cape. The terminal operator in Cape Town has embarked on several projects to address the challenges outlined above.

The results of a study that was conducted at the parastatal indicated that 65% of its failure rate could be attributed to cost overruns on projects and a varying 57% to time overruns. These catastrophic delays are attributed to, amongst other things:

• Political pressure or interference: Prevailing interference in the daily running of projects, as well as political pressure to commence with execution work while preliminary studies had not been completed.

• Organisational project structure: The ambiguity of roles and responsibilities results in the duplication of effort and a slowdown in decision-making.

• Constant scope changes owing to lenient engineering scope requirements have opened the business to numerous scope creep.

• Weak project quality control measures.

• A lack of an integrated project management information system (PMIS). This results in a lack of information sharing amongst stakeholders, leading to delayed decision-making.

• Cost estimation: the chronic underestimation of project costs and schedules (Tshapa & Nhlabatsi, 2018).

The impact and power that stakeholders have at the various stages of a project should be explored and maximised to ensure project success. Active participation and the driving of project processes aid in ensuring that the right type of investments are made, such as the acquisition of strategic assets that boost performance.

It is hoped that this study will boost economic activity, improve project management, raise stakeholder involvement, improve port performance, and broaden the project knowledge base. The framework was developed to help ensure that a successful return on investment is realised. By understanding the internal customer's perception of service delivery, the capital investment team will be able to implement corrective strategies that will align with the overall business strategy and ultimately deliver successful projects. This study was intended to explore the relationship between effective stakeholder involvement variables and the successful execution of capital projects in the Cape Region.

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APPENDIX. QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I. Personal information

What is your gender?

1. Male
2. Female
3. Prefer not to answer: _____

Which terminal are you representing?

1. Saldanha BTS
2. Saldanha MPT
3. Cape Town MPT
4. Cape Town CTCT
5. NCT
6. PE MPT
7. Other _____

Which department are you representing?

1. Operation
2. Projects
3. Engineering
4. Procurement
5. Finance
6. SHERQ
7. Other _____

How long have you been working for Transnet?

1. Less than 6 months
2. 6 months to less than 1 year
3. 1 year to less than 3 years
4. 3 years to less than 5 years
5. 5 years to 10 years
6. 10 years and more

Part II. The following set of questions relates to stakeholder management in capital projects

How would you rate the level of effective stakeholder involvement in the execution of capital projects?

1. Highly satisfied
2. Somewhat satisfied
3. Neutral
4. Somewhat dissatisfied
5. Highly dissatisfied

Do you think effective stakeholder management will aid in improving the successful execution of capital projects in the Cape region?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe

Part III. The following set of questions relates to the power of the stakeholders in the successful execution of capital projects

Statements	*Strongly disagree*	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly agree*
Determining and assessing the power (capacity to influence the actions of other stakeholders) will aid in achieving project success.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Project sponsors are actively involved in projects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stakeholders take ownership of their projects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The organisation has adequate financial resources to support capital projects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stakeholders have the influence to drive the successful execution of capital projects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stakeholders have the authority to make changes within a project.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part IV. The following set of questions relates to the urgency of the stakeholders in the successful execution of capital projects (how interested stakeholders are in pursuing their expectations)

Statements	*Strongly disagree*	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly agree*
Determining and assessing the urgency (proposed urgency to respond to the dynamism of the situation) will aid in achieving project success.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stakeholders take responsibility for their projects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Project managers effectively communicate any changes to project schedules.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a strong sense of urgency for the execution of deliverables among stakeholders.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐