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## Level of stakeholder engagement and participation in monitoring and evaluation of construction projects in Ghana

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### Abstract

Globally, the construction industry is acknowledged as complex and capital intensive. The need for transparency in monitoring and evaluation to promote organizational learning and accountability in project delivery cannot be overemphasized, hence the need for stakeholder engagement and participation. This paper reports on the level of stakeholder engagement in project delivery and participation in monitoring and evaluation of public construction projects in Ghana. Both structured interview guide and questionnaire schedule were used to collect relevant data for the study. A desk review of journal articles, books, conference proceedings, published and unpublished thesis work from the institutions' database and internet sources relevant to the study were adopted to underpin the study. Project implementation minutes and meeting attendance were also perused. Data was descriptively analyzed. Six key stakeholders were identified in local government project delivery in Ghana. It was evident from the study that there was a high level of stakeholder engagement in project delivery while participation of stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation of public projects at the local government level was very poor. This was attributed to lack of knowledge, understanding, involvement and time devoted for monitoring and evaluation of projects by stakeholders. In conclusion, the poor participation of stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation of local government project delivery may have contributed to the many challenges faced in local government project delivery in Ghana. These challenges included procurement lapses which resulted in bad payment schedules, non-conformity to project specification, delayed project delivery, lack of health and safety compliance, client's dissatisfaction, and corrupt practices in the construction industry. The study advocates for participatory monitoring and evaluation through stakeholder management at the local government level project delivery. This can be promoted through community based development project (CBDP) delivery. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on the level of stakeholder engagement and participation in monitoring and evaluation and its implication in local government project delivery in Ghana.

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## 1. Introduction

The construction industry globally is seen as very complex, dynamic and non-linear phenomenon [1]; [2]; [3] and the need to deliver successful projects have also become a globally issues in the construction industry [4]. While many studies have revealed indicators of project success, others have espoused measure to achieve project performance and project success [5]. A comprehensive understanding of a successful project is one that has been completed within budget, on schedule, within pre specified scope, user expectation, quality, technical specification, client and project managers satisfaction, environmental friendliness and health and safety [6], [7].

In achieving these project success indicators in the construction industry, measures such as stakeholder management and involvement in projects [8] , [9] as well as monitoring and evaluation [10]; [11]; [12]; [13] have been professed, however no study has yet considered the participation of stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation to achieve project success in the Ghanaian construction industry with focus on local government project, hence the study seeking to report on the level of stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation of local government construction projects in Ghana. A major contribution for project managers in planning for monitoring and evaluation to achieve project success.

## 2. Understanding Stakeholder Participation

Whereas there are several varying definitions for stakeholder, the project management institute [7] postulates that stakeholder(s) is (are) “An individual, group, or organization who may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project, program, or portfolio”. In 2015, Eyiah-Botwe [14] also defined Project stakeholders as individuals, groups or entities who may possess the power to be a threat or opportunity to a project. Bourne [15] also asserted that stakeholders are as individuals or group of people who will be impacted by or can influence the success or failure of an organizational activity. The study can therefore conclude that stakeholders are people or groups who have direct or indirect benefit an influence in the outcome of a project. These individuals are brought together to interact and relate to execute the project with the aim of achieving set standards and thus have a common interest of project success. As alluded to earlier, project stakeholder are unique to specific industry based on the aims and objectives of the project, while in some cases the selection of stakeholders for a project is influenced by nature, complexity, and procurement method adopted [14] as well as the source of funding. Project stakeholders are regarded primary or secondary based on the extent of their engagement on the project, thus formal or contractual agreement on the project [16]. Maylor [17], also categorized stakeholders as internal (project team) or external (outside the project team).

In the Ghanaian construction industry, the broad categories of stakeholders have been identified by [18] and [19] as clients, contractors, and professional consultants. Enshassi [20] also identified three key group of projects

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