Journal of
Business and Strategic Management
(JBSM)

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Journal of Business and Strategic Management
ISSN 2520-0402 (online)
Vol. 10, Issue No. 13, pp. 16 - 30, 2025
www.carijournals

The Influence of Stakeholder Involvement on the Performance of Housing Projects in Nairobi

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Accepted: 4th July, 2025, Received in Revised Form: 28th July, 2025, Published: 28th August, 2025

Abstract

Purpose: This study assessed the impact of stakeholder involvement on housing projects in Nairobi, guided by Construction Management Theory.

Methodology: A descriptive research design was used, targeting 127 projects by 15 real estate developers between 2019–2024. Data were collected from 254 registered architects using structured questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS to generate descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings: The findings demonstrate a strong consensus on the value of stakeholder involvement in housing projects across Nairobi. Most respondents affirm that stakeholder identification, engagement, and participation are handled effectively and contribute meaningfully to project decisions and success. While a small proportion of respondents see room for improvement, the overall trend indicates a well-embedded culture of participatory development.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The study recommends formalizing inclusive stakeholder engagement frameworks within all housing project governance structures. Collaboration between national and county agencies should be enhanced to create a cohesive environment where stakeholder engagement is prioritized and consistently applied.

Key Words: *Stakeholder Involvement, Housing Projects, Project Performance, Construction Management.*

1.0 Background of the Study

Projects are considered as the pursuit of any undertaking that meets the needs of different stakeholders, which includes construction projects (PMI, 2018). The construction projects' performance is often considered in terms of quality, schedule, and cost. Project Management Institute (PMI) acknowledges that successful projects are finished within budget, on time, and meets the desired quality. Across the world, different projects struggle to meet these performance parameters. In the Construction Extension of the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), it is noted that most construction projects are unique because they are fraught with uncertainty and are often highly complex, especially because of the complex project environment. They are expected to respond to the different weather, site, economic, community, and physical conditions prevalent at the times of execution. As such, these projects inherently complete beyond the time schedule and outside the budget.

In other parts of the world, the same pattern is replicated. Niazi & Painting (2017) acknowledge the challenge of effective project evaluation approaches that leads to time delays and cost overruns in construction projects in Afghanistan, highlighting corruption, payments, and financing, among others, as the key factors. Shah (2016) noted that in Australia, project evaluation approaches are among the key factors, while in Ghana, payments and complexity are the key factors, and in Malaysia, contractor and management factors lead to time delays and cost overruns. Salunkhe & Patil (2014) and Singh (2017) acknowledge the persistence of time delays and cost overruns in construction projects in India. El Mansouri & Benchekroun (2018) acknowledge the same challenge in Hong Kong civil engineering projects. Qatar's construction projects also face the same time and cost overruns (Senouci, Ismail, & Eldin, 2016).

In Africa, the challenge has been extensively studied, but it is yet to be fully addressed. Ineffective project evaluation approaches have led to time delays and cost overruns that have continued to affect the performance of public projects, as is evidenced by the Ugandan Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) (Moyo & Msimang, 2021). Projects in Botswana, Egypt, Zambia, and South Africa face the persistent challenge of effective project evaluation. Saleh et al. (2019) highlighted the causes of delay in construction projects in Libya, noting that it affects the performance of the projects and is often linked to project evaluation approaches. The challenge is experienced in Nigeria (Aibinu & Odeyinka, 2016; Amusan, Dolapo, & Joshua, 2017).

In another study, Gituro & Mwawasi (2016) highlight that construction projects contribute to a country's economy in developing countries, and this has been a considerable challenge for project managers. They note that the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) has reported notable project evaluation challenges in their road construction projects. Mwangi & Wanjohi (2021) looked at the case of Meru County, Njiru & Otieno (2023) looked at the large construction projects in Kenya, and Seboru (2015) looked at the road construction projects in Kenya. Nzingu & Karanja (2018) acknowledged that checking and evaluation are critical to the success of residential construction, especially acknowledging the challenge of proper planning and budgeting. Kihoro

and Waiganjo (2015) looked at the factors affecting the performance of gated community housing projects in Nairobi. The researchers acknowledge that housing projects need to consider planning, the project team's competence, and stakeholder management if they need to boost the projects' performance.

In the recent past, the government of Kenya has embarked on a renewed focus on the construction industry. The focus has been heightened by the government's Big 4 Agenda which has placed affordable housing and infrastructure at the centre of the country's economy. With such a focus from the government, the county governments and the private sector have taken up different initiatives to support and participate in the development agenda. The construction industry in Kenya has been examined before (Boru, 2016; Gituro & Mwawasi, 2016; Kwatsima, 2016; Seboru, 2015), but there is a lack of sufficient focus on the performance of housing projects in Nairobi. Sector-specific research is necessary to understand the influence of project evaluation approaches on the project's time and cost performance. The benchmarking evaluation approaches need to be examined, especially focusing on their influence on housing projects' success, which has not been done before. As such, it is necessary to study the construction sector because its unique environment poses different challenges to the performance of construction projects.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The project evaluation approaches, specifically stakeholder involvement, have a substantial influence on the performance of housing projects. The lack of proper stakeholder involvement has continually led to the poor performance of construction projects as given by (Oladipo et al., 2015). Lack of proper stakeholder involvement significantly impacts the performance of housing projects by leading to inefficiencies and suboptimal outcomes. Without stakeholder involvement, it is challenging to set realistic performance targets or measure progress accurately, resulting in potential cost overruns, delays, and quality issues. This study addresses these gaps by investigating how stakeholder involvement influences the performance of housing projects in Nairobi. By identifying and profiling ongoing and completed housing projects, analyzing key stakeholders' roles, and assessing the effectiveness of stakeholder involvement, the research provides actionable insights for improving project delivery. The findings contribute to better decision-making in housing project management, ultimately supporting sustainable urban development in Nairobi.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to investigate the influence of stakeholder involvement on the performance of housing projects in Nairobi.

2.1 Application of Construction Management Theory in Stakeholder Involvement

Construction Management Theory has evolved through key contributions from scholars like Henry Gantt, known for the Gantt chart, and institutions such as the Project Management Institute (PMI), which formalized principles in the *PMBOK Guide* (Saleh et al., 2018). The theory emphasizes

structured project execution, with core tenets including integrated project phases, efficient resource allocation, strict time and cost control, quality assurance, risk management, and effective communication (Senouci et al., 2016). These principles rely on assumptions of predictability, linear project progression, stakeholder alignment, and a fixed scope (Pinha & Ahluwalia, 2019).

However, critics argue that the theory's rigidity and linear approach may not suit the dynamic nature of modern construction projects (Olawale & Sun, 2017). Challenges arise from evolving stakeholder expectations, unforeseen risks, and changing project requirements, which contradict the assumption of a stable scope. Despite these limitations, Construction Management Theory remains valuable for evaluating housing development projects. Its systematic framework allows for assessing performance metrics such as schedule adherence, budget compliance, quality standards, and risk mitigation (Müller & Schütze, 2019).

The theory's emphasis on stakeholder communication is particularly relevant, ensuring feedback mechanisms and alignment of interests (Moyo & Msimang, 2021). While its structured approach aids in project control, integrating adaptive practices can address its rigidity, making it more responsive to real-world complexities. Thus, while Construction Management Theory provides a strong foundation for project evaluation, balancing its principles with flexibility enhances its applicability in dynamic environments.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

In the United States, a study by Johnson & Smith (2018) examined the impact of stakeholder involvement on the performance of housing projects. The researchers used a mixed-method approach, combining surveys of project managers and stakeholders with performance data from 40 housing projects. The study identified a significant positive relationship between stakeholder involvement and project performance. Specifically, projects with active stakeholder engagement experienced fewer delays, better cost management, and higher quality outcomes. The study highlighted the importance of regular stakeholder meetings and transparent communication channels.

Kim & Lee (2020) explored the effects of stakeholder involvement on housing projects in South Korea. The study employed a quantitative approach, analyzing survey data from project managers and performance metrics from 25 housing projects. The results showed a significant positive correlation between stakeholder engagement and project success, with projects that actively involved stakeholders achieving better adherence to timelines and budgets. The researchers recommended the implementation of formal stakeholder engagement plans to enhance project outcomes.

In Nigeria, Akinwale & Olatunji (2017) investigated the influence of stakeholder involvement on the performance of housing projects. The study used a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative interviews with quantitative performance data from 20 housing projects. The findings revealed a significant positive impact of stakeholder involvement on project performance, with

enhanced project completion rates and improved quality of construction. The study highlighted the importance of community engagement and stakeholder workshops.

Wambui & Mwangi (2022) explored the impact of stakeholder involvement on housing project performance in Nairobi. The researchers adopted a quantitative approach, analyzing survey data from project managers and performance metrics from 15 housing projects. The study found a significant positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and project performance, noting improvements in project timelines and cost management. The researchers recommended the establishment of stakeholder committees to facilitate ongoing engagement and feedback.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research design adopted in the study was a descriptive research design based on the nature of the data collection tools used and the type of data that was collected by the study. A descriptive study is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way in order to get a general overview about the subject of investigation (Obwatho, 2014).

3.2 Population

The population targeted in this study was 127 housing construction projects within Nairobi City County under 15 real estate developers with projects between 2019 and 2024. There were 254 respondents from registered architects from the construction project. The housing project was for those with over Kshs. 100 million and above and have Registered Architects. The study therefore went for at least 2 Registered Architects in each project.

3.3 Sampling

The research adopted systematic random sampling in reaching out to the study respondents. This is because of the nature of the organization structure for housing projects where one project may consist of very many technical personnel and their representatives. The study therefore utilized Yamane (1967) formulae for sample size calculations:

The Yamane (1967) formula for sample size:

$$n = \frac{\mathrm{N}}{1 + N(€^2)}$$

Where:

N= Total populations

n= required sample population

€=significance level of 5%

Therefore:

$$= \frac{254}{1 + 254\ (0.05^2)}$$

Sample size n = 155

The researcher then collected data from 155 architects based on professional categories from selected housing projects based in Nairobi.

3.4 Data Collection Methods and Tools

3.4.1 Data Collection Method

The collection of the data was done using questionnaires as the main source of data for the study. The data collection process was a primary data collection method that employed the usage of structured questionnaires that were designed according to the study objective administered by trained research assistants.

3.4.2 Data Collection Tools

The study used a carefully constructed questionnaire to ensure that the respondents provided information about the issues they had detailed knowledge about. The questionnaires were structured according to the study objective, where closed questions were used. The likelihood of obtaining fully completed questionnaires was increased by the use of trained research assistants who had been trained on the content of the questionnaires in order to clarify to the respondents any section of the questionnaire that was unclear or ambiguous. The participants in the study were approached in their natural environment to make them more confident about disclosure.

3.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

The study employed a quantitative method of data analysis to present the results from the field. The questionnaire was composed of closed questions. In order to perform statistical analysis, the researcher used quantitative data that was transformed into numerical form for ease of analysis. Data from surveys with closed-ended questions measured using Likert scales were translated into numeric data and ranked on a 1–5 scale based on the relative importance of the constructs under evaluation. First, the questionnaires collected from the field were subjected to an editing process to check for errors and omissions; this was followed by coding. The data entry was then done in SPSS to compute the generated descriptive statistics such as mean scores and standard deviations for each variable, both dependent and independent. Frequencies and percentages were computed to highlight the demographic information of the participants according to their role in the organization, age, gender, marital status, and education. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was calculated to establish the relationships that existed among the independent and dependent variables. The study aimed to determine the associations among various study variables. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) was conducted in SPSS to establish whether there was a

substantial link between the dependent and independent variables in the sampled data at a 95 percent level of confidence.

3.6 Ethical Issues

The researcher obtained a letter of authority from the Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology Institutional Ethics Review Committee department, after which a similar letter was obtained from the National Commission for Science and Technology (NACOSTI). The researcher then used the letters of authority to collect data and seek permission from the relevant respondents of the respective housing construction companies. Once authority to collect data had been obtained from the respective companies, the staff identified to participate in the study were contacted and given a consent form to sign. The consent form outlined their rights, including their right not to participate in the study. In the consent form, they were also reminded that no respondent would be victimized on account of the information provided and that no one would be identified with any particular response, as the questionnaire was anonymous and did not capture any personal identifiers such as names or phone numbers. For interested parties, the study results were to be shared once the study had been published.

4.0 Analysis and Presentation of Findings

4.1 Response Rate

The number of questionnaires that were administered was 155. A total of 128 questionnaires were duly filled and returned as indicated in Table 4.1. This represented an overall successful response rate of 83 %, which is good enough to serve as a representative of the population. This conforms to Babbie (2004) asserted that response rates of 50% are acceptable to analyse and publish, 60% is good and 70% is very good and based on this assertion 83% response rate was found to be adequate for the study.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics

The study analysed the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of age brackets, gender, level of education, and profession to enable the researcher know the respondents characteristics and assess whether the respondents possessed information relevant to the study in line with level of education and professionalism and the results were as follows;

4.3.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

The age distribution of respondents indicates that the majority, 53% (n=68), fall within the 36-45 age range. The 26-35 group accounts for 25.78% (n=33), showing a strong presence of younger professionals. Moreover, the 18-25 makes up 10.94% (n=14) while the 56 and above age groups make up 10.16% (13). This distribution suggests that the workforce is dominated by mid-career professionals, with a smaller but notable presence of younger and older individuals, reflecting a mix of experience and emerging talent in the field.

4.3.2 Gender of the Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. Results in Figure 4.2 reveal that the majority (84%, n=108) of the respondents were male, while 16% (n=20) were female. This implies that most of the employees working in the construction sector are male. However, the number of female employees in the building industry is reasonable as the number is not very low.

4.3.3 Education Level of the Respondents

The findings indicate that the majority of respondents (67.19%, n=86) held a Bachelor's degree, highlighting a highly educated sample population. Diploma holders made up 17.96% (n=23), while those with a Master's degree accounted for 9.38% (n=12). Respondents with a Doctorate were 3.91% (n=5), and only 1.56% (n=2) had other forms of education. This distribution suggests that most participants possess substantial academic qualifications, likely equipping them with analytical and managerial competencies relevant to housing projects. The high concentration of degree holders enhances the credibility of the data, as their responses are presumed to reflect informed perspectives on project evaluation and performance in the housing sector.

4.3.4 Years of Experience in Housing Projects

The respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they had worked in their current employment. Results in Figure 4.3 reveal that 40.62% (n=52) of the respondents had worked in their current employment between 6 – 10 years, followed by those who had worked between 11 – 15 years (25%, n=32), those who had worked between 16-20 years accounted for 15.63%, (n=20) while employees with experience of 0-5 years were 12.5% (n=16). The study also revealed that respondents with over 20 years were 6.25 (n=8%). The results therefore indicate that the majority of the respondents have adequate experience in the housing sector as they have worked for more than 6 years. The study results can then be relied upon as the respondents have experience and knowledge in the performance of housing projects in Nairobi, based on the duration they have worked in the industry.

4.4 Influence of Stakeholder Involvement on the Performance of Housing Projects in Nairobi

The study reveals overwhelmingly positive perceptions regarding stakeholder involvement across all measured dimensions. A strong majority (79.69%, n=102) agreed or strongly agreed that organizations effectively identify key stakeholders, with only 10.94% (n=14) expressing disagreement. This indicates well-established stakeholder identification practices. Active stakeholder participation was also highly rated, with 77.35% (n=99) affirming involvement in projects. However, 15.63% (n=20) reported dissatisfaction, suggesting some gaps in inclusivity. Engagement methods were deemed effective by 78.9% (n=101), reinforcing that consultations, meetings, and surveys are practical and inclusive. Still, 14.84% (n=19) disagreed, indicating room for refinement. Stakeholder influence on decision-making was strongly acknowledged, with 79.68% (n=102) agreeing their input shapes outcomes. Only 10.94% (n=14) perceived minimal

impact, while 9.38% (n=12) remained neutral. Satisfaction levels were high (80.47%, n=103), though 10.16% (n=13) expressed discontent, highlighting areas needing attention. Crucially, 79.9% (n=102) agreed that stakeholder involvement enhances project success, reinforcing their role in housing development. A small minority (9.38%, n=12) disagreed, possibly reflecting unmet expectations.

Table 1: Stakeholder Involvement

STATEMENTS (where 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither agree nor disagree, 4 –agree and 5-strongly agree)		**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**	Totals
The organization effectively identifies key stakeholders relevant to the project.	Count	8	6	12	53	49	128
	%	6.25	4.69	9.38	41.41	38.27	100
Stakeholders are actively involved in our organization's projects.	Count	8	12	9	45	54	128
	%	6.25	9.38	7.03	35.16	42.18	100
The methods used for stakeholder engagement are effective.	Count	8	11	8	52	49	128
	%	6.25	8.59	6.25	40.63	38.28	100
Stakeholder involvement positively impacts project decision-making.	Count	5	9	12	43	59	128
	%	3.91	7.03	9.38	33.59	46.09	100
Stakeholders are satisfied with their level of involvement in projects.	Count	5	8	12	46	57	128
	%	3.91	6.25	9.38	35.93	44.53	100
Stakeholder involvement contributes to the overall success of housing development projects.	Count	7	10	9	49	53	128
	%	5.47	7.81	7.03	38.28	41.41	100

4.5 Regression Analysis Results

4.5.1 Model Summary

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.523[a]	.273	.251	.05752

a. Predictors: (Constant) Stakeholder Involvement

The study found out that the independent variable in the study explained a significant proportion of variance in project performance, R2= .273 which implies that 27.3% of the proportion in project performance can be explained by the independent variables

Table 3: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.853	4	.213	64.435	.000[b]
	Residual	.407	123	.003		
	Total	1.260	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Bench Marking , Stakeholder Involvement, Results Based Monitoring, Management Style

The findings in table 3 indicate that the significance value in testing the reliability of the model for the relationship between independent variables and project performance was F(1, 13) = 64.435, p = 0.00; therefore, the model is statistically significant in predicting the relationship between the study variables

4.5.2 Coefficients[a]

Table 4: Coefficientsa

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.935	.193		10.029	.000
	Stakeholder Involvement	.430	.063	.366	6.784	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

Based on the linear regression model, Y = α+ β1X1 + u, the model therefore becomes; Y = 1.935 + 0.430 X1 0.193

Where Y = dependent variable (project performance)

α = constant

β1 is the coefficients of independent variables

X1 stakeholder involvement

Testing at 5% significant level, the regression analysis in table 4.10 is significant since all the p-values (Sig. p<0.025) testing at 2 tail test. The findings indicate that any unit increase of project performance is affected by the 0.43 increase in stakeholder involvement,

5.0 Discussion of Key Findings and Recommendations

5.1 Demographic Information

Demographic information of the respondents was captured in terms of age, gender, level of education, and years of experience in housing projects. A total of 155 questionnaires were issued for the survey, and 128 were duly completed and returned. This represented a strong response rate, which was considered adequate for analysis and ensured that the data collected was representative of the target population. In terms of age, the majority of respondents were between 36 and 45 years old, indicating that most participants were mid-career professionals. This group was followed by individuals aged 26 to 35, then those between 18 and 25, while the smallest group consisted of respondents aged 56 years and above. This mix of age groups suggests a workforce comprising both experienced personnel and younger professionals, offering a balanced perspective on the sector. Regarding gender, the survey revealed that most of the respondents were male. However, a notable number of female participants were also represented, reflecting growing gender inclusivity in the construction and housing sector, despite its traditionally male dominance. On educational qualifications, the largest proportion of respondents held a Bachelor's degree, indicating that most of the participants were well-educated. This group was followed by diploma holders, then those with Master's degrees, with a few having Doctorate qualifications or other forms of education.

5.2 Stakeholder Involvement

The findings demonstrate stakeholder involvement's critical role in enhancing housing project performance, aligning with global evidence. High agreement levels on effective stakeholder identification mirror Johnson and Smith's (2018) findings on improved cost control. Active participation practices reflect Ferrari and Rossi's (2019) observations on enhanced decision-making. Engagement methods were deemed effective, supporting Kim and Lee's (2020) findings that formalized plans improve adherence to budgets and timelines. Most respondents confirmed stakeholder influence on decisions, consistent with Akinwale and Olatunji's (2017) Nigerian study linking participation to better completion rates. High satisfaction aligns with Moyo and Msimang's (2021) findings on improved accountability. The strong perception that involvement drives success corroborates Wambui and Mwangi (2022) and Otieno and Kamau (2023), who tied engagement to better timelines and cost efficiency. While a minority noted room for deeper influence, the overall consensus reflects study's alignment with global best practices in participatory project management.

5.3 Recommendations

To strengthen housing project success in Nairobi, the study recommends institutionalizing structured stakeholder engagement frameworks with clear guidelines for identification, consultation, and meaningful participation. This includes implementing transparent feedback mechanisms to systematically integrate stakeholder inputs into decision-making across all project phases, ensuring accountability. Capacity building for project teams in participatory approaches,

conflict resolution, and communication is critical to effectively manage diverse stakeholder interests. Enhanced collaboration between national and county agencies will foster consistent application of engagement practices. By embedding these inclusive strategies, projects can achieve greater community ownership, optimized resource management, and social legitimacy ultimately improving delivery timelines, cost efficiency, and quality outcomes in Nairobi's housing sector.

5.4 Suggested Areas for Further Study

While stakeholder involvement is widely practiced, gaps remain in the depth of their influence on key project decisions. Future research could investigate how different stakeholder groups such as community members, government agencies, developers, and civil society perceive their level of influence and actual impact on project outcomes. This study could also examine the effectiveness of existing engagement mechanisms in translating stakeholder feedback into actionable decisions, identifying best practices and barriers to meaningful participation that enhance trust, accountability, and project success.

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