

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**<https://doi.org/10.56868/ijmt.v1i1.13>**Exploring External Stakeholder Engagement Strategies and their Impact on Project Success**Bakhtawar<sup>1\*</sup>, Ansar Ali Mehdi<sup>2</sup>, Maria Zalfaqaar<sup>3</sup>, Moomal Asad<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup>. Bahria University, Islamabad<sup>2</sup>. Bahria Business School, Bahria University, Pakistan<sup>3</sup>. National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan<sup>4</sup>. National Defence University, Islamabad

- Corresponding Author: [Bakhtawar@gmail.com](mailto:Bakhtawar@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

In the past few years, it can be observed that business norms and practices have changed and the market has now a wide circle of stakeholders as compared to past eras. The main purpose of the current study is to explore the impact of ESE strategies on project success in the IT industry (Information Technology) of Pakistan. The study is based on mixed methods. In the first phase, an in-depth Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was performed. In the next phase, face-to-face & virtual interviews were conducted with senior IT leads to develop various themes. Moreover, a word cloud and frequency chart was extracted using NVivo 12 to strengthen the argument. The findings show that there is a strong relationship between stakeholder engagement and project success in the IT industry. Likewise, the findings of the study suggest that a successful Strategy for External Stakeholder Engagement (SESE) is possible by using a collaborative and participatory approach. The study provides greater insights into the engagement of external stakeholders. Moreover, the study recommends exploring new means of communication that remain helpful in engaging stakeholders and should be aligned with the local and organizational culture.

**Keywords:** External Stakeholders Engagement Strategies, Project Success & Information Technology

**INTRODUCTION**

In the world of businesses and projects, failure has always been considered fatal (Baden, 2010; Albats, Alexander, Mahdad, Miller, & Post, 2020). Many internal and external stimuli affect projects' goals (Lee, 2007). There can be many factors like, but are not limited to, miss-management of the resources, miscommunication, change in regulations, and miss-engagement of the project's internal and external stakeholders (Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018; Project Management Institute, 2017).

Every project has a diversified pool of external stakeholders. Due to their conflicting perspectives, different priorities, and approaches regarding the consequences of a project's success, their engagement has always remained a dilemma for the project manager and the performing organization (Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019; Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018). Although in some industries like construction and manufacturing, engagement of the external stakeholders remains

a little easier, however, in the Information Technology (IT) industry, due to its agility, velocity variety, and veracity, expansions of the virtual world, cloud computing, Internet of Things (IoT), virtual and augmented realities, engagement of the external stakeholders has always been a problem for the management and organizations (Saad, Zahid, & Muhammad, 2022; Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019).

Researchers have been working to develop optimized ways for the active engagement of external stakeholders in the IT industry (Giacomarra, Crescimanno, Sakka, & Galati, 2020; Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019). Khristiningrum, Gustomo, & Ginting (2021) proposes that effective communication can be one of the possible ways for the active engagement of external stakeholders in the IT industry. Similarly, Lehtinen & Aaltonen (2020) suggest adding values for the external stakeholder to creep their engagement. In the same way, Khan, Waris, Panigrahi, Sajid, & Rana (2022) support the idea that active collaboration and negotiation among the organization and external stakeholders can render better results. Likewise, Silvius & Graaf (2019), Martinsuo & Geraldi (2020), and Winch & Cha (2020) believes in sharing the responsibility for bolstering stakeholder engagement. But it has been observed that still, multi-national organizations, having a rich history, traditions and experience fail to engage their valued stakeholder (Barendsen, Mu, & Silvius, 2021; Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019). They are spending millions and billions of USD on research and development funds to address the missing links among the performing organizations and external stakeholders' engagement, however, due to the complexity and customization of the IT industry, almost 70% of IT companies continuously fail to complete their projects successfully, and a major reason highlighted is a non-participatory approach of the external stakeholder (Rasool, et al., 2022; Guertler & Sick, 2021). Most of the time, the external stakeholder is not aware of the requirements and needs of the industry, although, the IT industry tries to keep them in constant a loop, uses agile methods and retrospective approaches for stakeholder engagement and value delivery (Project Management Institute, 2017; Kineber, Othman, Oke, Chileshe, & Zayed, 2021; Barendsen, Mu, & Silvius, 2021).

The situation becomes more challenging in societies like Pakistan, where IT-related practices have not matured over time. The processes, practices, and frameworks have not been either developed, or are not operationalized fully (Acciarini, Borelli, Capo, Cappa, & Sarrocco, 2022; Bhatti, Santoro, Sarwar, & Pellicelli, 2021; Guertler & Sick, 2021). Moreover, the contextualization of the industry and the Strategies for External Stakeholder Engagement (SESE) remain different (Acebo, Miguel-Dávila, & Nieto, 2021; Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021). Furthermore, literature is also little silent on the SESE in the IT industry (Fashina, Omar, Sheikh, & Fakunled, 2021; Acciarini, Borelli, Capo, Cappa, & Sarrocco, 2022; Albats, Alexander, Mahdad, Miller, & Post, 2020; Bhatti, Santoro, Sarwar, & Pellicelli, 2021). Therefore, realizing external stakeholders as an influencing group for IT projects, the study has evaluated and documented the engaging strategies for external stakeholders in information

technology. Therefore, the main objective of the study was to explore the SESE strategies in Pakistani IT projects.

The structure of the study was aligned with the objectives of the study. In the first phase, a detailed Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was adopted to explore the strategies for the external stakeholders' engagement. The reason for SLR to comprehend the phenomenon in detail. This helped in theme selection, however, the literature was a bit silent on the agreed-upon strategies. However, the literature was found inadequate and comprehensive, therefore, in the 2nd phase, the qualitative survey planned the themes presented in a prescriptive way through thematic analysis, to present socio-culturally supported strategies for SESE. Moreover, NVivo 12 was used for the extraction of the word cloud and the development of a frequency chart followed by a conclusion and recommendations.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The paper is based on a mixed-method approach. In the first phase, SRL was adopted to explore the Phenomenon of Interest (POI) in depth. The main keywords for the search were "External Stakeholder Engagement", "External Stakeholder Engagement Strategies", "External Stakeholder Engagement Strategies in the IT industry", and "External Stakeholder engagement for project success". The databases used were "Google Scholar", "Microsoft Academic", "Semantic Scholar", "Science Direct", "Emerald", and "Elsevier". The period used for the research was confined from 1990 to 2022, however, more focus was concentrated on the recently published literature. Moreover, scholarly work published in journals, proceedings, books, periodicals, and conference proceedings published in the English language were included in the study. A total of 127 manuscripts were considered in the study. The main focus areas for the selection were computer science, software management, information technology, and other closely related areas. In the initial screening, 13 publications were removed. Similarly, 8 more publications were removed, as the projects were purely from biological sciences and were having no coherence and connection with the current study. Furthermore, 6 more documents were excluded due to duplications of concepts and constructs. Forty-four (44) articles were removed due to language (not in English) concerns, duplication, relevance, and other issues. So, the study concluded with 17 reviews and 39 full-length articles, therefore, the total publications included in the study were 56 as portrayed in Figure 1.

In the 2nd phase, themes extracted from the SLR were taken to the industry and were discussed in detail with the project managers and leaders, as they remain engaged most of the time in SESE and information gathering. An open-ended structured questionnaire was developed for the interview, which was revised and rated time and again by the academicians and industrial professionals. The software houses were selected from Rawalpindi and Islamabad, as most of the national and international software houses are based here. A total of forty-four (44) software houses were contacted initially, however, only thirty-six (36) participated in the interview. The rest of them were excused due to their internal

departmental policies. Furthermore, only thirty-one (31) interviews were considered complete, because many of the project managers and leaders did not answer all questions of the interview and it was difficult to contact them and present them in a coherent form. The respondents (Project managers and project leads) were asked only one question “what are the SESE in your organization”? The responses have been maintained in the thematic analysis part of the study. In the 3rd phase, with the help of NVIVO 12, the world cloud and frequency table was constructed from themes, to support and generalize the findings.

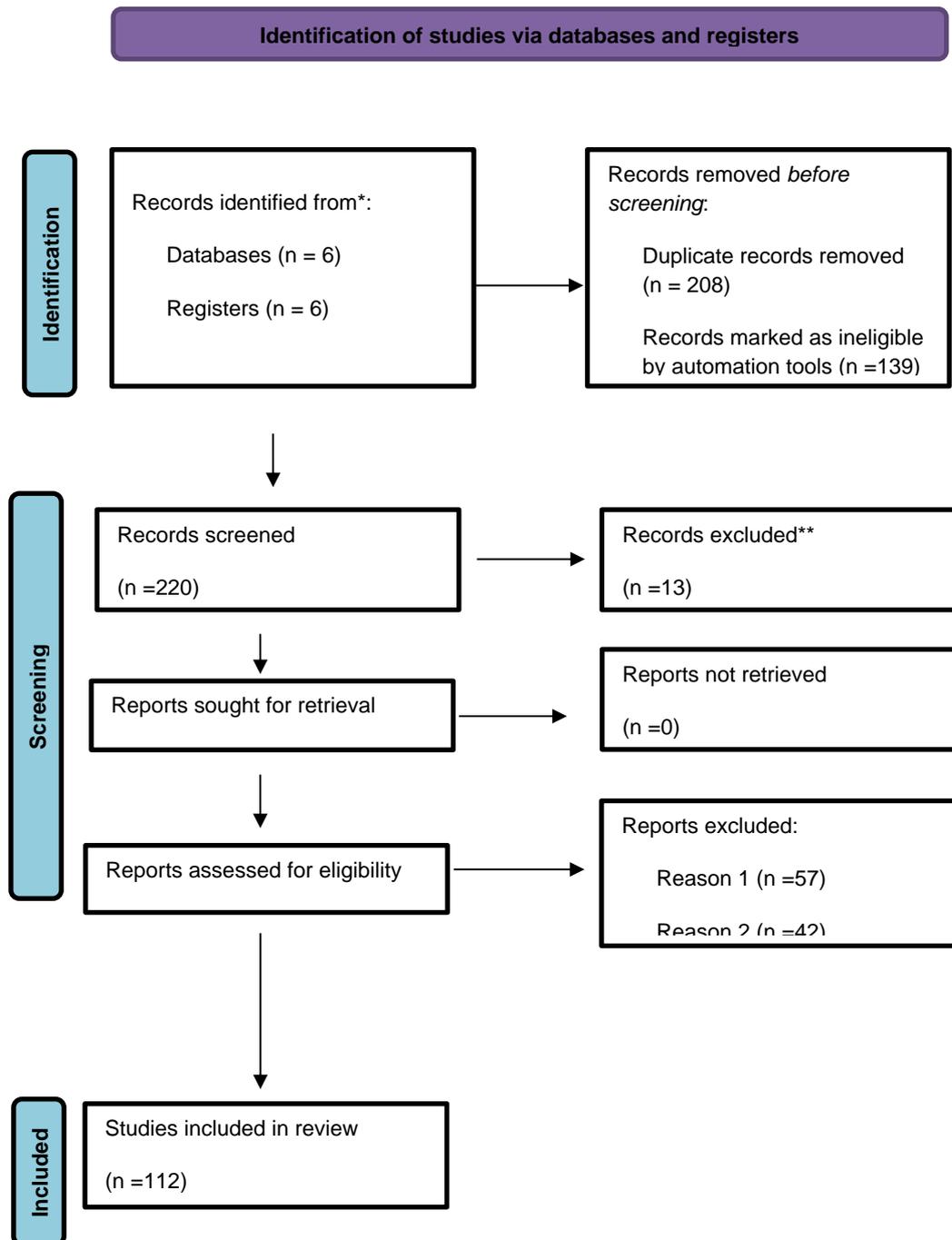


Figure 1: PRISMA for the SRL

**FINDINGS**

After SRL, data was analyzed using data extraction using NVivo 12 from the 56 sources as given in Table 1. A total of 8 themes were extracted, which are being used across the globe for SESE in the IT industry. The major focus of the themes was on effective communication and inclusion of the stakeholder in the development loop. Similarly, cooperation, creating awareness and educating them, using local intelligence and practices based on the need and context of the project.

**Table 1: Themes Extracted from Literature**

S/No.	Strategy	References
1	Effective Communication with the general public that is open and honest	(Albats, Alexander, Mahdad, Miller, & Post, 2020; Barendsen, Mu, & Silvius, 2021; Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019; Khristiningrum, Gustomo, & Ginting, 2021)
2	Form community advisory boards.	(Lee, 2007; Lieshou, Nijhof, Naarding, & Blomme, 2021; Jones, Maas, Kraus, & Reason, 2021)
3	Engage the general community when designing and shaping assessment criteria.	(Lieshou, Nijhof, Naarding, & Blomme, 2021; Kaboré & Sané, 2022; Kaboré & Sané, 2022)
4	Educating, conversing, and socializing	(Khristiningrum, Gustomo, & Ginting, 2021; Khristiningrum, Gustomo, & Ginting, 2021)
5	Collaboration, mutual understanding, and partnership	(Lalic, Lalic, Delić, Gracanin, & Stefanovic, 2022; Lehtinen & Aaltonen, 2020; Saad, Zahid, & Muhammad, 2022)
6	Effective use of digital tools in external-engagement activities.	(Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018; Acciarini, Borelli, Capo, Cappa, & Sarrocco, 2022; Gemino, Reich, & Serrador, 2021)

- 7 Corporate stories. (Khan, Waris, Panigrahi, Sajid, & Rana, 2022; Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2011)
- 8 Stakeholder meetings and workshops (Kineber, Othman, Oke, Chileshe, & Zayed, 2021; Acciarini, Borelli, Capo, Cappa, & Sarrocco, 2022)

### ***External Stakeholders Engagement Strategies (SESE Strategies)***

Projects are surrounded by internal and external stakeholders (Akbar & Shahid, 2022). It is easy to engage the internal stakeholders due to formal regulations, rules, and other statutory bodies (Ayat, Ullah, & Kang, 2022; Baah, Acquah, & Ofori, 2022). However external stakeholders, such as regulatory agencies and local communities that do not have formal or contractual contact with the project organization but may have an impact or influence on the project are critical to the PS (Castro, 2021; Magano, Silvius, Silva, & Leite, 2021; Olander & Landin, 2008 ). There are certain recommended strategies in the literature, however, for different projects, SESE strategies remain different. Among them, negotiating with external stakeholders as a strategy has been focused more in literature, that involves external stakeholders in project implementation or decision-making processes for co-creation of value and overcoming the underlying challenges (Greenwood, 2007; Barendsen, Mu, & Silvius, 2021; Lieshou, Nijhof, Naarding, & Blomme, 2021; Mayor, et al., 2021).

When it comes to tackle the issue of external stakeholder involvement in Information technology organizations, research on managing project stakeholders assumes that project managers play a critical role (Gil, 2009). In this regard, some attention has been paid to the responsibilities and actions of project owners (Bhatti, Santoro, Sarwar, & Pellicelli, 2021; Guertler & Sick, 2021). Barendsen, Mu, & Silvius (2021) and clients' (2017) in-depth studies on planning for engagement of external stakeholders, notably IT need special attention and care as the organization's capabilities were significantly vulnerable in the past.

Knowing external stakeholders is important to increase the organization's business operations, day-to-day activities, processes, and procedures. It converts "stakeholders' expressions" into "stakeholders' journeys" (Kirmizi & Kocaoglu, 2022; Guertler & Sick, 2021; Oppong, Chan, Ameyaw, Frimpong, & Dansoh, 2021). In certain situations, a shared knowledge of the communication methods between internal stakeholders working toward the same goal is critical to ensure that actions involving external stakeholders are arranged consistently and appropriately (Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021; Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021). After assigning roles and responsibilities, a project manager or project management team is to organize activities and arrangements to involve external stakeholders

in project activities and decision-making through communication and negotiation (Gemino, Reich, & Serrador, 2021; Boaz, Borst, Kok, & O'Shea, 2021). This includes identifying and categorizing external stakeholders and studying their location, using best practice guidelines, frameworks, and tools like energy gain matrix (Acciarini, Borelli, Capo, Cappa, & Sarrocco, 2022).

They may include active dialogue, workshops, working groups, face-to-face, and phone meetings, as well as a variety of seminars and roundtable discussions to develop repetitive and one-on-one organizational practices (Köpsel, Kiipper, & Peck, 2021; Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019). Separate personal relations and communication teams, in addition to the project manager, are mentioned in some research as an important element in executing such processes (Acebo, Miguel-Dávila, & Nieto, 2021; Baah, Acquah, & Ofori, 2022).

Previous research studies provide a limited perspective on addressing the role of SESE in organizational projects by giving agency and responsibility to the person who does so (Fashina, Omar, Sheikh, & Fakunled, 2021; Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021; Gemino, Reich, & Serrador, 2021). These studies recommend that roles, obligations, and functions associated with planning to negotiate with external stakeholders should be handled separately (Boaz, Borst, Kok, & O'Shea, 2021). However, handling every stakeholder expectation and defining their role individually, although, it remains primary, but too difficult, especially in larger projects, therefore, it is recommended that a common platform or an advisory board should be there for stakeholder negotiation and recommendations (Zenk, et al., 2022; Acebo, Miguel-Dávila, & Nieto, 2021). Moreover, aspects such as organizational contexts and how internal stakeholders link collaborative actions need also be defined with the level of authority (Bhatti, Santoro, Sarwar, & Pellicelli, 2021; Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021).

Furthermore, stakeholders need to be engaged in the planning phase to design a success and implementation and assessment criteria for the project, based on local and contextual needs and requirements (Rondi, Massis, & Kraus, 2021; Winch, 2017). However, sometimes stakeholders don't know their needs and requirement, therefore, for the value creation and its alignment with the local standards and artifacts, the project team should educate, and train the locals regarding the project objective and possible outcomes (Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019; Jones, Maas, Kraus, & Reason, 2021). They should moderate the sessions ensuring external stakeholders' active engagement, and address project challenges, especially, those that arise from the local context and need tacit and local knowledge for their solution (Huang & Chen, 2022; Baah, Acquah, & Ofori, 2022; Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021).

This will help in developing rapport, raising trust, faith, and support levels, and may increase collaboration, mutual understanding, and partnership among the project team and external stakeholders (Avotra, Chengang, Marcelline, Asad, & Yingfei, 2021; Bhatti, Santoro, Sarwar, & Pellicelli, 2021). Cooperation and coordination can be further improved via digital communication or nondigital

methods, however, digital communication networks have reshaped the working mechanism, therefore, locals can also be connected in the active loops through these for better outcome (Jones, Maas, Kraus, & Reason, 2021; Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018; Wang, et al., 2021; Fashina, Omar, Sheikh, & Fakunled, 2021).

In the same way, workshops, formal, informal, and nonformal training, visits, and gatherings, sharing corporate success stories, and listening to folk knowledge and success criteria can help in PS and SESE (Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018; Saad, Zahid, & Muhammad, 2022).

Summarizing, the most important aspect of project success, according to many researchers, is good and effective communication with project external stakeholders (Gemino, Reich, & Serrador, 2021; Derakhshan, Turner, & Mancini, 2019; Lee, 2007). It provides project participants with a sense of ownership and worth (Baden, 2010). Moreover, stakeholders believe that they are important and are fully engaged in project activities. Furthermore, involving stakeholders early in the planning process reduces the number of difficulties that may arise during the project execution phase. In addition to analyzing and engaging stakeholders in the project delivery process, a systematic approach can be an effective method (Huang & Chen, 2022; Jones, Maas, Kraus, & Reason, 2021).

### ***Project Success***

Project success is considered vital for the success of the organization and its stakeholders (Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2011). Liu, Cao, Duan, & Wu (2021) explicated that projects are often evaluated based on three factors: cost, time, and quality. A productive and effective project meets its objectives on time, under budget, and according to specifications, all while satisfying the customer (Sawadogo, Sané, & Kaboré, 2022; Fashina, Omar, Sheikh, & Fakunled, 2021; Guertler & Sick, 2021). However, managing project context through stakeholders is the most effective way to eliminate project ambiguity and uncertainty (Boaz, Borst, Kok, & O'Shea, 2021; Zaman, Damij, Khaliq, Nawaz, & Pradana, 2022). Stakeholders have an exceptional role in the success of any project as they help in providing the requisite resources to the company needed for the completion of the project (Lalic, Lalic, Delić, Gracanin, & Stefanovic, 2022). According to Baah, Acquah, & Ofori, (2022) partnerships between different organizations and external stakeholders need to be developed based on the level of interest that further enhances the success of the projects.

The current understanding is that the stakeholders, particularly the primary sponsor, are the best judges of the project success (Baden, 2010). Additionally, success is measured at the end of the project by analyzing whether the scope is completed within budget and time constraints and whether the project's output is delivered to specification (Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021; Greenwood, 2007). Similarly, success is measured after project completion by assessing expected and obtained benefits; and whether the organization achieves higher-order strategic objectives simultaneously (Wang, Xu, He,

Chan, & Owusu, 2022). Baden (2010) distinguished between the success of project management, which occurs when the project is well-managed to complete the desired scope on time and within budget, and project success, which occurs when the project meets its business objectives. The importance of larger project performance metrics has become the standard (Kaboré & Sané, 2022; Boaz, Borst, Kok, & O'Shea, 2021).

Ayat, Ullah, & Kang (2022) illustrated that project success criterion differ from one to the other. He investigated whether such differences are merely a function of the external situation, such as the parent organization's strategic goals for the project, or whether there is something inbuilt in different types of projects, or projects from different industries, that results in a common pattern for a particular type of project (Gemino, Reich, & Serrador, 2021). People also assess project success differently depending on their own goals, and one person can rate a project as a success while another rate it as a failure (Jones, Maas, Kraus, & Reason, 2021). Only one manager can "win" if two managers wish to utilize a project to expand their power base at the cost of the other. In this research, we investigated whether a person's personal preferences can be anticipated based on their demographic profile. If such were the case, it would impact a project manager's decision on which project management approach to utilize for the project being managed (Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018; Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018).

However, over time different researchers found that multiple criterion help in the success of any project, which requires engagement and communication between internal and external stakeholders (Bhatti, Santoro, Sarwar, & Pellicelli, 2021; Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018; Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021). Customer and end-user satisfaction is very essential because it affects all success metrics except recurring business (Burton, 1996; Huang & Chen, 2022; Guertler & Sick, 2021). Henceforth, the research available on project success shows the way different aspects help in the success of any project through the implementation of various strategies (Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2011).

### ***Theoretical Support of the Study***

The stakeholder theory pushes to engage all the external elements, organizations, and customers in a productive way to the processes inside the organization (Buuse, Winden, & Schrama, 2021; Hummels, 1998). It proclaims that not only the shareholders, but all stakeholders need to be interconnected in a loop, so that organization can full its vision, mission, and strategies in the best possible way (Castro, 2021; Magano, Silvius, Silva, & Leite, 2021).

The theory of the stakeholder of organizational management and business ethics was presented by R. Edwards in 1984 (Guertler & Sick, 2021). It postulates that more values should be given to the concern of the external stakeholder morally so that it extends cooperation and coordination, trust and belief among organizational mission, and stakeholders can be engaged in a productive way (Guertler & Sick, 2021). Therefore, it is the primary responsibility of the organization

to engage its stakeholders for value creation. In the same way, the new classical theory state that stakeholders can be used in an integrated way to support the organizational goal and also value creation for the stakeholders and demands for the development of a unified platform for stakeholder engagement through effective communication (Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2011; Kaboré & Sané, 2022).

Likewise, a framework for the stakeholders' engagement supports the integrated engagement of the external stakeholders through developing good relations, effective communication, and dialogue, and involvement/engagement of the stakeholders in an active organizational learning process (Boaz, Borst, Kok, & O'Shea, 2021; Guertler & Sick, 2021). According to Acciarini, Borelli, Capo, Cappa, & Sarrocco (2022) Baah, Acquah, & Ofori (2022), and Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein (2018), those organizations, that engage their external stakeholders in a continuous loop, through retrospectives, formal, informal, and non-formal meetings, they are getting the best from the markets, and stakeholders. Criticism and feedback will co-create values, and open new ways of doing business (Gemino, Reich, & Serrador, 2021; Jones, Maas, Kraus, & Reason, 2021).

### *Thematic Analysis of the Interviews*

Negotiation is an attribute that allows individuals to come to a mutual agreement that allows two parties to effectively communicate with each other. However, the collected data shows that the respondents have varying responses to the negotiation. For instance, one of the key respondents from NokNok explained that;

“End users are most important because we generate revenue from them then IT team. our technical teams are more important than Suppliers who provide products means provide grocery things.”

Based on the aforementioned response it can be said that the IT companies mainly generate their revenue through their negotiation with stakeholders who supply them with requisite products.

According to another NokNok respondent:

“As my experience, let's take an example of Careem and Uber, if I have good experience with Careem they will constructively see the things and their support system is nice to see this is things are working. If we provide good products but support is not good ultimately the client will not be happy. we focus on after-sale service like support system a lot.”

The response as mentioned earlier demonstrates the way different companies such as Uber, Careem, and others communicate with IT companies and utilize their services to improve their services. Negotiations allow mutual agreement between organizations and stakeholders. Likewise, office meetings allow different individuals to discuss their concerns and goals in a better way through the

discussion. Another important strategy is to have more knowledge than vendors which helps in discussing the terms precisely. Similarly, market knowledge allows the organization to have a better understanding of the vendors. Finally, having a huge loop allows the organizations to fill it via appropriate strategies and agreements with the vendors. According to the response of a key respondent, dialogue allows stakeholders to share their views and concerns directly with the organization which eventually allows them to resolve different issues. Ministry of IT, Pakistan explained that;

“One of the projects was to deliver 100-1000 equipment to end-users. but just b/c we were not timely focused on the engagement of relevant stakeholders and we didn't address their grievances timely. Just because of that one of the equipment had some functional problem and it didn't work properly. We faced problems after delivering that product to end-users.”

According to the respondent, the grievances of the relevant stakeholders remained unaddressed which created an issue when the product was delivered to the destination. Henceforth, it can be said that such a situation can be handled adequately by timely negotiation and dialogue.

Meetings between stakeholders and organizations allow them an opportunity to communicate with each other. Based on the theme different questions were asked by the respondents and their responses showed variation in their views based on their knowledge, expertise, and other aspects.

Arpatech (Pvt) Ltd highlighted that;“You know, selection of the right resources and keeping them engaged, making sure that people who are engaged with you within the organization, they are retained and well-groomed over some time. So they own the entire process and technology to be able to serve your customers.”

The response shows that it is important for an organization to engage the employees in different activities and provide them with the requisite information to deal with consumers in a better way that will help in the success of different goals or projects set by the company. Also, some of the respondents from Arpatech (pvt)Ltd provided their views on “who are involved in engagement planning and prioritization”?

“Engaging and for having the continuous relationship with those specific and important stakeholders like PASHA and our customers.” It shows that there is an evident relationship of the organization with consumers and stakeholders that is mainly based on meetings. The respondent explained that different meetings are held by the organization to keep the system up-to-date and address the issues faced by the consumers. Arpatech (Pvt) Ltd uniquely positioned itself;

“So we are, we are, we are very nicely positioning, so on a day-to-day basis, the managers, the team leads and myself, you know, we, we always get involved in making those day-to-day decisions.

According to the respondent, different meetings are held based on the nature of the activities. There are different types of meetings that are held based on the nature of the issue and task that allows the staff an opportunity to discuss a matter of concern. Furthermore, most of the employees attend the meeting which allows them to contribute to the decision-making process. VINNCORP has a different schedule for the meetings;

“We do have, uh, uh, meetings on daily basis. Like there's a term for the standing meetings.”

The meetings are usually held daily or weekly basis discussing the way clients respond to the services provided by the company.

On the other hand; Feedback on the services provided by the company allows an organization to make optimistic changes in the internal as well as external environment of the business. However, when interviewees were asked questions related to the feedback they responded differently further explained;

“Evaluation of the performance of vendors. Giving scores”

The response as mentioned before shows that the scores are given to the vendors based on their performance, which allows the company to assess the level of involvement and contribution to the success of the organization.

Micro Merger (Pvt) Ltd follows a system where;

“We value our stakeholders and keep their interests supreme in our business practices additionally, we get feedback from our external stakeholders and clients at the end of each project.

According to the respondent after the completion of a project clients and stakeholders provide their feedback regarding the services provided to them, which helps in improving future strategies and services. Arpatech (Pvt) Ltd explained that;

“So I think it is very important to proactively engage external stakeholders. And one example would be running an NPS program, which is a net promoter score program. A fundamental survey that my team does from a customer satisfaction perspective to get feedback from customers.”

It shows that there are different types of programs used by the companies to record feedback including the NPS program, which is a survey used for feedback of customers related to their satisfaction levels. It further helps in getting advice from consumers that helps in the improvement of the services. The response shows that some service providers feel happy when they get feedback on their performance even when it is not excellent, as it helps them in improving their skills. Also, stakeholders are kept informed regarding the performance of the company which increases the

engagement with stakeholders by improving the level of communication. Effective communication allows IT companies to communicate with potential stakeholders effectively. Respondents were asked to share their opinion about effective communication and they shared varying views: According to Micro Merger (Pvt) Ltd

“Continuous interaction and we choose a context-appropriate method of engagement. A participatory approach (communication of information, consultation, partnerships) yields better results than a one-way approach.”

According to the respondent, there are different methods of communication that are opted by the company's for instance participatory approach, consultation, and partnership that help companies in creating effective communication with stakeholders. There are different benchmarks set by the companies that allow them to design different strategies to stay in touch with the consumers and consider their demands. VinnCorp explained that;

“External stakeholders are the most important practice we follow and the services we are providing to the market. First of all, we grab a client and maintain a fine, secondly, good communication with them. On the project and the clarity on the services, we provide on it. No other than just sugarcoating, what we do, we show them that we ought to be doing better of our services and what we make as a protector, or you've been transparent and fully effective communication.”

The response shows that good communication with clients helps in clarifying the terms of services that further help in clarifying the goals set for the project. Also, effective communication helps in building a viable communication environment between stakeholders and the company that improves service delivery. According to Micro Merger Pvt Ltd;

“Our experience suggests that engagement with external stakeholders yields positive discourse for mutual benefits.”

It shows that communication with external stakeholders provides benefits to both parties as it improves the overall condition and services provided by the companies. According to the response above, it can be seen that communication plays an important role in providing good services as it allows consumers to share their views regarding the products. Also, their concerns are being handled timely.

Another important theme of the research is Social Media, as it plays a significant role in engaging stakeholders. The responses show that social media assists IT companies in various ways. It provides communication between the organization and potential clients. It can also help companies in achieving new business opportunities. However, the respondents have mentioned the role of media in various ways. NokNok uses social media platforms to reach its target audience;

“End users (international), targeted audience is end users we use social media like linked in and WhatsApp to engage with them continuously.”

Many businesses, especially in Pakistan are using social media as a powerful tool to increase their market share. Especially, they are using social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram to increase the customer base of their products or services. Ministry of IT uses social media for posting advertisements;

“Advertisement- Invitations posted on Social media- print media- LinkedIn – Facebook”

Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn offer organizations a way to connect with external stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and partners. They can also be used to monitor and respond to feedback about the organization. According to one of the employees from Arpatech (Pvt) Ltd. thinks;

“So in the digital era, you have to stay alive on your social media channels. It is a very important thing, um, to ensure that your stakeholders. Whether that is potential clients or industry experts or industry influencers”

The responses from interviews show that social media plays important role in building businesses in the contemporary world. The most important point is that if businesses do not have their own social media channels and they are not interacting with their clients on their terms, they will go elsewhere. If businesses are engaging with their clients on their terms and engaging in a way that is appropriate for them and the work that they do, then it is quite easy to make good impressions. Social media is powerful as it reaches everyone without any regard for their age, location, or their race. Therefore, it is considered an important element of external stakeholders.

Furthermore, Technology is needed for process efficiency, to use computers to help with important planning and decision-making, to develop information systems, and to apply scientific methods in the completion of a project. It can also facilitate a process when it is done correctly. There are various benefits such as maximizing production efficiency and minimizing the amount of human effort. Additionally, technology can help organizations to engage with external stakeholders in several ways, most notably through online platforms and social media. By using these tools, organizations can reach out to a wider audience and solicit feedback from a larger number of people.

Therefore, most companies rely on technology for completing their various tasks. One of the respondents from NokNok reflects on the use of Technology in dealing with clients,

“Basically we do not entertain the walk-in customer. Just client has to installed app.”

The company relies on technology to communicate with its stakeholders. Likewise, Arpatech (Pvt) Ltd. also considers Technology as an external stakeholder for its company;

“as I said, people, processes, and technology. These are the three core elements. That is how you are going to stay engaged with your customers, right? Company’s reputation is very much dependent upon these three things.”

Technology plays an important role in the success of IT companies. It is a key driver of innovation and helps to create new opportunities for businesses. IT companies need to keep up with the latest technology trends to stay competitive and deliver the best possible products and services to their customers. For Project success, IT companies should focus on the Technology Strategy. Moreover, technology can help to make the process of engaging with external stakeholders more efficient and streamlined. Another way NokNok relies on Technology is the right use of Online Platforms;

“Advertisements on multiple channels ... we provide offers for promo codes and discount offers. The amount can be discounted or if you refer some other clients so some amount will be added to your Wallet on your account as a source of attraction”

Technology can be a great enabler in engaging external stakeholders, whether it is through social media platforms or other online tools. By leveraging technology, organizations can reach a larger audience more effectively and efficiently. For example, online platforms can be used to track RSVPs for events, send out reminders, and provide materials and resources in advance. Social media can also be used to promote events and engage with external stakeholders on a more informal basis. Finally, technology can help organizations to collect and analyze data from engagement activities, which can be used to improve future outreach efforts.

The role of retrospectives in project success is crucial. It allows managers to take a step back and analyze what went wrong and what went right during the project. This allows for future projects to be improved and for current projects to be completed more efficiently. Additionally, retrospective gives employees the chance to voice their concerns and give feedback about the project. This allows for a more cohesive team that is better equipped to handle future projects. It can help to build relationships between different departments within the company, which can lead to a more efficient and productive workplace. One of the respondents from Arpatech (Pvt) Ltd. thinks that;

“It is the very important thing, um, to ensure that your stakeholders see you as a positive company, always staying in touch and engaging the audience and informing of the new activities.”

The companies choose to stay in touch with their audience and keep them informed. According to MicroMerger (Pvt) Ltd,

“We get the feedback from our external stakeholders and clients at the end of each project that enables us to grasp their demands.”

They appreciate the feedback they get from their users. Also, the company's software development team uses this feedback to assess and streamline its processes. Furthermore, it will help the company's marketing team to use this feedback to assess and improve its product. The ministry of IT thinks;

“Identification of stakeholders should start from the beginning of the project to address on right time and right stakeholders.”

Retrospectives are a powerful tool for engaging external stakeholders. By providing a forum for open dialogue and feedback, they can help build trust and relationships between organizations and their stakeholders. Additionally, they can help identify areas of improvement and potential areas of conflict. Ultimately, retrospectives can help create a more open and effective communication channel between organizations and their stakeholders.

In any organization, timely product delivery is essential to maintaining good relationships with external stakeholders. If a company consistently fails to deliver products on time, it will damage its reputation and may eventually lose customers. Therefore, timely delivery of the product is important to meet deadlines. Timely implementation will ensure a smooth flow of products and customer satisfaction. In addition, the time frame helps in the efficient use of resources and helps in lowering costs.

NokNok is very conscious about time delivery and it does not want to keep its customers waiting.

“Right after placing the order client will receive his/her order within 15 minutes. In case it gets delayed even a single minute then some amount will be transferred to the user's Wallet. Similarly, if the amount will be increased per minute.”

On-time product delivery is essential for project success. A project can be well planned and organized, but if the products are not delivered on time, the project will likely fail. There are many reasons why product delivery might be delayed, such as problems with manufacturing or transportation. Whatever the reason, it is important to take action to avoid delays. The Ministry of Information Technology also considers it essential;

“Just b/c we were not timely focused on engagement of relevant stakeholders and we didn't address their grievance timely. Just because of that one of the equipment had some functional problem and it didn't work properly. We faced problems after delivering that product to end-users.”

However, Vinnacorp has faced issues regarding Timely Delivery,

“Yes, we did. Uh, we did not decide the architecture of the system and, uh, also, uh, while we are facing, uh, some issues when we are working with, we do face a lot of issues regarding, uh, the decision for the particular requirement of deciding on that particular requirement.”

The impact of delays in product delivery can be far-reaching and costly for businesses. In some cases, it may even result in the loss of customers. Delays can cause disruptions to production schedules, which can lead to missed deadlines and lost sales. In addition, delays can damage relationships with suppliers and other business partners. In the worst case, they can even lead to legal action. Therefore, a significant impact of delays in Timely Delivery can be felt by external stakeholders, who often rely on the products or services provided by companies. Delays can cause these stakeholders to lose faith in the company and question the ability to deliver on promises. Additionally, delays can result in financial losses for our external stakeholders if, for example, they have to purchase alternative products or services to make up for the delayed delivery. In some cases, delays can even cause safety issues for external stakeholders if, for example, they are relying on the company to provide a critical component for their operations.

Engaging external stakeholders through workshops/training programs can be an excellent way to get them involved in the company or organization. By providing these programs, companies can show their stakeholders how much they value their input and expertise. Additionally, these programs can help build trust between organizations and stakeholders. Ultimately, this trust can lead to more effective communication and collaboration between organizations and external stakeholders. Moreover, workshop/training programs can also help reduce potential conflict between organizations and stakeholders.

Workshops and training can play an important role in ESE. They can help organizations to better understand the needs and expectations of their stakeholders, and to develop more effective engagement strategies. Additionally, workshops and training can provide opportunities for stakeholders to share their own experiences and expertise, which can further improve engagement efforts.

Therefore, many of the IT companies in Pakistan are aware of it, and Arpatech (Pvt) Ltd.

“From our protective perspective, which is, uh, you know, focus more on the international market, then, um, our stakeholders, our international clients, of course, international symposium. International conferences.”

There are various ways to engage stakeholders, such as through international conferences and symposiums. However, conducting a workshop or training program specifically designed for a certain group of stakeholders can be more beneficial in building a closer relationship and fostering

communication between the company and its stakeholders. Therefore, the Ministry of IT arranges workshops;

“Ministry of IT has taken some initiative to educate stakeholders to include end users and customer as well by conducting workshops.”

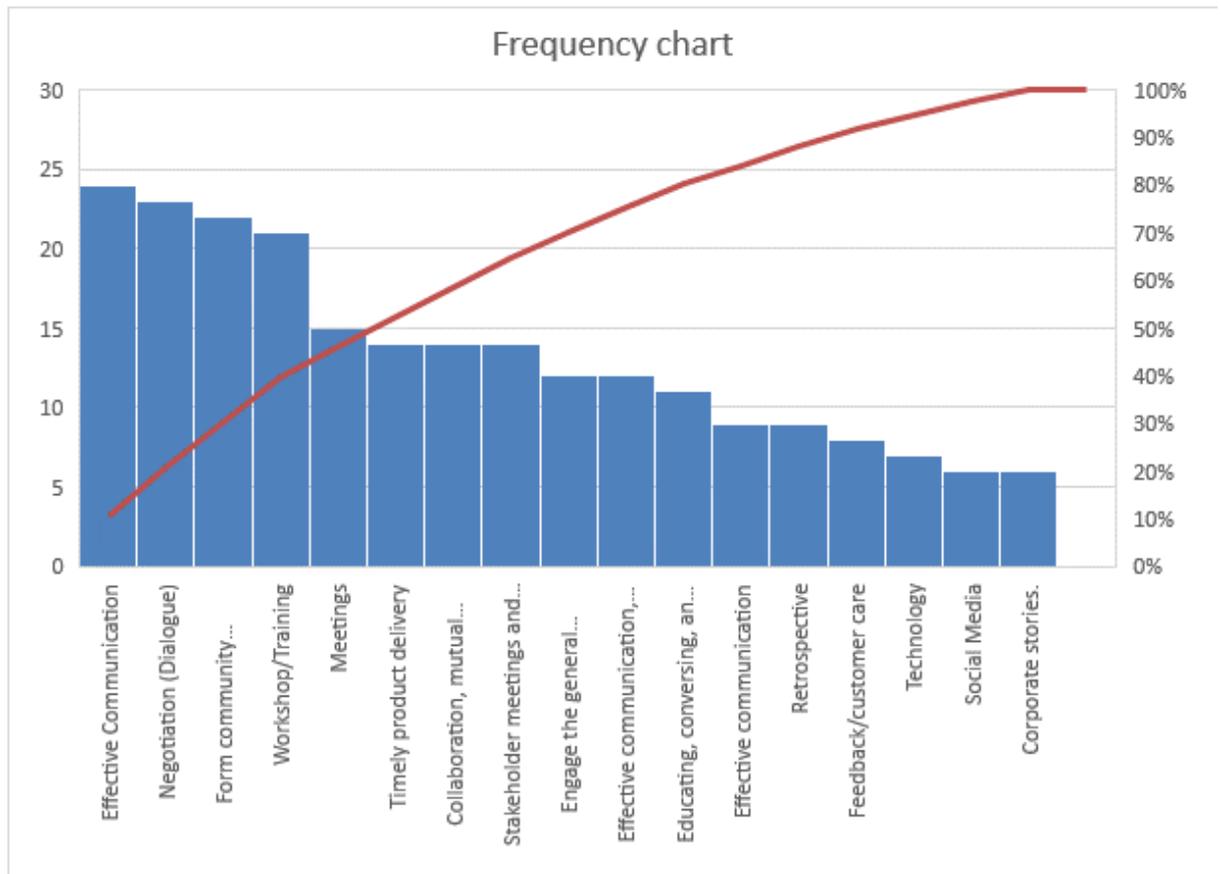
Workshops and training programs provide an opportunity for the two-way exchange of information and knowledge. On one hand, attendees can learn more about the company’s latest products, services, and development plans. On the other hand, the company can obtain first-hand feedback and suggestions from stakeholders on how to improve its offerings. When designing a workshop or training program, it is important to carefully consider the target audience and objectives. The content must be relevant and useful to attendees so that they can walk away with new knowledge or skills that they can apply in their work as a stakeholder.

Workshops and training play an important role in ESE. They provide a space for dialogue and allow organizations to develop their understanding of each other's expectations, needs, and interests. Furthermore, they can help build relationships between organizations, as well as create opportunities for networking and collaboration. Consequently, the study came with the following theme listed in Table 2, which is more desirable to practice in IT industry Themes.

***Table 2: Emerged Themes of the Study***

<b>Sr. no.</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Negotiation (Dialogue)	The theme will help in exploring the negotiation skills used by the stakeholders
2	Meetings	It will help in providing information related to the meetings held between different parties
3	Feedback/customer care	This will mainly address the feedback on the services
4	Effective communication	This theme will explain the way effective communication leads toward the success of the project
5	Social Media	It will provide important information about the way social media contributes to the success of a project
6	Technology	The use of technology is an important part of any project. This theme will help in understanding its role in the success of any project/company





**Figure 3:** Frequency Chart of the Thematic Analysis

## DISCUSSION

To evaluate the impact of external stakeholders’ engagement on the success of the project for the IT Industry, various sub-items of external stakeholders are chosen. The results from thematic analysis help to identify the most practiced SESE strategies for the success of the project in IT in Pakistan (Akbar & Shahid, 2022). The first important practice adopted by a few companies is effective communication for SESE. The communication method should be based on a participatory approach, consultation, and partnership. This helps companies to create effective communication and relationships with stakeholders (Castro, 2021; Huang & Chen, 2022).

In the long run, social media will continue to be an important tool of communication (Acciarini, Borelli, Capo, Cappa, & Sarrocco, 2022). Social media is accessible to everyone and organizations connect with external stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and partners through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. It has made it easier for companies to communicate with their stakeholders and keep them engaged without meeting them physically (Guertler & Sick, 2021; Kirmizi & Kocaoglu, 2022).

In the same way, the use of technology is another important element in this regard. It is essential for engaging external stakeholders; social media platforms and other online tools provide the perfect means for doing so (Khan, Waris, Panigrahi, Sajid, & Rana, 2022; Guertler & Sick, 2021). In addition, technology can help organizations keep track of their engagement with external stakeholders, something that is essential for maintaining accountability (Lalic, Lalic, Delić, Gracanin, & Stefanovic, 2022; Kirmizi & Kocaoglu, 2022).

Furthermore, negotiation with external stakeholders is important because it allows the companies to agree on what is important to each party, and how those interests can be best met (Gemino, Reich, & Serrador, 2021). It also allows the company to understand what the other party is looking for, and what they are willing to concede (Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2011). They are always concerned about keeping their clients happy and one of the ways to keep the clients happy is timely product delivery. Timely product delivery is essential in engaging and maintaining the trust of external stakeholders (Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2011).

At the same time, these companies also believe in engaging external stakeholders via meetings and workshops. External stakeholders can stay up-to-date with what's going on at the company by attending regular meetings, either daily or weekly (Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2011). This is a great opportunity for clients to communicate their needs and give feedback on the services they are receiving. Likewise, workshops and training programs also provide an opportunity for exchanging information and knowledge between two parties (Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018). Workshops and training programs provide an opportunity for exchanging information and knowledge between external stakeholders and IT companies (Khan, Waris, Panigrahi, Sajid, & Rana, 2022). These activities also create an environment that supports development of new skills and capabilities. Therefore, with mutual understanding and cooperation, external stakeholders and IT companies make projects successful.

Moreover, giving or receiving feedback from external stakeholders also keep them engaged with the project (Huang & Chen, 2022). Some IT companies like to give feedback to their vendors, whereas some welcome feedback from external stakeholders. After a project is completed, clients and stakeholders provide feedback on the services they received. This helps to improve future strategies and services (Khan, Waris, Panigrahi, Sajid, & Rana, 2022). Some companies get happy when they get negative feedback from their clients because they think it provides room for improvement. Therefore, even negative feedbacks are better than not receiving any feedback (Jonas, Boha, Sörhammar, & Moeslein, 2018). Similarly, evaluating the engagement of stakeholders is also very important, as it allows the company to gauge stakeholder involvement and contribution to organizational success (Ho et al., 2021). Likewise, retrospectives are a powerful tool for engaging external stakeholders. By looking back at what has been accomplished, external stakeholders can be involved in the decision-making process and be a part of the team's success (Huang & Chen, 2022; Gemino, Reich, & Serrador, 2021)

## CONCLUSION

The impact of Islamic branding and marketing is far more reaching as Muslim consumers are not obliged to one country but exist in almost every part of the world. The study adds to the current literature by relating the marketing mix application in Muslim societies and countries. Any Islamic setting and culture can use the framework employed in this research. Significantly, the impact of Islamic branding and marketing is far more reaching as Muslim consumers are not obliged to one country but exist in almost every part of the world. This finding has opened up many possibilities for further study. As an illustration, two variables (Islamic Marketing and Islamic Branding) can be used to check the indirect effect as a mediator between Islamic Marketing Mix and Consumer Perception. Additionally, empirical research might examine how people view and behave toward female marketers in a Muslim society. Investigating the factors influencing non-Muslim consumers to choose Islamic Halal could be another line of inquiry.

### **Author's contribution:**

Bakhtawar contributed to the main idea, data collection and first draft writing

Ansar Ali Mehdi contributed to the literature collection and methods

Maria Zalfaqr Said worked on formal analysis and English language

Moomal Asad worked on methods, reviews and corrections.

### **Consent to Participate**

The authors declared that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships, which seem to affect the work reported in this article. We declare that this deals with human participants and human data or human rights issues are discussed and evaluated.

### **Consent for Publication**

We do not have any individual person's data in any form.

### **Competing Interests**

The author declares that there are no competing interests in this work

**Grant information:** The author declared that no grants were involved in supporting this work.

## REFERENCES

- Acciarini, C., Borelli, F., Capo, F., Cappa, F., & Sarrocco, C. (2022). Can digitalization favor the emergence of innovative and sustainable business models? A qualitative exploration in the automotive sector. *Journal of Strategy and Management*, Vol. 15 No. 3, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSMA-02-2021-0033>, 335-352.
- Acebo, E., Miguel-Dávila, J.-Á., & Nieto, M. (2021). External stakeholder engagement: Complementary and substitutive effects on firms' eco-innovation. *business strategy and the environment* Volume 30, Issue 5 , 2671-2687.

- Akbar, F., & Shahid, R. (2022). Risk management (RM) and project success (PS) of electrical power transmission and distribution systems: the moderation role of human resource management. *International Journal of Energy Sector Management*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJESM-03-2021-0010>, 11-23.
- Albats, E., Alexander, A., Mahdad, M., Miller, K., & Post, G. (2020). Stakeholder management in SME open innovation: interdependences and strategic actions. *Journal of Business Research* Volume 119, 291-301.
- Avotra, A. A., Chengang, Y., Marcelline, T. R., Asad, A., & Yingfei, Y. (2021). Examining the Impact of E-Government on Corporate Social Responsibility Performance: The Mediating Effect of Mandatory Corporate Social Responsibility Policy, Corruption, and Information and Communication Technologies Development During the COVID era. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 1-11.
- Ayat, M., Ullah, A., & Kang, C. (2022). The unsolicited proposal and performance of private participation infrastructure projects in developing countries. *Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEDT-12-2021-0730>, 11-23.
- Baah, C., Acquah, I. S., & Ofori, D. (2022). Exploring the influence of supply chain collaboration on supply chain visibility, stakeholder trust, environmental and financial performances: a partial least square approach. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, Vol. 29 No. 1, <https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-10-2020-0519>, 172-193.
- Baden, D. (2010). "CSR: an opportunity for SMEs", in Louche, C., Idowu, S.O. and Filho, W.L. (Eds),. *Innovative CSR: From Risk Management to Value Creation*, Greenleaf Publishing Limited, Sheffield, 84-101.
- Barendsen, W., Mu, A. C., & Silvius, G. (2021). Exploring team members' perceptions of internal sustainability communication in sustainable project management. *Project Leadership and Society* Volume 2, 1-13.
- Bhatti, S. H., Santoro, G., Sarwar, A., & Pellicelli, A. C. (2021). Internal and external antecedents of open innovation adoption in IT organisations: insights from an emerging market. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Vol. 25 No. 7, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-06-2020-0457>, 1726-1744.
- Boaz, A., Borst, R., Kok, M., & O'Shea, A. (2021). How far does an emphasis on stakeholder engagement and co-production in research present a threat to academic identity and autonomy? A prospective study across five European countries. *Research Evaluation*, Volume 30, Issue 3, 361–369.
- Burton, B. K. (1996). Feminist ethics as moral grounding for stakeholder. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 6, 133.

- Buuse, D. v., Winden, W. v., & Schrama, W. (2021). Balancing Exploration and Exploitation in Sustainable Urban Innovation: An Ambidexterity Perspective toward Smart Cities. *Journal of Urban Technology*, 175-197 .
- Castro, G. M.-d. (2021). Exploring the market side of corporate environmentalism: Reputation, legitimacy and stakeholders' engagement. *Industrial Marketing Management* Volume 92, , 289-294.
- Derakhshan, R., Turner, R., & Mancini, M. (2019). Project governance and stakeholders: a literature review. *International Journal of Project Management* Volume 37, Issue 1, 98-116.
- Fashina, A. A., Omar, M. A., Sheikh, A. A., & Fakunled, F. F. (2021). Exploring the significant factors that influence delays in construction projects in Hargeisa. *heliyon*, Volume 7, Issue 4, e06826, 1-9.
- Gemino, A., Reich, B. H., & Serrador, P. M. (2021). Agile, Traditional, and Hybrid Approaches to Project Success: Is Hybrid a Poor Second Choice? *Project Management Journal* , Vol. 52(2) , 161–175.
- Giacomarra, M., Crescimanno, M., Sakka, G., & Galati, A. (2020). Stakeholder engagement toward value co-creation in the F&B packaging industry. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, Vol. 15 No. 3, <https://doi.org/10.1108/EMJB-06-2019-0077>, 315-331.
- Greenwood, M. (2007). Stakeholder engagement: Beyond the myth of corporate responsibility. *Journal of Business ethics*, 315-327.
- Guertler, M. R., & Sick, N. (2021). Exploring the enabling effects of project management for SMEs in adopting open innovation – A framework for partner search and selection in open innovation projects. *International Journal of Project Management* Volume 39, Issue 2, 102-114.
- Huang, Y.-C., & Chen, C. T. (2022). Exploring institutional pressures, firm green slack, green product innovation and green new product success: Evidence from Taiwan's high-tech industries. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* Volume 174, 11-22.
- Hummels, H. (1998). Organizing ethics: A stakeholder debate. *Journal of Business Ethics*,. *Journal of Business Ethics*,.
- Ika, L. A., Diallo, A., & Thuillier, D. (2011). The empirical relationship between success factors and dimensions: The perspectives of World Bank project supervisors and managers. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, Vol. 4 No. 4,<https://doi.org/10.1108/17538371111164092>, 711-719.
- Jonas, J. M., Boha, J., Sörhammar, D., & Moeslein, K. M. (2018). Stakeholder engagement in intra- and inter-organizational innovation: Exploring antecedents of engagement in service ecosystems. , *Journal of Service Management*, Vol. 29 No. 3. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOSM-09-2016-0239>, 399-421.
- Jones, P., Maas, G., Kraus, S., & Reason, L. L. (2021). An exploration of the role and contribution of entrepreneurship centres in UK higher education institutions. *Journal of Small Business and*

- Enterprise Development, Vol. 28 No. 2, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-08-2018-0244>, 205-228 .
- Kaboré, S. E., & Sané, S. (2022). The effect of opportunism on the success of international development (ID) projects in a context dominated by a collectivist culture. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, Vol. 15 No. 3, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMPB-09-2021-0253>, 548-568.
- Khan, A., Waris, M., Panigrahi, S., Sajid, M. R., & Rana, F. (2022). Improving the Performance of Public Sector Infrastructure Projects: Role of Project Governance and Stakeholder Management. *Journal of Management in Engineering*, 37(2): 04020112, 1-20.
- Khristiningrum, V. A., Gustomo, A., & Ginting, H. (2021). Strengthening Human Capital Department Roles through Building Collaboration with External Stakeholders. *The Asian Journal of Technology Management* Vol. 14 No. 2, 192-204.
- Kineber, A. F., Othman, I., Oke, A. E., Chileshe, N., & Zayed, T. (2021). Exploring the value management critical success factors for sustainable residential building – A structural equation modelling approach. *Journal of Cleaner Production* Volume 293, 15 , 11-23.
- Kirmizi, M., & Kocaoglu, B. (2022). The influencing factors of enterprise resource planning (ERP) readiness stage on enterprise resource planning project success: a project manager's perspective. *Kybernetes*, Vol. 51 No. 3, <https://doi.org/10.1108/K-11-2020-0812>, 1089-1113.
- Köpsel, V., Kiipper, G. d., & Peck, M. A. (2021). Stakeholder engagement vs. social distancing—how does the Covid-19 pandemic affect participatory research in EU marine science projects? *Maritime Studies* , 189–205.
- Lalic, D. C., Lalic, B., Delić, M., Gracanin, D., & Stefanovic, D. (2022). How project management approach impact project success? From traditional to agile. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, Vol. 15 No. 3, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMPB-04-2021-0108>, 494-521.
- Lee, C. W. (2007). s there a place for private conversation in public dialogue? Comparing stakeholder assessments of informal communication in collaborative regional planning. *American Journal of Sociology*, 41-96.
- Lehtinen, J., & Aaltonen, K. (2020). Organizing external stakeholder engagement in inter-organizational projects: Opening the black box. *International Journal of Project Management* Volume 38, Issue 2, 85-98.
- Lieshou, J. W., Nijhof, A. H., Naarding, G. J., & Blomme, R. J. (2021). Connecting strategic orientation, innovation strategy, and corporate sustainability: A model for sustainable development through stakeholder engagement. *business strategy and the environment*, Volume 30, Issue 8, 4068-4080.

- Liu, C., Cao, J., Duan, K., & Wu, G. (2021). Effect of network position on inter-team conflict and project success in megaprojects. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/ECAM-05-2022-0438>, 11-23.
- Magano, J., Silvius, G., Silva, C. S., & Leite, Â. (2021). The contribution of project management to a more sustainable society: Exploring the perception of project managers. *Project Leadership and Society Volume 2*, 1-9.
- Martinsuo, M., & Geraldi, J. (2020). Management of project portfolios: Relationships of project portfolios with their contexts. *International Journal of Project Management Volume 38*, Issue 7, 441-453.
- Mayor, B., Toxopeus, H., McQuaid, S., Croci, E., Lucchitta, B., Reddy, S. E., . . . Jens, A. (2021). State of the Art and Latest Advances in Exploring Business Models for Nature-Based Solutions. *Sustainability* , 13(13), 7413; <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13137413>, 1-21.
- Moradi, S., & Kähkönen, K. (2022). Success in collaborative construction through the lens of project delivery elements. *Built Environment Project and Asset Management*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BEPAM-09-2021-0118>, 11-23.
- Olander, S., & Landin, A. (2008 ). A comparative study of factors affecting the external stakeholder management process. *Construction Management and Economics Volume 26*, Issue 6, 553-561.
- Oppong, G. D., Chan, A. P., Ameyaw, E. E., Frimpong, S., & Dansoh, A. (2021). Fuzzy Evaluation of the Factors Contributing to the Success of External Stakeholder Management in Construction. *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management / Volume 147 Issue 11* , 11-23.
- Project Management Institute. (2017). A guide to the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK guide). Project Management Institute, publisher.
- Rasool, S. F., Chin, T., Wang, M., Asghar, A., Khan, A., & Zhou, L. (2022). Exploring the role of organizational support, and critical success factors on renewable energy projects of Pakistan. *Energy Volume 243*, 15 , <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.energy.2021.122765>, 1-12.
- Rondi, E., Massis, A. D., & Kraus, S. (2021). Servitization through open service innovation in family firms: Exploring the ability-willingness paradox. *Journal of Business Research Volume 135*, 436-444.
- Saad, A., Zahid, S. M., & Muhammad, U. B. (2022). Role of awareness in strengthening the relationship between stakeholder management and project success in the construction industry of Pakistan. *International Journal of Construction Management Volume 22*, Issue 10, 1884-1893.
- Saad, A., Zahid, S. M., & Muhammad, U. B. (2022). Role of awareness in strengthening the relationship between stakeholder management and project success in the construction

- industry of Pakistan. *International Journal of Construction Management* Volume 22, Issue 10, 1884-1893.
- Sané, S., & Abo, P. (2021). Transactional leadership and success of international development projects (IDP): mediating effects of cooperative style to conflict resolution and team potency. *Management Research Review*, Vol. 44 No. 12, <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-09-2020-0575>, 1623-1638.
- Sawadogo, D., Sané, S., & Kaboré, S. E. (2022). Sustainability management and the success of international development projects: the role of political and social skills. *Journal of Business and Socio-economic Development*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBSED-02-2022-0020>, 11-23.
- Silvius, A. G., & Graaf, M. d. (2019). Exploring the project manager's intention to address sustainability in the project board. *Journal of Cleaner Production* Volume 208, 1226-1240.
- Turner, J. R. (2009). *Handbook of project-based management: Leading strategic change in organizations*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Wang, T., Xu, J., He, Q., Chan, A. P., & Owusu, E. K. (2022). Studies on the success criteria and critical success factors for mega infrastructure construction projects: a literature review. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/ECAM-12-2020-1042>, 11-19.
- Wang, W., Gao, S., Mi, L., Xing, J., Shang, K., Qiao, Y., . . . Xu, N. (2021). Exploring the adoption of BIM amidst the COVID-19 crisis in China. *Building Research & Information*, VOL. 49, NO. 8, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09613218.2021.1921565>, 930–947.
- Winch, C. (2017). *Teachers' know-how: A philosophical investigation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Zaman, U., Damij, N., Khaliq, A., Nawaz, M. S., & Pradana, M. (2022). Feeling “holier than thou”: exploring the critical nexus between project governance, exploitative leadership and multi-dimensional success in ICT projects. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, Vol. 15 No. 5, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMPB-11-2021-0294>, 816-841.
- Zenk, L., Hynek, N., Edelmann, N., Virkar, S., Parycek, P., & Steiner, G. (2022). Exploring motivation to engage in intraorganizational knowledge sharing: a mixed-methods approach. *Kybernetes*, Vol. 51 No. 13, <https://doi.org/10.1108/K-12-2020-0868>, 18-32.

**Publisher’s Note:** All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations or the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.