DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Stakeholder management practices at Mondi South Africa:

a case of the forestry division

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the

degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management Sciences

in the

Faculty of Management Sciences

at the Durban University of Technology.

ERASMUS S'BONGISENI PHILANI MSOMI

21856838

May 2023

Supervisor: __ _______________Date: March 2023

Professor A T Agbenyegah

ABSTRACT

All over the world, there is a growing conviction that business relationships, particularly with communities, lead to financial performance and increased shareholder value creation. In South Africa, large corporations in sectors such as mining, agriculture and forestry quickly found themselves having to define their relationships with stakeholders other than their shareholders. Furthermore, those corporates with large land holdings had to deal with the uncertainty of land claims implemented by the government after 1994 which immediately transformed communities into influential stakeholders. Consequently, critical stakeholder issues, particularly in relation to social stakeholders who are non-market in nature both in theory and practice are now at the forefront of corporate relationships.

This study investigated and reviewed various stakeholder management practices currently employed by Mondi SA, (Forestry Division) a JSE-listed company operating in South Africa. The study further explored the various aspects of stakeholder relationships for Mondi in order to establish if these practices have any influence on Mondi’s growth and business stability.

The study examined Mondi's stakeholder engagement practices and their integration into business strategy by applying both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a mixed-method approach, using non-probability purposive sampling. Using a sample of 42 respondents, representing a population of 265 employees, the study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study further explored how stakeholder management, as a strategy contributes to business stability for the Forestry division. The data was analysed using SPSS for quantitative inquiry and Nvivo for the qualitative element. Stakeholder theories and management have been applied in the interpretation and analysis of this research. Critical theories of systems and organisational thinking have been used to analyse stakeholder management practice and its dynamics of power between Mondi and stakeholders, with reference to communities. The study established that Mondi’s stakeholder management practices are implemented from a risk mitigation point of view. With stakeholder engagements and socio-economic projects delivered to stakeholder communities, the findings also suggest that the practice is intentional, and planned. The results, therefore, confirm that Mondi Forestry's stakeholder management practice is strategically managed to maintain industrial peace to ensure that operations are not affected. In addition, the stakeholder management practice is necessary to maintain compliance which also influences the smooth running of the operations within legal and industry standards. Arguing from the standpoint of the various studies that have explored the challenges and benefits of stakeholder influence in business, this research empirically investigated whether stakeholder management and engagement influences business performance and stability in South Africa, using Mondi Forestry division as a pilot.

Keywords: Stakeholder management, stakeholder theory, value creation, community stakeholders, systems theory, organizational theory.

DECLARATION

I, ***ERASMUS S'BONGISENI PHILANI MSOMI***, hereby declare that this dissertation titled "Stakeholder management practices at Mondi South Africa: a case of the forestry division" is my original work and a result of my independent investigation. I declare that this work has not been submitted for any other qualification, degree program or examination at any other higher education institution. I declare that where I have used and cited the works of others, they are appropriately indicated and acknowledged by means of references in-text in the dissertation as well as in the bibliography.

Student Name **:** Erasmus S.P. Msomi

Signature **Date:** 02 June 2023

Supervisor Name **:** Professor A T Agbenyegah

Signature **:** **Date: 9/08/2023**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- To God Almighty, who gave me the strength, wisdom, and good health to complete this work.
- Professor A T Agbenyegah, my research supervisor, who pushed and supported me to complete this, even when I felt it cannot be done!
- My Mum, Mrs Florence Gugu Msomi for her support all the way.
- Sandanathi Xaba, my cousin who inspired and supported me during this journey.
- Team Mondi, for giving me an opportunity to complete this work.
- My children, especially Zandi, Lunga and Thimna Msomi.
- Zama Mdletshe for her support during this journey.
- Nomakhosazana Shongwe for her support when I began this journey.
- Thabisile Phumo, Lucas Moloto, and Molebogeng Motabogi-Moseki from Sibanye-Stillwater, for encouragement and support.

DEDICATION

The dedication for this work goes to the memory of my late father Mr. Jerome Msawenkosi Msomi who, through his untimely passing when I was 17 years old, passed the ‘baton’ to me. It has been my belief that if I can be at least half the man he was, I would have done well in life.

Another dedication goes to Fr Vincent Bongi Mdabe (CMM) who showed up in my life when I needed guidance and support. Twenty-eight years later, this is the fruit of the seed you planted in me.

Table of Content

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BUC	Business Unit Central
BUM	Business Unit Midlands
BUZ	Business Unit Zululand
CDF	Community Development Facilitators
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMC	Computer-mediated communication
CP	Cleaner production
CSI	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSV	Creating Shared Value
DV	Dependent Variables
FSC	Forestry Stewardship Council
HQ	Headquarters
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IV	Independent Variables
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NOSA	National Occupational Safety Association
PAF	Principal Axis Factoring
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PMB	Pietermaritzburg
QUAL	Qualitative
QUAN	Quantitative
QR Code	Quick Response Code
RDAP	Reactive, Defensive, Accommodative, and Proactive
SLO	Social Licence to Operate

SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SQF	SiyaQhubeka Forestry
SVAT	Sustainable Value Analysis Tool

Chapter One

Background and Research design

1.1 Introduction

There exists some evidence in the literature and practice that stakeholders play a very important role in the overall business strategy for success. There also exists some consensus from both business and academia that business needs to have a strong stakeholder management plan to manage stakeholders effectively. While different stakeholder principles are recognised and applied based on business needs, proper management of stakeholders could drive business towards progress, making stakeholder management one of the important and effective management tools.

Stakeholder management is a management tool that identifies, engages, and manages stakeholders to reach a common purpose or aim. The goal of stakeholder management is to guarantee that all stakeholders' requirements and expectations are successfully balanced and aligned with the organization's objectives. This can be accomplished through communication, negotiation, teamwork, and resource allocation. Effective stakeholder management assists businesses in developing trust, forming alliances, and managing conflicts, resulting in better decision-making, better project outcomes, and enhanced overall success.

This study investigated and reviewed various stakeholder management practices currently employed by Mondi SA, a Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) listed company operating in South Africa. The study further explored the various aspects of stakeholder relationships for Mondi to establish if these practices have any influence on Mondi's growth and business stability. Arguing from the standpoint of the various studies that have explored the challenges and benefits of stakeholder influence in business, this research empirically investigated whether stakeholder management and engagement influence business performance and stability in South Africa, using Mondi Forestry division as a pilot.

1.2 Background to research

Large firms in South Africa's mining, agricultural, and forestry industries quickly discovered that they needed to specify their interactions with parties other than their shareholders. The traditional focus of business on maximizing shareholder value has been criticized (Edmans, 2020). Additionally, businesses with substantial land holdings had to deal with the uncertainty of land claims put in place by the government in 1994, which immediately transformed communities into powerful stakeholders. Critical stakeholder issues are thus increasingly at the forefront of corporate partnerships, particularly regarding social stakeholders who are non-market in character in both theory and practice (Freeman,2017).

Land reform and the forestry sector in South Africa are interrelated issues that have a significant impact on the country's economic and social development. The government's land reform programme aims to redress the imbalances of the past by transferring land ownership from white landowners to black South Africans. In the forestry sector, this has resulted in the transfer of commercial forestry land to previously disadvantaged communities and the creation of new black-owned and managed forestry enterprises (Tshidzumba & Chirwa, 2022). However, this process has been slow and has faced numerous challenges, including a lack of capacity and resources, unclear legislation and policies, and resistance from some stakeholders. As a result, the forestry sector in South Africa continues to face significant challenges, including declining forest cover, low levels of investment, and limited job creation.

To address these issues, the government has developed policies and programs aimed at promoting sustainable forest management, increasing investment in the sector, and supporting the development of black-owned and managed forestry enterprises. The success of these initiatives will depend on effective stakeholder engagement and collaboration, as well as the creation of an enabling environment that supports sustainable forest management and the development of the forestry sector in South Africa.

All over the world, there is a growing conviction that business relationships, particularly with communities leads to financial performance and increased shareholder value creation (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & de Colle, 2010). The body of literature in this research explored and discussed this theory and the value of stakeholder management in general and social stakeholders. Although many studies have explored stakeholder management in corporations, there is an appreciative paucity of information on the role and influence of stakeholders in the South African context. This study was limited to Mondi Forestry division in South Africa. This is because, firstly, Mondi has forestry operations located in KwaZulu Natal and Mpumalanga covering the national and international supply of fibre. Secondly, there is a high concentration of communities located within Mondi's plantations or neighbouring such plantations.

Based on literature in this field, there might exist a general consensus that a number of interdependencies exist between corporations and their stakeholders (Freeman et al. 2004, and et al., 2022). In practice, however, to link the practice of stakeholder management with various business performance objectives, stakeholder theory is crucial for creating a framework for analysing these interdependencies. It is hoped that a discussion on the stakeholder management activities of Mondi will facilitate a general understanding of how communities influence the strategic direction of the company and how this influence is geared towards addressing key challenges faced by both communities and Mondi. It is further hoped that this study could share insights into the challenges and benefits of stakeholder management. Such insights will have significant implications for the understanding of business value of such practice and its contribution and influence in stabilizing business operations at Mondi South Africa. Although the findings of this study may not be generalizable, they could help shed important light into understanding the role of communities as company stakeholders in providing business stability. The findings of this research could therefore act as a point of departure for similar studies in different contexts.

1.3 Research Problems

1.3.1 Problem Statement

In recent years, interest in the theoretical concept known as a "Social Licence to Operate" (SLO), which symbolizes the implied approval of impacted stakeholders for enterprises to function, has grown (Taylor & Mahlangu, 2017). Although the SLO concept was originally used in the mining industry to determine or measure relationships with affected people, it has since spread to other industries around the world including forestry (Taylor & Mahlangu, 2017). It is defined as the "acceptance or approval of an operation or business by local community stakeholders who are affected by it and those stakeholders who can affect its profitability" (Moffat et al., 2016:480).

While these definitions imply that the SLO is informal and does not represent a legally binding 'licence' or relationship, its withdrawal could have serious consequences for any business. Stakeholders, in different spheres of any business, are involved in granting or withdrawing this licence to operate and thereby elevating the importance of stakeholder management as an integral part of any business operation.

In addition to this, there is paucity of data in South Africa on empirical investigation into the bidirectional relationship between stakeholder management, encompassing 'licence to operate' and performance of companies. In this regard, a comprehensive theoretical framework based on agency, stewardship, dependent resources, and stakeholder theories that serve as the conceptual model's foundation is lacking. In addition, most studies on stakeholder management have been carried out either in Europe or America. In the review of literature on stakeholder management, very few studies that have examined the social stakeholder engagement and influence on corporate activities in Africa and South Africa in particular, were found (Kujala, et al., 2022).

While normative arguments have concentrated on giving ethical principles for the sake of business practices, most of the literature focusing on the business case tried to combine corporate (financial) success with a stakeholder approach to strategic management (Freeman, 2017). The main goal of any normative justification is to create value for stakeholders. According to Boatright (1994), Clarkson (1995), Evan and Freeman (1993), and Donaldson and Preston (1995), a stakeholder should be treated as an end in their own right rather than as a tool to serve the interests of other preferred stakeholders. According to Zakhem and Palmer (2017), the theories of management require normative justification as they rely on some conception of what is morally good, right, and just.

These descriptive studies have all captured important, but distinct, aspects of stakeholder management. The whole consequences of stakeholder management, however, cannot be understood by just analysing its various components. The fragmented character of these descriptive studies highlights the need for a comprehensive description of stakeholder management techniques that encompass all of these disparate components. A fragmented conceptual framework impedes operationalisation of the construct, limiting both empirical development and eventual practical significance of the stakeholder research (Aguinis et al., 2018; Antolin-Lopez et al., 2019; Suddaby et al., 2017). This research seeks to advance the descriptive use of the theory by integrating the different strands of the descriptive studies identified in the literature, so as to provide a more robust and holistic narrative detailing and evaluating the concerns and influences affecting stakeholder management. It aims to do so by empirically investigating how the multinational paper and pulp company, Mondi, operating in the South African forestry industry, has managed its relationships with the local communities that are directly or indirectly affected by its operations.

Additionally, Dunham et al. (2006) pointed out that while the "community" represents a valid and important stakeholder group, there hasn't been much theoretical or practical guidance provided regarding the optimal stance that firms should adopt toward the community. Undoubtedly, an important gap exists in the stakeholder literature owing to the lack of such a narrative (Dafna, et al.,2015; Guass, 2016 & Chava et al.,2021). By examining how businesses handle their interactions with the community, this research hopes to close some of that knowledge gap. It does so by focusing on the context around Mondi's forestry operations.

1.3.2 Study Aims and Objectives

The study aims to explore and ascertain deeper understanding of how stakeholder management practices influence performance and stability in the forestry operations at Mondi South Africa. This objective is achieved through a mixed method research that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

1.3.2.1 Specific

- To critically examine Mondi's stakeholder management practices for the forestry operations.
- To examine how stakeholder management practices are integrated into the business strategy.
- To explore the influence of stakeholder management practice in Mondi's business decisions
- To examine the relationship between stakeholder management and shareholder/stakeholder value creation.
- To critically evaluate the rationale behind stakeholder management practices and their influence in creating business performance and stability

1.3.3 Research Questions

1.3.3.1 Main Research question

Can stakeholder management practices contribute in any form to business performance and stability at Mondi SA's forestry operations?

1.3.3.2 Specific Research questions

- What is the current stakeholder management practice at Mondi forestry operations?
- How is stakeholder management integrated into the forestry business strategy?
- To what extent do stakeholder management practices influence Mondi's forestry business decisions.
- To what extent does stakeholder management practice translate into shareholder and stakeholder value creation?
- What/Which critical factors guide stakeholder management practice for successful implementation?

1.3.4 Hypothesis

The general hypothesis of this study is that stakeholder management as a business practice and management tool, has a positive contribution to a business' success and stability. To answer the research questions, this research deciphers and answers these following specific hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H_a**) :**	Integrating stakeholder management as a business practice does influence business stability for Mondi forestry operations.
Null hypothesis 1 (H_o):	Integrating stakeholder management as a business practice does not influence business stability for Mondi forestry operations.
Hypothesis 2 (H_a**):**	Proper stakeholder management does indeed increase shareholder value creation through effective stakeholder management by Mondi.
Null Hypothesis 2:	Proper stakeholder management does not increase shareholder value creation through effective stakeholder management by Mondi.

This study involves data collection and interpretation using both quantitative and qualitative methods, and the above hypotheses are aligned to answer the qualitative data, including the final conclusions of the study. The quantitative research process has the following specific hypotheses to statistically test the data and investigate the relationship between variables:

HO3a**:** There is no significant association between the following issues: employment opportunities, contracting and business opportunities, environmental issues and concerns, corporate social investment, land or forestry issues and business performance and stability.

HA3a**:** There is significant association between the following issues: employment opportunities, contracting and business opportunities, environmental issues and concerns, corporate social investment, land or forestry issues and business performance and stability.

HO1a: There is no significant association between employee's current role and external stakeholders' engagement with business strategy integration.

HA1a: There is significant association between employee's current role and external stakeholders' engagement with business strategy integration.

HO2b: There is no significant association between shareholder value creation and corporations practicing stakeholder management.

HA2b: There is significant association between shareholder value creation and corporations practicing stakeholder management.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The significance of Freeman's (1984) seminal work, Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach, has led to a redefining of the role of stakeholders in business and increased professional and academic attention. An established definition of a stakeholder is "any group or person who can affect or is affected by the operations of the organization" (Freeman, 1984:46). This definition exists despite the fact that there are numerous and sometimes contradictory viewpoints over what constitutes a legitimate "stakeholder" in a corporate setting, Freeman (1984).

Stakeholder theory assesses the meaning of stakeholders to an organization and identifies different roles associated with stakeholders. The history of stakeholder theory encompasses the identification of roles and the meaning and application of a stakeholder to a company. This research bases its empirical discussions on stakeholder theories and related approaches in order to further understand how stakeholders influence decisions and performance of a business.

Freeman argues that a framework which seeks to identify and categorize different stakeholders should start with the application of this basic question: “Who are those groups and individuals who can affect and are affected by the achievement of an organization’s purpose?” (Freeman, 1984:54). According to Parmar et al. (2010), the stakeholder theory is best placed to lead the research on the relationships between business and the groups including individuals who can affect or are affected by it which might improve our understanding of value creation, ethics, and managerial decision making.

Since then, a myriad of stakeholder definitions and models have emerged including notably Goodpaster (1991), Clarkson (1995), Donaldson and Preston (1995), Mitchell et al. (1997), Rowley (1997), and Frooman (1999), among others. The stakeholder theory, according to Freeman et al. (2010), was developed to address the issues of value creation and trade, as well as the ethics of capitalism. The Stakeholder theorists regard businesses as platforms or “the vehicles by which stakeholders are engaged in a joint and cooperative enterprise of creating value for each other” (Freeman et al, 2007: 6).

More intriguing, for the purposes of this study, is the stakeholder analysis theory of Mitchell et al (1997) which used three attributes of “power, legitimacy, and urgency” to determine if corporations can prioritize the competing stakeholder claims. There are stakeholders in South Africa, particularly in the forestry sector, who believe they have stakeholder entitlement and have the ability to influence other stakeholders, in order to impact the organization's operations. Mitchel et al, (1997, cited in Dekkar and Qing, 2014) define this power as the relation among stakeholders where stakeholders influence one another. Mitchell went on to postulate three distinct bases of power:

- Coercive: based on force or threat.
- Utilitarian: based on material benefits or incentives.
- Normative: based on symbolic influences

In a critique of this power dynamic among stakeholders, Phillips et al (2010) assert that instrumental stakeholder theories often failed to acknowledge that corporations have real constraints in choosing a stakeholder strategy. Research by Harrison et al (2010) and Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014) propose two types of stakeholder strategies. One that companies have the moral obligation to balance all the interests of stakeholders. This, they labelled the ‘all-stakeholder strategy’. The second strategy idea is known as the "powerful-stakeholder strategy" since it focuses on granting stakeholders' requests solely based on their power. Arguments put forward by both Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014), and Jones et al (2018) state that ethical treatment of stakeholders will reduce the corporation’s risk exposure to protests, boycotts, strikes, bad press and litigations. Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014) similarly argued that companies who take benefit of the bargaining energy generated in the course of stakeholder interactions, are much more likely to achieve better results. Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, and de Colle (2010), in their review of recent literature hold the view that a positive relationship between stakeholder-oriented management yields positive returns for the firm performance, which could be measured in financial terms.

The macro-theory that supports the framework for this research is the stakeholder theory, which is introduced, positioned, and analysed. Other ancillary theories like ‘systems’ and ‘organisational’ theories are applied in this study, in order to position Mondi, the entity under study, not only as a business but as a social system. Both these ancillary theories and stakeholder theories are interrelated. Systems concept is interdisciplinary and applies to all structures of nature, culture, and many socio-scientific disciplines. It is a method for investigating phenomena from a holistic perspective (Capra, 1997). Systems thinking arises from the shift in focus from the component to the whole, according to Aristotle's contention that knowledge is obtained from the comprehension of the whole and not that of the individual parts (Aristotle's Holism) (Weinberg, 2001; Jackson, 2003). The systems theory uses the general view of the whole organisation and considers its operations as a unitary structure. In an organisation composed of different departments that are referred to as sub-systems, general management applies the systems approach theory to ensure that the entire organisation runs as a single uniform unit.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 Research design

This research adopts a research strategy involving a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, using a sequential exploratory strategy and intentionally integrating or combining these methods to draw on the strengths of each. Creswell (2013) defined the mixed method research as a 'bounded system' for those research designs that include at least one quantitative and one qualitative method. The quantitative data will enable the researcher to identify the relationships between specific variables, as well as the differences for triangulation and validity testing of the qualitative data set.

The research investigations that lend themselves well to mixed methods are those in which a quantitative or qualitative methodology is unable to provide sufficient insight into a research topic or question from numerous angles. However, because two distinct types of data are gathered and processed, mixed methods research takes additional time (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In keeping with the pragmatic viewpoint, this study uses a mixed-methods research approach.

1.5.1.1 Sequential Explanatory Mixed Method

There are two stages to the sequential mixed-methods explanatory design: quantitative and qualitative (Creswell et al. 2003). In this approach, the researcher first gathers and examines quantitative (numerical) data. Secondly, qualitative (text) data is gathered, analyzed, and used to further the first phase's quantitative data collection or to complement it. In the interim phase of the study, the qualitative second phase elaborates on the quantitative first phase, and the two phases are related (Yin, 2006).

This strategy is justified by the fact that quantitative evidence and subsequent study offer a broad view of the research issue. The qualitative evidence and interpretation clarify and justifies the statistical findings by delving further into the perspectives of the participants (Creswell 2003). This research used the following sequence design to suit the objectives and methods of the study:

Figure 0.1 Sequential mixed method design

Source: Self illustration

In this illustration, the sequential model is represented by the arrows, with quantitative data collection happening first. The first data collection of the qualitative process followed and represents the bigger pool of participants. The second qualitative process represents the last stage of the three phased sequential model for this research and only involves strategic managers. Based on this model, the qualitative approach dominated this study both in data collection and analysis.

There seems to be a consensus within the field of mixed methods research that pragmatism is the rationale informing a mixed methods approach (Biesta, 2010, Creswell, 2009, Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). Without using any philosophical assumption, the choice of a mixed approach is driven by the research questions it seeks to answer. However, more important is the opportunity this method presents in enabling the framing of research questions (Biesta, 2010).

The systematic exploration of phenomena through the collection of quantifiable data and application of statistical, mathematical, or computer tools is known as quantitative research Muhammad (2016). The goal of quantitative approaches is to produce precise measurements of social action that can be analysed using statistical data.

'Qualitative' methods, on the other hand, are used to respond to inquiries regarding experience, meaning, and viewpoint, frequently from the perspective of the participant (Hammarberg et al., 2016). A standardized questionnaire was used to collect the data for this research. This involved eliciting the same information from every respondent. The questions were designed to ensure that answers are comparable and classifiable. All quantitative and qualitative data was subjected to deductive and inductive treatment, respectively.

The qualitative approach was dominant in this study both in data collection and analysis. Many real-life situations do not lend themselves to study by precise measurement and cannot be fully understood by the accumulation of statistical data. The interpretivist paradigm, which views the world as being created, interpreted, and experienced by people in their interactions with one another and with larger social systems, provides the theoretical foundation for the majority of qualitative research. The interpretivist paradigm is founded on the principle that the methods employed for comprehending knowledge that pertains to humans and social sciences must differ from those used in physical sciences. This is because humans interpret their surroundings and subsequently make decisions based on such interpretations, whereas the world does not. (Hammersley, 2013).

This study will thus focus not just on objectively verifiable data, but also on the numerous subjective interpretations that people attach to their relationships in the workplace. Stakeholder theories and management is applied in the interpretation and analysis of this research. Critical theories of Gramsch and Foucault is used to analyse social dynamics of power between corporates and communities. These theories are consummately important in this subject.

1.6.2 Population target

With 22,000 employees spread across 100 production locations in more than 30 countries, including its core operations in Europe, North America, and Africa, Mondi is a world leader in environmentally friendly packaging and paper. The population from which participants were drawn was carefully selected against 265 forestry employees in relation to the purpose of the study. By selecting a specific subgroup or sample from the larger group of potential participants, known as the target population, researcher was able to conduct the study on a smaller, more manageable sample size (Miles et al., 2013). From a population of 265 employees, a purposive sample was designed to include employees who have some interface with stakeholders as part of their work routine.

1.6.3 Sampling method

The study sample was selected by means of purposive non-probability sampling. In purposive sampling, ‘‘a sample is built up which enables the researcher to satisfy her [his] specific needs in the project’’ (Robinson, 2002:265).

According to Andrade (2021) sampling entails the specific principles that the study intends to employ in selecting the members of the study population in the survey. In addition, purposive sampling entails the selection of units (which may be people, organizations, documents, departments, etc.), with direct reference to the research questions being asked.

This particular sampling technique facilitated the deliberate selection of participants who possess the necessary knowledge and aptitude to address the research inquiries. Narrowing down from a population of 265 forestry employees, participants as research respondents were targeted according to their role categories which included (but not limited to); finance, corporate affairs, forestry operations, mill operations, public affairs and human resources. Furthermore, this type of sampling was useful when the researcher wanted to draw a sample that shares characteristics of the research as the findings will not be generalized to the broader population. A final sample of 42 respondents (26 for quantitative and 16 for qualitative phases) was achieved through voluntary participation.

1.*6*.4 Measuring instrument

The qualitative research element used open–ended questions and the quantitative approach closed-ended questions as means of collecting data. The open-ended questions for a qualitative approach allowed the process of interaction between the participant and the researcher to be flexible and participants could respond in their own words.

For this study, this qualitative approach characteristic was critical because the researcher in this context, needed to make participants comfortable in responding to questions and be able to articulate the issues in their own way. The quantitative element, although minimal, used structured predetermined questionnaires, and self-administered by participants using online data collection platforms. This was the first stage of data collection and influenced further development of the qualitative data collection process. The sequential process was designed to ensure that quantitative data collection is used to provide direction for the qualitative process. After the in-depth analysis of the organisational structure, participants were drawn based on job and task relevance in relation to the objectives of the study. The self-administered questionnaires were issued to selected participants after consent has been sought.

Additional participants were identified for unstructured interviews where a set of questions were administered through interviews.

1.6.5 Data analysis

Computer processing and analysis of data programs have been developed to run on personal computers, thus making the task of data processing and analysis quicker and easier. All the interviews were organised, transcribed, and analysed using NVivo. With the aid of Nvivo, the transcribed data was then coded. This facilitated the generation of similarities, differences, and significant relationships between responses. It also facilitated the generation of themes from the transcribed data.

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the study's qualitative data, while descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyse the quantitative data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Central to the thematic analysis was that the research participants' subjective meanings and social reality are appropriately conveyed in the research report and employs a lower level of inference interpretation, rather than a more abstract interpretation (Vaismoradi et al, 2016).

1.*6*.6 Delimitations

This research was characterised by different delimitations throughout, primarily in the research theory, population and sampling. The 'case study' approach adopted here targets Mondi South Africa's operations in two Provinces, focusing mainly on forestry operations in these areas where there is more interface and interactions with non-market stakeholders.

1.*6*.7 Validity and reliability

The mixed methods chosen for this research would, on its own, assist in the validity process. Triangulation, as described by Hussey and Hussey (1997), is the application of different research procedures, methods, and techniques in the same study to overcome the potential bias and sterility of a single-method approach. As noted by Burton and Obel (2011), triangulation involves adopting several distinct methodologies to improve comprehension of a particular theory or phenomenon. Validity and reliability on the other hand, increase transparency, and thereby decreasing opportunities to insert researcher bias into qualitative research (Singh, 2014).

Reliability was achieved through a standardized interview questionnaire. Furthermore, reliability and validity were tested through dissection of the data collection into 3 main projects…internal (quantitative) and individual interviews (qualitative) and lastly, additional interviews with strategic management in Mondi's stakeholder environment. The present investigation employed the methodology of triangulation both at the data collection stage and the methodological level. These are important processes in modern research, as they are used to enhance the accuracy of the assessment and evaluation of a research work (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

1.*6*.8 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality of participants was central to ethical research practice in this research. In a corporate study environment, the researcher would need to ensure that where possible, participant's responses cannot be traced back to them in any form of dissemination.

The quantitative data questionnaires were completed anonymously. The analysis of data would not be linked to any individual, but assumptions and conclusions would be drawn on behalf of the business rather than individuals.

1.7 Ethical considerations

The research methods were interactive in nature, even though interviews were conducted virtually. The principal ethical concern that guided the process of data collection in this study was to safeguard the participants from any harm or negative impact caused by the research, as noted by Gray (2009). Both qualitative and quantitative research methods required individuals to answer some pre-determined research questions.

Throughout the qualitative interviews, participants were requested to provide personal perspectives and narratives, despite the potential risks of exposure, embarrassment, and in certain circumstances, impinged reputation, employment status, and self-worth. To reduce any negative effects, the researcher made a conscious effort to provide a thorough explanation of the research's nature and intended application. In order to confirm willingness or refusal to participate in the study, the participants were given both a "consent form" and a "participant information sheet", which helped ensure that they comprehended the study's objective.

In addition, the respondents were assured that their responses would be treated anonymously and would in no way be linked to them. The raw data transcript shall be stored electronically with password encryption and destroyed after a period of 5 years post the study.

1.8 Limitations of the study

This empirical study followed purposive sampling technique which can be the subject of a selection system that is biased. The study was exposed to gather data from employees who works in the operational division of Mondi as a result, the study focused only on that division of the entity. Although the methodology was described in detail, there were several limitations to this study. Furthermore, the interview was not conducted by experts which could result in some degree of bias during the interview processes.

1.9 Outline of the study

The following chapter sequence represents the layout of the completed research:

1.9.1 Chapter One

Background and research design

This chapter provides a general introduction to the study. It highlights key issues such as the background of the study and the key questions which the study seeks to answer. The chapter also discusses the methods used for data collection and analysis.

1.9.2 Chapter Two

Literature Review: Stakeholder theories

The chapter provides an in-depth review of stakeholder management theories and the impact thereof in corporations from an international perspective. It discusses different analyses based on theory and practice. The literature review in this section attempts to unpack the hypothesis that proper stakeholder management does indeed increase shareholder value creation.

1.9.3 Chapter Three

Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of the theoretical framework that will guide the study. It further explored the contextual background of Mondi's business environment and the conditions that elicit the formation of stakeholder relationships, the various typologies and characters of stakeholder networks, and the factors that account for the success or failure of stakeholder relationships.

1.9.4 Chapter Four

Research Methodology

This section presents and discusses the study design, paradigm, data collection tools and sampling methods, including data analysis techniques.

1.9.5 Chapter Five

Data presentation

This first section of this chapter presents qualitative data for the first phase of the study. Data is presented in different formats. The inferential tests are also presented to answer some of the working hypotheses. The second section presents results of the qualitative study. It provides the background of the data collection methods and then presents coding and thematic areas identified during data collection.

1.9.6 Chapter Six

Results and discussions

In this chapter, data is analysed and discussed. The chapter provides an integrated analysis of data, with detailed discussion and interpretation of results. Literature is also used to further understand and interpret the data.

1.9.7 Chapter Seven

Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter provides a summary of the study outlining conclusions on main findings of the study, the contributions made to the body of knowledge and stakeholder management framework. The chapter also presents recommendations and implications of the research findings on theory and practice and highlights possible directions for future research.

Chapter Two
Stakeholder Theories

2.1 Introduction

The chapter provides an in-depth review of the evolution of stakeholder management theories and their subsequent relevance to business. It discusses different analyses based on literature, theory and practice and highlights different stakeholder models and their meanings in relations to business management today. Instead of analysing all these stakeholder theoretical concepts, this chapter aims primarily at streamlining different arguments and stakeholder approaches with the view to aligning them with the purpose of the study. The literature review in this section would therefore present a brief overview of stakeholder approaches, with more emphasis on social stakeholders. Much attention is paid to the stakeholder classification models and influence of stakeholders in business operations and decisions.

2.2 The history of Stakeholder Theories

Stakeholder theory assesses the meaning of stakeholders to an organization and identifies different roles associated with stakeholders. A stakeholder is an individual or group of people who have a stake in an organization. The history of stakeholder theory encompasses the identification of roles and the meaning and application of a stakeholder to a company. The definition has changed over time to include more people who are perceived to be stakeholders due to having a critical input in the sustainability of an organization. The relationship between a stakeholder and a business is reciprocal. Harrison, Freeman and Abreu (2015) argue that stakeholder theory creates a practical and effective way of managing organizations in highly dynamic business environments. The model establishes acceptable behaviour, linkages of sharing information among all stakeholders, and harnesses ideas to ensure the principle of fairness and the common good.

The stakeholder concept in business management could be traced back as early as 1963. The concept of stakeholder was officially introduced by the Stanford Research Institute in the year 1963 with the intention of elaborating on its implications as a crucial element for the sustainability of business enterprises (Jongbloed et al., 2009 as cited in Mainardes et al., 2011).

It was only up until the publication of Freeman's landmark book 'Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach' (1984), that the role of stakeholders in business received more attention resulting in multiple stakeholder theories and debates. Soon thereafter, a series of other stakeholder theory publications emerged and dominated the business management field. Reviewing the stakeholder literature today, concepts like 'stakeholder', 'stakeholder model', 'stakeholder theory' are defined in different ways with very diverse and contradictory arguments (Donaldson and Preston, 1995).

Stakeholders, according to Freeman (1984), are any group or people who can or is influenced by the success of the organization's objectives. This is to say; organisations exist beyond investors and shareholders and further implies that organisations' successes or failures affect others other than shareholders. Stakeholder theory focuses on several principles that have changed over time due to the awareness of the input of different groups of individuals and people on the organization. Stakeholders are persons or groups that have legitimate but different and sometimes competing interests in a business. As a result, the intrinsic value that a corporation poses determines the interests of stakeholders. The shareholders that invest in a business with the expectation of a return continue to be the most important stakeholders.

Argandona (2011) insists that the stakeholder model determines the way a business creates value, which exists when there is a clear difference between production and consumer surplus resulting in a profit. As a managerial theory, the model identifies the cause-effect relationships, attitudes, structures, and practices. The development of the theory addressed the legitimate relationship between managers, professions, and shareowners in determining the governance structure and organizational goals.

According to Argandona (2011), a stakeholder represents a group that owns a stake in an organization and its activities. The most basic stakeholder that the stakeholder model identifies are investors who support the formation and fund a business, suppliers who bring in raw materials and supplies, employees that provide labour, and target customers that determine the sustainability of an organization (Donaldson, 1995). This old model has only four players.

Contrastingly, another stakeholder model insists that a company benefits from its stakeholders that also benefit from a business. In this context, investors, suppliers, employees, customers, governments, trade associations, communities, and political organizations are referred to as stakeholders, according to Donaldson (1995).

The expansion of the stakeholders takes into consideration the exceptional value that each brings into an organization. Shareholders have a powerful influence on the management of a firm as investors compared to other stakeholders like employees and the community. Argandona (2011) insists that the stakeholder theory achieves its function by striking a balance between the objectives and interests of different stakeholders. The model determines the management instrument of corporations, which demands an organization to remain responsive to the needs of the board of directors, customers, community, suppliers, trade organizations, employees, and affected groups of people.

2.3 The evolution of Stakeholder Theory

Freeman et al. (2010) outlines a brief theoretical history of the stakeholder theory and business rationale for such development during the period post 1963. Freeman asserts that there was a problem with how limited liability by companies affected other people. During this period, the world was undergoing drastic industrialisation and globalisation. These developments coincided with heightened public awareness of the impact of business on communities.

Thus, Freeman et al. (2010) classified the reasons for the evolution of stakeholder theory according to the three main problems that it was intended to address:

- **The Value creation and trade:** This was based on the realization that the business world has changed and therefore, relationships with the broader society need to be re-defined. Inequalities were becoming more visible, and ethics alone could not hold business accountable.
- **The ethics of capitalism:** Several questions were being raised about the effects of capitalism and its relationship with other social institutions. The growth of capitalism, and globalisation came with calls for more transparency and responsibility for business.

- **The managerial mindset:** Freeman assets that this is created by combining the previous two problems, i.e., value creation and ethics of capitalism. In an effort to address the issues, more responsibility was left in the hands of business managers who also were overwhelmed with the global changes and unclear as to how business should respond. The challenge here was how managers balance business 'interests' with ethics and social responsibility.

In his earlier contribution, Freeman (1984) had suggested that most businesses relied on separating 'business decisions' from 'ethical decisions'. Fassin (2009) suggests that Freeman's model had its foundations in sociology which studied interactions between individuals or groups. According to Mainardes et al. (2012), Freeman's conceptualization of stakeholder theory emerged from an organizational context that recognized the business's interdependence with its external environment. This viewpoint reflects an acknowledgement that corporations cannot operate in isolation, and thus, must consider the interests of various stakeholders. Freeman himself based his work on Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) and eventually named these external groups 'stakeholders'. The traditional capitalist model only recognised suppliers, employees and shareholders as the only 'stakeholders' important for any business success. Nevertheless, Freeman (1984) added other groups in the stakeholder realm, influenced by business activities (see Figure 2.1 below).

The extensive body of work that has been done in the field of stakeholder theory may be broken down into three categories: descriptive, normative, and instrumental (Ma et al., 2012). Jones and Wicks (1999) have posited an argument that encompasses an array of topics. Specifically, these include: firstly, the emergence of two diverging approaches in the context of stakeholder theory, namely the social science approach and the ethics-based approach; secondly, a proposition for a convergent approach towards the advancement of stakeholder theory; thirdly, an analysis of the degree to which convergent stakeholder theory amalgamates normative and empirical theory; and lastly, an examination of the correlation between convergent stakeholder theory and other theories of organization.

According to Freeman (2004), it is necessary to trace the origins of the concept of "stakeholders," as well as "stakeholder management," "managing for stakeholders," and "stakeholder capitalism," and provide an adequate explanation for each.

Figure 0.1 The original stakeholder model.

Source: Adapted from Freeman (1984).

While Freeman's stakeholder definition was generally accepted, others expanded this stakeholder concept to include more insight into how businesses could deal with different stakeholder issues in management (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Michelle et al.,1998; Jawahara and McLaughlin, 2001). Clarkson (1995:106) expanded this view by defining stakeholders as "persons or groups that have or claim ownership rights, or interest in a corporation and its activities, past, present or future". From a business perspective, the definition of stakeholders today refers to and includes investors, employees, suppliers, and customers. Freeman's (1984) objective was to elucidate the correlation between the organization and its surroundings, encompassing the conduct exhibited in this milieu. (Mainardes et al., 2012).

Freeman's stakeholder theory posited a strategic management framework aimed at facilitating companies to comprehend the external environment's potential impact on their business.

Furthermore, the theory emphasized the need for businesses to acknowledge the reciprocal relationship between the corporate entity and society at large (Fredrick, 2006). Therefore, the stakeholder management strategy should establish a management framework that includes both market and non-market stakeholders' interests. For corporations, changes in the external environment have an effect on the internal environment. These external environments are more symbolic in the South African context as a result of the dismantling of the apartheid system. The business narrative slowly shifted from 'shareholders' to 'stakeholders' as the business sector tried to redefine its roles in the new South Africa.

Although widely accepted, Freeman's stakeholder approach did not go unopposed. Arguing from a practicality point of view, some scholars believed that broadening the stakeholder map to include non-market stakeholders could ultimately undermine business objectives (Friedman, 1970; Jensen, 2000; Morgan and Hunt, 1994' Sternberg, 2000 and Stich, 2008). The stakeholder theory was even labelled as 'radical' though it has become remarkably conservative in its later days. Some labelled it as 'thinly veiled socialism' (Phillips et al. 2003:491) and much 'incompatible with business' (Sternberg, 1996). Milton Friedman (1970), in his controversial article was against the stakeholder theory but rather pro-capitalism and the freedom it brings to business. Friedman wrote that business had and should only have one purpose: to maximise profits and should be indemnified from any social responsibility. The major differences between Freeman and Friedman are that the later believed that business' sole purpose and responsibility is about maximizing profits, while Freeman maintained that the fundamental drivers in maximising profits are in fact stakeholder relationships.

Despite these 'diverse and contradictory' arguments about what defines a real 'stakeholder' in a corporate setting, there exists an accepted definition of Stakeholders as any individuals or groups that have the potential to influence or be influenced by the accomplishment of the organization's goals (Freeman and McVea, 2001).

Even though other definitions emerged thereafter, the consensus remained that a company should take into consideration, the needs, interests, and influences of people other than shareholders (Frederick et al, 1992). This consensus remains in the literature even today (Aakhus & Bzdak, 2015; Business Roundtable, 2019; Freeman et al., 2017; Kujala & Sachs, 2019; Mitchell et al., 2022; Noland & Phillips, 2010; Sachs & Kujala, 2021b). Clarkson (1995) summarised that the definitions have three similar fundamental factors:

- The organisations
- Other actors and
- The nature of the company-actor relationships

According to Clarkson (1995:110), “the cooperation is a system of primary stakeholder groups, and the…continuing profitability of the corporation depends upon its ability to fulfil its economic and social purpose, which is to create and distribute wealth or value sufficient to ensure that each primary stakeholder group continues as part of the corporation’s stakeholder systems”.

The objective of stakeholder theory has also changed with time. The first purpose of the model is empirical in nature, which defines the organizational structure and operations that determine organizational behaviour, values, and attitudes (Donaldson, 1995). The model as descriptive or empirical theory designs the nature of a company, determines characteristics, and behaviours in the management, workforce, and production procedures. Stakeholder theory also provides the means that managers think and act to achieve organizational goals. Shareholders determine the agenda of a company and task board members to act on the interests of investors.

The second purpose is the instrumental approach that identifies relationships between managers and workers in achieving organizational objectives. The theory insists that the traditional function of an organization is to generate profit for shareholders (Donaldson, 1995). Management concentrates on identifying ways of creating good connections with workers to improve production, customers to persuade them to purchase, stockholders by generating profit, and suppliers to ensure proper supply of quality raw materials (Brin

& Nehme, 2019). Every shareholder plays a critical role in enhancing a business in delivering on its objectives. The third purpose of stakeholder theory is the normative interpretation, which identifies values, principles, and guidelines for enhancing smooth organizational operations (Donaldson, 1995).

As seen, empirical, instrumental, and normative purposes of the stakeholder theory establish ways of explaining the way organizations perform their roles. Descriptive focuses on revealing the past, present, and future organizational status and activities that generate profit. The instrumental application makes a direct connection with all stakeholders in ways that organize them towards creating value for a company. This approach assesses and defines relationships between management, workers, customers, and other stakeholders in ways that guarantee organizational success. This includes defining organizational linkages, profitability, sustainability, and growth (Donaldson, 1995). Likewise, the normative approach of the stakeholder theory identifies the acceptable and unacceptable principles that guide a company. The main difference between instrumental and normative approaches is that the former is hypothetical while the latter is rules. In order to determine organizational performance, the three approaches are nested, with normative being at the centre and the other two being instrumental and descriptive, respectively.

2.4 Stakeholder theory and business management

According to Clarkson (1995), Donaldson and Preston (1995), Scott and Lane (2000), and Baldwin (2002), the stakeholder management concept was initially designed for the purpose of enabling organizations to identify and analyse the attributes of individuals or groups that exert an impact on, or are impacted by, organizational conduct. This process involves:

- Identification of stakeholders
- Process of identifying and interpretation of their needs
- Construction of relationships within the process guided by the organisation’s objectives.

Freeman and McVea (2001) attempted to clarify how the stakeholder theory was developed using four distinct elements of organisational management:

1) Strategic organisational planning
2) Systems theory
3) Corporate social responsibility
4) Organisational theory

Freeman further argues that both systems and organisational theory are based on the ideology that “organisations are open systems that interact with diverse third parties and thus it is necessary to set out collective strategies that perfect the systems as a whole beyond the actual recognition of all relationships on which companies depend for their own survival” (Mainardes et al., 2011:228). Brin and Nehme (2019) assert that the stakeholder theory provides ethics that guide top managers in enhancing engagement with people when making corporate decisions.

The approach requires management to be aware of the effects of the external and internal environment on the performance of the organization. Ethics, as part of the normative objective of the model, designs a company environment that determines business performance and stability. The difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour influences the quality of relationships as guided by the instrumental approach of the model in creating a supportive working environment and a responsive corporation that balances the interests and needs of all stakeholders.

Harrison, Freeman, and Abreu (2015) argue that the stakeholder theory provides the basis for integrating all stakeholders’ needs when making organizational decisions. The way an organization treats consumers determines the attitude and behaviour of employees towards stakeholders. A firm’s behaviour towards communities and suppliers also shapes customers’ behaviour and attitudes. The management theory, unlike corporate social responsibility (CSR) theory that focuses on the philanthropic approach, provides a framework for promoting moral behaviour that links all stakeholders to achieve higher performance. Harrison, Freeman, and Abreu (2015) in their literature analysis found that stakeholder theory supports an overarching phenomenon that compels managers to pursue balanced objectives that enhance organizational stability while reducing conflict among stakeholders.

2.5 Stakeholder value creation

Stakeholder value generation at the person level may be defined in terms of stakeholders' utility function, or via individual skills (Cabral et al., 2019). Increasingly, the generation of value at the organisational level is dependent on the innovation of business models, which refers to the importance of adequate stakeholder identification for an increase in innovation power (Lehtinen et al., 2019).

The purpose of Creating Shared Value (CSV) is to highlight the possibilities of simultaneous social and economic advancement, and the purpose of CSR is to balance environmental concerns within this framework. CSR is a fundamental necessity for any firm that strives for sustainable development. Only a small number of academics have researched the aspects of capturing stakeholder value, in spite of the fact that numerous authors discuss the process of creating value for stakeholders (Saint & Tripathi, 2010). The concepts of value slippage, competitiveness, and isolating processes (Lepak et al., 2007) lend themselves well to the investigation of this topic. It is vital to make the transition away from an economic concentration toward a wider form of value which incorporates not only the economic, but also the social and environmental components, in order to generate and retain value for many stakeholders.

In addition, it necessitates a transition away from making decisions in the short term with the goal of gaining quick returns and moving towards a method of conducting business that is long-term, sustainable, and cooperative. This goes beyond the justification of bargaining power in the process of value capture (Tantalo and Preim, 2016). Instead of concentrating on trade-offs, a successful stakeholder strategy for producing value and sustaining cooperative relationships with stakeholders is dependent on the ability to include stakeholders in this process, to jointly meet their demands rather than focusing on trade-offs (Lehtinen et al., 2019). As a result, both the notion of sustainable value as well as the Sustainable Value Analysis Tool (SVAT) are making significant contributions, both in terms of fresh and exciting concepts, to this area of study.

The SVAT's core ideas can be adapted to the "Radical Transactiveness" model (Papagianakis et al., 2019) to create a framework that aids in examining the relevance of stakeholder interests in the decision-making process and has the potential to lay the groundwork for a more environmentally friendly method of conducting business. This framework may serve as the cornerstone for a sustainable method of doing business.

An organization must balance between the financial performance and non-economic enrichment of stakeholders. Harrison, Freeman, and Abreu (2015) report that the model's primary objective is to create more and sustainable value that can be either narrow or broad. Narrow value creation focuses on achieving the objectives of specific stakeholders. This refers mostly to achieving high financial returns for shareowners while minimizing costs associated with satisfying non-economic objectives. Contrastingly, broad value creation models focus on building a sustainable value creation that takes into consideration the needs of all stakeholders. While the narrow approach achieves the needs of shareholders, the broad model helps an organization in striking a balance between financial organizational objectives and non-economic goals in ways that create a sustainable value (Harrison, Freeman, & Abreu, 2015). Different companies have to find their own unique ways of negotiating and creating long-lasting relationships among stakeholders, which influences the stability of an organization.

Harrison, Freeman, and Abreu (2015) also identified seven key areas for creating value for stakeholders based on the model, which provides managers with strategies for enhancing managerial stability. The first and most critical is building long-lasting relationships through proper communication strategies and decision-making processes that encompass all affected entities. Moreno-Marimbaldo and Manso-Callejo (2020) report that management must approach stakeholders at all levels through supportive communication that gathers information, experience, and differences in opinion.

The second is holding proper dialogue with stakeholders to persuade them to accept organizational strategies and tactics of value creation (Harrison, Freeman, & Abreu, 2015). The third area affects the workforce and requires management to establish a supportive working environment. The fourth is preserving the environment, which directly affects customers and the community.

The fifth area identifies the need to enhance performance by increasing the customer base (Harrison, Freeman, & Abreu, 2015). The sixth is philanthropic in nature and relates to supporting local development, which empowers customers and communities to interact effectively with the organization. The last area is improving organizational reputation that determines the ways stakeholders interact with an organization. For example, the adoption of cleaner production (CP) tools as a policy depends on the management's integration of legitimate decisions.

Likewise, enforcement of environmental legislation and statutes make it possible for an organization to adopt acceptable behaviour in accessing supplies, protecting the environment where the community and customers live, and appreciating a pro-environmental reputation that can create a competitive advantage (Harrison, Freeman, & Abreu, 2015). A company must strike a balance between creating value for non-economic stakeholders and creating profit that enhances stable organizational growth.

In business and project management, stakeholder theory presents a dynamic way of executing organizational objectives. Project stakeholders hold a prominent position in the development of a project and determine the correct way of managing functions within the system and human aspects that cover a diversity of areas. Stakeholder management is an instrument for directing projects, attaining strategic competence, and linking projects to business objectives (Uribe, Ortiz-Marcos, & Uruburu, 2018). As such, the model endorses sustainable organizational activities that create value.

Management can benefit from stakeholder theory, which provides competent means of managing relationships with stakeholders and enhancing the performance of the internal stakeholders, like the workforce, by providing a guiding framework for managing the volatile business environment. Relationships with stakeholders can be challenging because of the competing interests. Management must navigate through the diverse interests which are important for stakeholder and the business.

Uncertain relationships among stakeholders threaten to destabilize efficient management (Uribe, Ortiz-Marcos, & Uruburu, 2018). Stakeholder management provides a stable way of implementing better approaches to creating organizational stability. Managers have to use proper interpersonal skills to reach all stakeholders.

Likewise, managers must encourage the acquisition of social skills, communication skills, and emotional intelligence that creates high business management efficiency (Uribe, Ortiz-Marcos, & Uruburu, 2018). Management has to obtain a sustainable mixture of elements of organizational management, stakeholder theory, and business management. When stakeholders are part of the organizational strategic vision, management holds a clear objective of creating economic and non-economic value. Stakeholder theory requires managers to use sustainable management processes that make it easier for a company to achieve its organizational goals.

Baumfield (2016) argues that the stakeholder model identifies organizational obligations for all stakeholders and requires management to maximize outcomes for stakeholders. Although a divide exists between the shareholder primacy and stakeholder's perspectives, a company's interests are intertwined with organizational goals. The stakeholder theory perspectives, which are instrumental, normative and empirical provide managers with the means of enhancing business management. Baumfield (2016) propounds that instrumental stakeholder theory provides strategic means of treating stakeholders as guided by the law.

Likewise, normative stakeholder theory defines ethical and guiding principles that enhance fairness, work ethics, and ensures that organizational operations follow moral guidelines. Descriptive stakeholder theory provides a systematic way for business management to determine appropriate behaviour towards all stakeholders, which is critical in acknowledging the diverse needs.

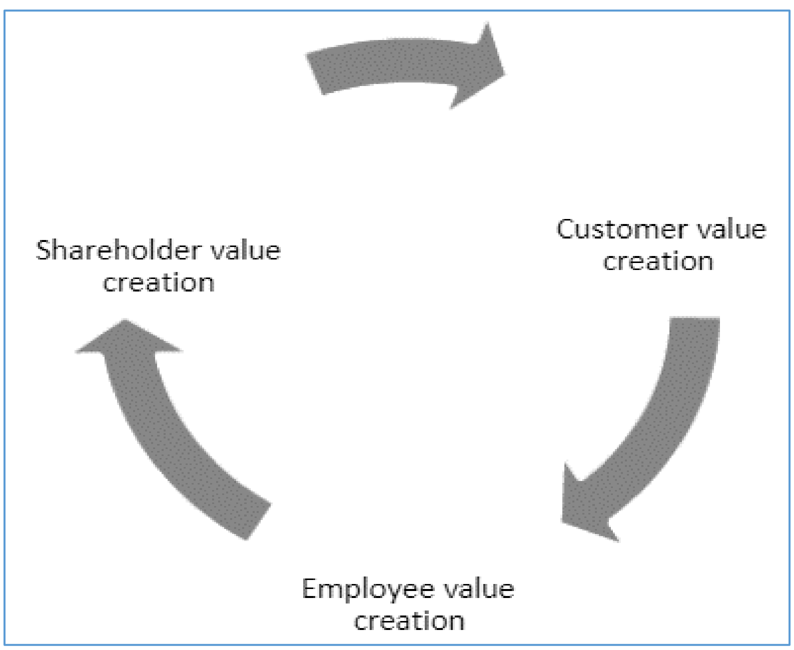
Laczniak and Murphy (2012) argue that stakeholder theory provides the basis for stakeholder marketing, which gives managers the power to determine ways of maximizing or sacrificing profit to balance the needs of all stakeholders. Stakeholder theory promotes marketing stability as a business management approach that builds trust, responsibility, and commitment to marketing. Reynolds, Schultz, and Hekman (2006) found that the model is a managerial instrument that requires managers to pay simultaneous attention to competing but legitimate stakeholders' interests. Managers working within the context of stakeholder management principles have to make organizational decisions after consulting with all affected parties. This creates sustainable relationships that guarantee business performance and stability.

More challenging for managers is the task of achieving both shareholder and stakeholder value creation. For shareholders, there is only one dimension: profits, while stakeholder's interests are multi-dimensional and involves expectations of both profits and welfare for all. The shareholder value can be created by implementing efficient management strategies to bring in more customers and business, thereby generating more revenue. This value is then delivered to the 'owners' through increased equity value, share price and dividends. The employees benefit through increased benefits and incentives, in the form of bonuses and share options. This shareholder value creation is dependent upon the strategic decisions made by the higher management to increase customer value creation.

Employees, being a major part of internal stakeholders, always know the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, and often understand what get in the way of success and have first-hand knowledge of what it takes to deliver best results (Ramachandran, 2017).

The figure 2.2 below illustrates the process of shareholder value creation:

Figure 0.2 Value creation chain for key stakeholders.



Source: Mastilo et al. (2017).

The Stakeholder theory on the other hand, argues that the actual business value can only be created when all the stakeholders get the benefit, i.e., customers, financers, employees, or the supply value chains, communities and indeed, owners. The table 2.1 below illustrates the basic differences between both these value creation strategies to understand the strategic management process while implementing stakeholder management policies.

Table 0.1 Shareholder v/s Stakeholder Value Creation.

Key differences	Shareholder Value	Stakeholder Value
Purpose	Maximize shareholder value within what is legally permissible	Maintain financial viability while providing value for all
Philosophy	Willing to trade off responsible conduct for increased profitability	Willing to trade off profitability for increased responsible conduct
Parties served	Shareholders/Owners	Owners, managers, employees, suppliers, partners, customers, citizens etc.
Dimensions	One dimensional	Multi-dimensional
Indicators of success	Increased share price, dividends, and economic profit	Satisfaction of all stakeholders
Advantages	Clear objectives for managers, easy to measure performance, promotes wealth generation	Improves brand image, better relations with stakeholders
Disadvantages	Undesirable externalities, biased towards short term gains, promotes job outsourcing, principal-agent problem, poor image, concentration of wealth.	Conflicting objectives, emotion-based decisions, biased towards activist objectives, leads to stakeholder involvement which may slow decisions making and increase costs

Source: Adapted from Merkhofer, 2019.

Orij (2010) asserts that the model gives managers a better understanding of effective approaches of separating managers' ethics from their actions based on urgency, the influence of power, and legitimacy. Branco and Rodrigues (2007) found that managers could use corporate social responsibility within stakeholder theory to operationalize the complementary role of an organization to the community, customers, and other stakeholders. This is achieved by considering the effects of business decisions on stakeholders in supporting the attainment of organizational goals. Managers have to set precedence when dealing with different stakeholders by specifying their differences in opinion and determining the right course of action that preserves the attainment of economic and non-economic objectives. Good stakeholder management increases the credibility and legitimacy of business processes and results in stable business operations and higher profitability without compromising the needs of non-economic partners (Moreno-Marimbaldo & Manso-Callejo, 2020). Communication among stakeholders should achieve a consensus and management should facilitate individual interactions to manage relations. Proper engagement and involvement of stakeholders in decision-making create networks of trust with positive impacts on business growth.

2.6 Stakeholder Classification Models

There are five-stakeholder classification models. These are grid-based, stakeholder cube, salience model, directions of influence, and prioritization. The theoretical framework for the grid-based approach comprises three distinct grid-based models, namely the power/interest grid, power/influence grid, and impact/influence grid. The stakeholder cube has three dimensions which are power, interest, and attitude. The third model which is the salience model exploits power, urgency, and legitimacy. The fourth is directions of influence that can be upward downward, outward, or sideward. Upward refers to the executives and senior management and board of directors while the downward direction of influence relates to the relations among the workforce working on a project as a team of experts.

Outward refers to suppliers, government agencies, regulators, the public, and customers that represent the non-economic interests. Sideward refers to peers who provide the support systems to each other's teams to assist a company in attaining functional management. The fifth model, which is prioritization orders stakeholders according to their nature (Brainbok, 2018). This ordering comprises ~~of~~ a large group of stakeholders, ever-changing stakeholders, and dynamic relationships with stakeholders. Mitchel, Agle, and Wood (1997) posited that 'salience' represents the appropriate concept for the process of stakeholder identification.

The authors assert that the process of identifying stakeholders is predicated upon the consideration of three key attributes, namely, power, urgency, and legitimacy. Looking at this view, Mitchel et al. were implying that organisations have knowledge advantage of identifying who are stakeholders based on these attributes.

Thus, stakeholder management is based entirely on managing the influence and expectations of groups or individuals possessing such attributes.

Mitchell et al. (1997) posited an essential aspect of their stakeholder identification framework to be the dynamic nature of the attributes, as they are not predetermined or permanent at any specific moment. This signifies that the validity of a given stakeholder's assertion may vary over time. This implies that a particular stakeholder’s claim may be legitimate at one point, but not at another. An entity or individual possessing a limited number of attributes and concerns that are of minimal or moderate significance may elevate its status from moderate to high priority through the acquisition of a deficient attribute, as per the adaptive nature of Mitchel's model. As the number of stakeholders increases, the efficacy can be mismanaged, and thus, strategies are required to make sure each stakeholder is managed and prioritized as per their needs. Each stakeholder has a unique perspective about what it will take for the organization to succeed.

In their "narrow" definition of stakeholders, Mitchell et al. (1997) put forth a definition of primary stakeholders as individuals or entities that bear certain degrees of financial or human capital investment risks. Based on the qualities of authority, legitimacy, and urgency, Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) categorized stakeholders into eight groups:

Demanding stakeholders	Present a pressing claim but lack authority or a proper connection. Although they may be bothersome, they are not harmful, therefore management can ignore them.
Discretionary stakeholders	These stakeholders are legitimate, yet they don't have any pressing claims or positions of authority. Managers are not required to interact actively with these stakeholders, but they may choose to do so.

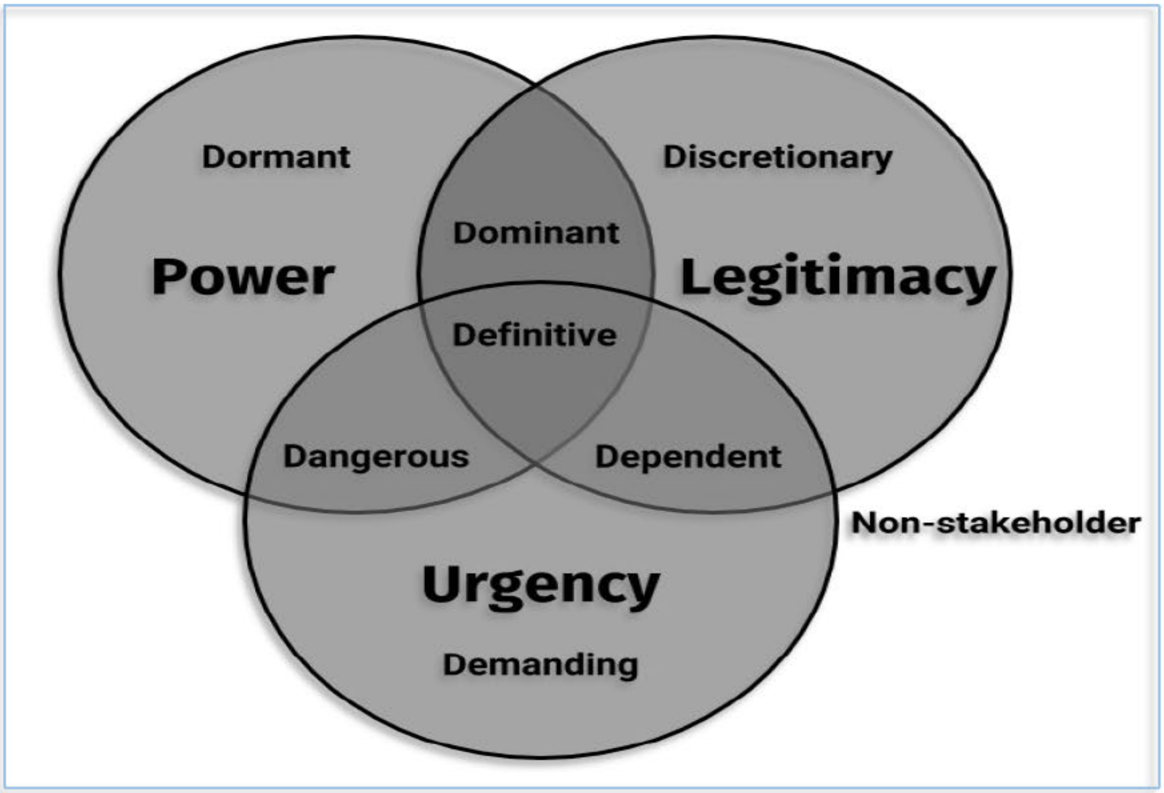
Dormant stakeholders	Possess the ability of imposing their will but given that they have no valid relationship or compelling claim, their power is ineffective.
Dependent stakeholders	Have valid, pressing claims but no authority. The ability to achieve anything is dependent upon other people.
Dominant stakeholders	Powerful and high level of legitimacy. Their influence is assured, and their expectations matter.
Dangerous stakeholders	Though they are not legitimate, they have power and potential to be violent and coercive, hence they qualify as "dangerous".
Definitive stakeholders	They have all the required stakeholder attributes. They are probably associated with powerful dominant groups and their claims require managers to give them priority.

According to Mitchel et al. (1997), as cited in Dekkar and Qing (2014), power pertains to the dynamic interaction among stakeholders, wherein a stakeholder exercises influence over another, while retaining the capacity to withdraw vital resources from the organization.

Mitchell further proposes that there are three different bases of power: -

- Coercive: based on force or threat.
- Utilitarian: based on material or incentives.
- Normative: primarily based totally on symbolic influences.

Figure 0.3 The Salience Model Diagram



Source: Adapted from Mitchel et al. (1997).

The graphical representation of the salience model as a Venn Diagram with three cycles delineating power, legitimacy, and urgency is depicted in Figure 2.3 above. The aforementioned diagram contains eight distinct regions, each of which corresponds to a unique category of stakeholders. In a critique of this power dynamic among stakeholders, Phillips et al. (2010), assert that the instrumental stakeholder theories often failed to acknowledge that corporations have real constraints in choosing a stakeholder strategy. Each identified strategy must be able to recognize each stakeholder based on interest and power (Arter, 2017).

Researchers Harrison et al. (2010) and Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014) offer two types of stakeholder strategies: one is referred to as an "all-stakeholder strategy" and assumes that businesses have a moral duty to balance the interests of all stakeholders. The second approach, which is referred to as a "powerful-stakeholder strategy," focuses on validating requests from stakeholders purely on the basis of their influence.

The first technique is known in the literature as "managing-for-stakeholders" or a "fairness approach," whereas the second is known as a "arms-length approach" to stakeholder management (Bridoux & Stoelhorst, 2014; Harrison et al., 2010).

The salience paradigm propounded by Mitchell et al. (1997), has been subjected to a great deal of criticism. Though it has only gotten a small amount of attention in the stakeholder literature up to this point, the definition of urgency has been subjected to particularly intense scrutiny (Wood et al., 2021). There has also been disagreement over whether legitimacy should be accepted as a quality within the salience model.

Amongst others, Banerjee (2007) has been one of the critics of the salience framework. According to Banerjee (2007), legitimacy of a stakeholder is a result of power connections between various actors, and the rationale that defines the legitimacy of a stakeholder originates from corporate and commercial values, not social values. Tantalo and Preim (2016) remark further that the Mitchell et al. (1997), paradigm does not truly address a problem that is important to stakeholder management. The issue is how the management of an organisation interacts with stakeholders whose salience varies.

In their stakeholder studies, a number of academics have put up the idea that focused organisations may use a variety of stakeholder tactics, ranging from active to passive methods, in order to control stakeholder groups. Pro-action, accommodation, defence, and response are four techniques that have been detailed by previous research as being effective (Mitchell and Lee, 2019).

The approach that a company takes towards its stakeholders may be characterised as reactive, defensive, accommodating, or proactive, according to Wartick and Cochran (1985). The Reactive, Defensive, Accommodative, and Proactive (RDAP) scale was designed by Clarkson (1995) to define the tactics that corporations employ to manage stakeholders and to assess corporate performance. The researchers believe that the pro-action approach is an active method in which anticipatory activities play an essential role in resolving the concerns of stakeholders. In contrast, the defensive strategy comprises doing the bare minimum with respect to the legal elements of stakeholders, while the accommodation strategy takes a more hands-off approach to the problem of dealing with stakeholder concerns than does the pro-action approach.

The last kind of business strategy is known as the response strategy, and it involves a corporation actively opposing the demands of stakeholders or completely disregarding such requests. Oliver (1991), an expert in the subject of institutional theory, has also offered techniques that are comparable to this one. Her research elucidates five distinct tactics that organisations have put into action as a reaction to challenges originating from their respective institutional environments.

Pressures exerted by stakeholders are one kind of institutional pressure that might be taken into consideration. According to Oliver (1991), there are five different techniques that might be used: capitulate, compromise, avoid, defy, and manipulate. Acquiescence may also manifest itself in a variety of other ways, such as via habit, imitation, or obedience. In its turn, the compromise technique entails striking a balance with external constituents, pacifying them, and negotiating with them. The term "avoidance" refers to "the organisational attempt to preclude the necessity of conformity." Organizations may engage in avoidance in order to hide their nonconformity, protect themselves from the pressures of the institution, or get out from under the expectations and rules of the institution (Oliver, 1991).

Giacomara et al. (2019) consider defiance to be an active kind of opposition to the processes of institutionalisation. It might take the shape of a challenge, an assault, or a dismissal. Finally, the active manipulation technique entails a deliberate and opportunistic behaviour aimed at co-opting, influencing, or controlling institutional pressures and assessments. Other authors, such as Cummings and Doh (2000), Jawahara and McLaughlin (2001), and Savage et al. (1991) have also given and examined various strategies for the management of stakeholders from the perspective of the focus organisations.

Existing literature review on stakeholder management has revealed that in previous studies on stakeholders, only a small amount of time was spent on the many contextual elements that, in addition to the characteristics of stakeholders, may explain and drive management behaviour in relation to stakeholders. Nevertheless, other points of view have been discussed. Jawahar and McLaughlin (2001) conducted research on stakeholder management, wherein they formulated the descriptive stakeholder theory and applied an organisational lifecycle approach.

Their study demonstrated how the stage of an organization's lifecycle influences the significance of certain stakeholders for managerial decision making, and they proposed that the strategy an organisation employs to deal with each stakeholder is contingent on the importance of that stakeholder to the organisation in comparison to the importance of other stakeholders.

There is also empirical evidence to suggest that certain CEOs, owing to variances in the personal values held by managers, are more attentive to the concerns of external stakeholders than others (Bogers et al., 2019). Several researchers, such as Tapaninaho and Kujalo (2019), have looked at the stakeholder orientations of CEOs and boards of directors, as well as their effect on management conduct in relation to stakeholders (Velter et al., 2020). In addition, Rowley's (1997), ground-breaking research has explored how the network of stakeholder interactions may really impact the behaviour of a focus business with reference to stakeholders. He believes that enterprises should instead react to the interplay of various impacts from the whole stakeholder network rather than responding individually to each stakeholder in the network.

Another strategy proposition is called ‘powerful-stakeholder strategy’ as it focuses on fulfilling the requests of stakeholders purely based on stakeholders’ power. Arguments put forward by both Bridoux and Stoelhorst, (2014), and Jones et al, (2018), state that ethical management of stakeholders will reduce the corporation's risk of being subject to strikes, boycotts, protests, adverse press, and litigations. Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014) additionally advanced the argument that businesses are more likely to perform better when they leverage the bargaining power created via stakeholder engagement.

Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, and de Colle, (2010), in their review of recent literature are generally supportive of a positive relationship between stakeholder-oriented management and company performance, which is at most, measured in financial returns. In an earlier review Clarkson (1995), stated that primary stakeholders include capital suppliers (shareholders), employees, and other resource suppliers, customers, communities, and the natural environment. He further went on to refer to governments and communities as public stakeholders.

Barney and Hansen (1994), and Van de Ven (1992), stated that relationships and positive dealings with primary stakeholders like customers, suppliers, employees, and local communities could generate reputational capital and trust as valuable resources. These resources, Barney argues, could lead to competitive advantage for any business. Olander (2007) went even further to create the impact probability matrix, where the project stakeholders are categorized depending on their level of impact and probability of impact on the organization (see table 2.2 below).

Table 0.2 The stakeholder impact/probability-matrix

Level of impact	Keep Satisfied	Key Players
	Minimal effort	Keep informed
	Probability to impact	

Source: Adapted from Olander, (2007)

Stakeholder academics have only just lately begun to explore the strategic activities of stakeholders (Attanasio et al., 2022). The current body of research on stakeholder behaviour focuses, for the most part, on identifying and documenting the myriad of ways in which stakeholders attempt to exert influence on organisations or mould their relevance (Lehtinen et al., 2019). Researchers have also taken into consideration a variety of factors that play a role in the selection of particular influence strategies (Barney and Harrison, 2020). According to Frooman (1999), as cited in Falqueto et al (2020), influence strategies are the "means" that stakeholders use to obtain what they want. He suggests that the kind of resource connection that exists between the stakeholder and the company is what defines the sort of influence strategy that each stakeholder will adopt.

Falqueto et al. (2020), citing Frooman (1999) defines four different kinds of stakeholder influence methods in his theoretical research. These tactics are all dependent on the sort of resource linkages that exist between stakeholders and the focus organisation.

These tactics include not using something directly, using something directly, not using something indirectly, and using something indirectly. The term "withholding strategies" refers to situations in which a stakeholder decides to stop providing a resource to an organisation with the hope of persuading the organisation to modify its behaviour in some way.

Workers, for instance, have the ability to quit contributing their labour to a project if they go on strike. Utilization strategies, on the other hand, are strategies in which the stakeholder continues to contribute a resource but does so with restrictions connected to it. Direct strategies are strategies in which the stakeholder directly influences the flow of resources to the company whereas in indirect strategies, the stakeholder works via an ally who directly influences the flow of resources to the company.

Hendry (2005) has conducted an empirical test of Frooman's (1999) hypotheses by describing the various stakeholder influence tactics used by four non-governmental organisations. Loureiro et al. (2020), highlight the importance of a company's communication strategy as one of the most essential ways to influence the behaviour of a company in addition to the four influence tactics that were identified by Frooman (1999). Moreover, Loureiro et al. (2020) recognized diverse types of influence and tactics employed by stakeholder, including but not limited to forming alliances with other stakeholders, engaging in multi-stakeholder dialogues, executing blockades and boycotts, initiating litigation, and lobbying legislators.

These are just some of the strategies that she identifies. Hendry's (2005) empirical investigation concerns the identification of various factors that contribute to the selection of influence strategies, while also identifying a spectrum of distinct influence strategies that stakeholders may deploy to promote their interests. The author sheds light on significant factors that impact the decision-making of stakeholders in selecting an influence strategy. These include the availability of a specific strategy, the stakeholder's proficiency and knowledge of a particular influence strategy, possible partnerships that may lend support to a specified strategy, and the perceived effectiveness of a chosen influence strategy.

Previous investigations into stakeholder relationships have uncovered a few contextual characteristics that could explain the behaviour of stakeholders. Furthermore, along with explicating and scrutinizing the tangible constituents of stakeholder attempts to exert influence upon an organization and the rationales underlying the selection of specific influence tactics, scholarly concentration has presently shifted towards evaluating those factors that instigate and augment the probability of stakeholder mobilization and activism. This is something that has been done in addition to examining what factors explain the choice of certain influence strategies (Beck and Stopoli, 2021).

In their study on stakeholder mobilisation, Rowley and Moldoveanu (2003) developed a theoretical model of stakeholder group action. Within this model, the conventional interest-based action viewpoint was reinforced with ideas addressing identity-based action. Rowley's work from 1997 recommends an inter-organizational network view and explains how the network locations of stakeholders may truly explain their behaviour. In turn, Rowley's study suggests an inter-organizational network perspective.

Neville and Menguc (2006) have also studied the relationships between stakeholders and their consequences to the strength of stakeholder influence. Prior to this, Rowley (1997) was the only other scholar to make this consideration. Jawahar and McLaughlin (2001) adopt a perspective based on the organisational life cycle and provide insight into how the organisational life-cycle stage may actually affect the possibilities for stakeholders to influence managerial decision making. They do this by adopting an organisational lifecycle perspective.

The area of stakeholder research is one that is still in its infancy compared to other areas of management. As a result, the vast majority of work done in the field of stakeholder research has concentrated on theoretical disputes on the nature of stakeholder theory and the nature of the idea of stakeholders (Sosa & Pate, 2017; Kujala, et al., 2022). Due to the progression of the theory, there has been a notable dispersion of concepts within the corpus of published literature, alongside a distinct divergence in definitions and perspectives. Stakeholder theory has found widespread application in the examination of various phenomena, such as organizational leadership, organizational identity, child labour, management of quanxis in China, organizational cultures, and hostile takeovers (Barney & Harrison, 2020).

In contrast, no empirical study on how to manage stakeholder relationships has been done, although that is starting to change. For instance, Goyal (2020), has advocated for the application of the insights gained from stakeholder theory to actual issues that exist in the real world, as opposed to only concentrating on the development of the theory itself. The minimal amount of empirical research that has been done has, for the most part, taken an instrumental approach by focusing on the connection between stakeholder orientation and the financial success of corporations (Watson et al., 2018).

In the same vein, there has not been a lot of empirical study done in the subject of descriptive stakeholder research. For an example, the literature on stakeholder management as it now stands, does not include a sufficient amount of descriptive theory or research that specifies the ways in which businesses engage with various stakeholders (Attanasio et al., 2022).

A notable gap in existing literature is the aspect of stakeholder management that pertains to the involvement of stakeholders themselves. Instead, a considerable portion of the available literature has adopted the perspective of the firm and concentrated their efforts on the establishment of diverse frameworks of stakeholder identification and classification. Understanding how stakeholders really behave and how they are able to affect management's decision-making has received just a fraction of the attention that it deserves (Frooman, 1999; Frooman & Murrel, 2005; Hendry, 2005).

2.7 Social Stakeholders

Stakeholders can be either social or non-social, whereby the former group represents people and organizations that are directly involved in organizational activities. These include shareholders and investors, employees and management, customers, local communities, suppliers, and other business partners. An organization has primary and secondary social stakeholders all with their unique and at times competing claims in the organization’s business activities. Primary social stakeholders include employees and managers, investors, customers, suppliers, business partners, and local communities (Verdeyen, Put, & Buggenhout, 2004).

Secondary social stakeholders comprise of external groups that influence organizational activities. This group includes civil society, social and pressure groups, unions, media, governments, and activist groups (Verdeyen, Put, & Buggenhout, 2004).

An organization has to take cognisance of and satisfy all social stakeholders as part of its reputation management in order to address negative perceptions that could result in reputational damage (Sarmah, Islam, & Rahman, 2015). The most critical social stakeholder is the local communities who are likely to exert both positive and negative impacts on organizational activities. Collaboration and communication between management and social stakeholders improve the conventional planning approach and guarantee legitimate execution of organizational objectives.

2.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this section has provided a comprehensive overview of stakeholder management theories as a management strategy for business. The literature in this section seems to present a consensus that there is a positive relationship between good stakeholder management and business stability thereby unpacking the hypothesis that integrating stakeholder management as a business practice does influence business stability and profitability. From the studies in this field presented in this chapter, it is evident that stakeholder management is no longer an optional choice for many business organisations, but a business imperative. This is to say, although businesses may prefer to be autonomous, they are often faced with internal and external issues which require stakeholder management, and these, if not managed effectively, will constrain business progress.

This chapter also presented the literature arguments that when organizations work with key stakeholders, the end result usually is increased autonomy. When an organization interacts voluntarily with its stakeholders in order to find mutually beneficial solutions, good relationships are formed. Poor interpersonal relationships can lead to forced compliance with restrictions and regulations. When organizations establish relationships with stakeholders /voluntarily, they are more likely to achieve the desired autonomy and success. The literature reveals that there has been a paucity of empirical study conducted on the potential elements and processes that might explain the behaviour and interaction of stakeholders and a focus organisation. In addition, Lamberg et al. (2008) points out that stakeholder research offers a somewhat static picture of stakeholder management, ignoring the dynamism of stakeholder relationships as a result. Medvedeva et al. (2022) suggest that conducting a thorough examination of the influence of stakeholder network structure on a focal firm's behaviours, in conjunction with an assessment of the impact of the lifecycle stage on both stakeholders and management, may be an interesting angle for empirical research.

Chapter Three
Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical backgrounds underpinning this study. In order to contextualize the research objective and to provide the necessary socio-political background for understanding the rationale for the study, this chapter reviews the two important theories of organisations and systems and how these relate to the stakeholder theories as presented and discussed in the previous chapter.

One of the key principles in King IV is that Boards in business establishments should adopt integrated thinking, which recognises the interdependencies between the company and other factors that might affect the company's ability to create value (King, 2016). This principle implies that every organisation should have a certain standard which guides its interactions and practices with all relevant stakeholders in order to achieve the status of being a 'responsible citizen'. This further implies that this status could be achieved as an "outcome of the systemic behavior and, as a result of the processes on how the organization's multiple elements interact, adapt to, and impact one another as well as the environment in which the organization operates (Kramer, 1999:570). As earlier explained in the previous chapter, these 'various components and organization's environment would refer to stakeholder groups both internally and externally, which create this 'environment'. It is therefore opportune and fitting that this chapter addresses the additional theories of the firm, and the systematic nature of how businesses are organized in order to understand the relationships which influence and drive behavior and management practices to achieve success.

The organisation and systems theory are therefore presented in this chapter, to complement the stakeholder theory already discussed. This, hopefully, would give a complete theoretical context which interlinks the stakeholder management practice with organisations and their relationship to business management and success. The attempt is made to provide a sound conceptual bridge between systems theory as a macro-theory, and the stakeholder theory in this study, and contextualize the key role that stakeholders play in influencing an organization's long-term economic success, viability, and stability.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

According to Hodge et al. (2003), a theory is defined as an explanation of a phenomenon that consists of philosophies stating the relationships observed between the phenomena. Theories can also be used in other fields, such as philosophy, social science, and the humanities, to help us understand and interpret different aspects of human experience and behaviour. Hodge et al. (2003) identify descriptive and normative theory as the two major types of theories. A theory can, therefore, be classified as either normative or descriptive.

Theories are developed to describe, analyze, as well as comprehend occurrences, as well as to question and expand current knowledge within the constraints of crucial boundary assumptions (Imenda, 2014). Minoja (2012) states that the theoretical framework is the foundation that may hold or sustain a research study's hypothesis. The theoretical framework defines and presents the framework for understanding why and how the research issue under consideration exists.

A theoretical framework is made up of ideas and existing theory that is employed for a specific investigation, along with their definitions and references to relevant academic literature (Lederman & Lederman, 2015). The theoretical framework must show a comprehension of ideas and concepts relevant to the subject of the research study and related to the larger fields of knowledge under consideration. The theoretical framework is not always easily accessible in the literature (Lederman & Lederman, 2015). One must go through course materials and relevant research papers to look for theories as well as analytical models that are applicable to the research subject under review. The appropriateness, simplicity of application, and explanatory strength of a theory should all be considered while choosing one.

The following are some ways that the theoretical framework improves the research:

1. An explicit exposition of theoretical assumptions allows the reader to critically analyse them (Sekhon et al., 2017).
2. The theoretical framework links the researcher to prior knowledge. A suitable theory serves as a foundation for your hypotheses and research methodologies (Imenda, 2014).

3. Explaining the hypothesis of a research project encourages the researcher to answer ‘why’ and ‘how’ inquiries. It enables one to go mentally beyond just describing a phenomenon to generalising about many elements of that phenomenon.

4. Having a theory allows you to determine the boundaries of such generalisations. A theoretical framework explains which important factors impact a phenomenon of interest and emphasises the importance of investigating how those key variables may vary and under what conditions (Minoja, 2012).

Because of its practical nature, a good theory in research is valuable precisely because it serves one core aim: to interpret the significance, nature, as well as difficulties related to a phenomenon that is frequently encountered and yet unexplained in our world, so that, information and awareness can be used to act in much more efficient and educated forms.

3.3 Stakeholder theory as a business strategy

Again, referring to the definition of ‘stakeholder’ as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives” (Freeman 1984:46), this concept has been dominant in business management theory and practice. Thus, stakeholders in an organisation would include customers, suppliers, employees, communities, regulators, and competitors. The interests, values, and restrictions by these stakeholders are incorporated into the organisation's daily operations to ensure its success.

Stakeholder theory provides for organisational management that includes the concerns of multiple business influencers, both internal and external, to their management plan and practices. Stakeholder theory, when incorporated into a business strategy, assumes both resource and market-based approaches. It also adds a socio-political level in the form of corporate social responsibility into management practice. The theory projects that the business must serve the interests of all stakeholders other than those who are shareholders in the company. Stakeholder theory views an organisation as a significant social body rather than a single entity (Jones, Wick, and Freeman, 2017).

It considers it as a social unit where the business has responsibilities to other people in their social circle rather than the owners because the action of a company can benefit or harm the stakeholders (Gilmartin and Freeman, 2002; Jones, Wick, and Freeman, 2017).

The stakeholder theory comprises three distinct concepts, namely normative stakeholder theory, descriptive stakeholder theory, and instrumental stakeholder theory. The first concept, which is the normative stakeholder theory, defines the ethical and guiding principles that enhance fairness, work ethics and ensures that organisational operations are carried out under moral guidelines (Friedman & Miles, 2006). The second concept, which is the descriptive stakeholder theory, defines the methodological way in which business management determines the required behaviour to address all stakeholders.

The descriptive theory describes the nature of the firm in the sense of the beliefs of the stakeholders and how they view the firm. The concern is how managers and stakeholders act towards and view each other (Freeman, 2015). This concept is vital in acknowledging the diverse needs of stakeholders. The third concept is instrumental stakeholder theory that provides for the appropriate treatment of stakeholders based on the law. It stipulates how individual managers should work if they want to achieve the goals and objectives of their organisations. The objectives of the organisation are achieved through descriptive data.

Stakeholder theory as a business strategy identifies the needs of stakeholders, classifies them, then provides a solution to them. As a management strategy, it requires managers to give simultaneous attention to competing stakeholders' needs. The theory provides management with the principles of making organisational decisions by consulting all the stakeholders likely to be affected by the decision (Harrison, Freeman, and Abreu, 2015). Thus, it fosters a sustainable relationship between management and other stakeholders, influencing business stability and performance (Reynolds, Schultz, & Hekman, 2006). The stakeholder management theory argues that the maximisation of shareholder value within a multitude of shareholders requires an organisation to create satisfactory interactions. This representation and interactions further provide more value created for each individual stakeholder (Harrison, Freeman, & Abreu, 2015).

Stakeholder theory promotes marketing, increasing the profits of an organisation. Furthermore, the socio-economic needs of the broader society, and local communities are placed on the business agenda through effective stakeholder management and ethical treatment of all.

3.4 Organisational theory

Organisational theory is a management theory used to examine operations and interactions outside and within an organisation. Hodge et al. (2003) say that an organisation is composed of "two or more people working together co-operatively within identifiable boundaries to accomplish a common goal." This composition of people brings about the complexity and diversity of organisations. When people work together, the need to divide labour among people according to their specialised knowledge arises. An organisation must also have boundaries within which people work. Rationally, each organisation has a purpose and goals they are striving to achieve. The organisation relies on the teamwork employed by the group rather than an individual.

There are varied organisational theories. The first one, *classical theory*, which is also known as *the traditional theory*, puts the organisation at the top before the employees. Using an analogy, this theory takes the organisation as a machine and the human beings as mere parts of that machine. It considers the human beings as means of production; hence the structure is built on the accounting model. This theory is more concerned with the output that humans offer to the organisation than the human resource. The second organisational theory is *the scientific management theory*. This theory acknowledges that it must focus on improving each individual for an organisation to achieve its potential. Scientific management theory applies engineering science in production. This theory mainly focuses on the production level of the organisation because the production level is primarily repetitive and needs a scientific approach. Scientific management theory emphasises the aspect of the critical attention to standardise working methods in an organisation. Thus, it focuses on improving working conditions for employees working at the production level.

Another organisational theory is the *administrative theory* which is based on departmentalisation (Hose-Ryan, 2017). This theory applies the divide and rule mechanism to categorise related tasks into departments or groups which accomplish these tasks to achieve the organisation's common goal.

Henry Fayol developed this theory to reiterate the importance of emphasising organisational management and human behavioural factors of management. It focuses on how an organisation organises individual into structures to accomplish the tasks they are assigned. It mainly concentrates is on management before operation standardisation (Bacud, 2020). Max Weber (1978) introduced yet another organisational theory, *the bureaucratic theory*. This theory is based on levels of authority with a specialised workforce where principles are standardised, and personnel are trained. This theory is different from the traditional organisation theory in that it offers promotion on merit only.

An extended version of the classical theory of organisation is *neoclassical theory*. The only difference between the two is that neoclassical theory adds behavioural science to management. This theory acknowledges that an organisation is affected by human actions because it is a social system. It recognises the formal and the informal systems in the organisation that are not recognised in classical theory. Human behaviour affects the structures of an organisation, and these organisations affect communications and interaction within the organisation.

Organizational theory is founded on three perspectives: modern, symbolic-interpretive, and post-modern (King and Carberry, 2020). In relation to organisational management, the viewpoints take various methods. Modernists are objectivists who concentrate on the actuality of knowledge which is built on conceptualization and theorization. As an example, a corporation makes profits depending on the CEO's ability to make sound judgments while investing the organization's money. The outcomes of the CEO’s actions may be readily quantified in terms of profit and loss. Modernists perceive facts from the five senses. Namely, what they see, hear, touch, smell, and taste.

Modern perspective creates a set of standards that may be employed in organisations so that all workers can follow, perform, and operate, guaranteeing the organization's whole process goes smoothly. Modernists do not consider the metaphorical standpoint of going beyond the five human senses and into emotions as well as intuition (Kanter, 2019).

3.4.1 Modern Perspective

Since the works of pioneers such as Max Weber and Frederick Taylor, modernists have supported the rationalisation of organisational processes (Hatch, 2019). Modernists are more concerned with outcomes or ordered states, than with intricate social processes (Chia 1995). Modernists are constantly concerned with efficacy and efficiency.

The logical contemporary mind is conditioned to seek 'development,' both scientifically and productively. Modernists believe that an individual's conduct at work is heavily influenced by the values, attitudes, or ideas that they have and may communicate to others. Thus, employee behaviour may be adjusted to achieve management goals by modifying their underlying common views. According to modernists, there is a positive relationship between organisational success and the robustness of corporate culture (Hatch, 2019). Modernists have a strong organisational culture that is focused on getting individuals to conform. Corporate culture, according to modernists, may impact organisational performance. Modernist companies foster a culture in which everyone works toward the same objective. According to modernists, external variables may either assist organisations increase performance after they adapt to the new transition or lower effectiveness once they are unable to keep up with the shift. Modernists believe that employees must have structure in order to achieve the organization's aims (King and Carberry, 2020). Modernists place a premium on the authority of the leader and knowing the culture of the business in order to optimise organisational efficiency and effectiveness (Kanter, 2019).

3.4.2 Symbolic Interpretive Perspective

Symbolic interpretative organisations investigate experiences such as intuition and emotion, which are beyond the grasp of the five senses (Kanter, 2019). Because symbolic interpretative discoveries cannot be readily repeated by others, modernists dismiss symbolic interpretive conclusions.

Capper (2018), states that the symbolic interpretative viewpoint is concerned with meaning and comprehension, and the findings should not be generalised further than the environment in which they were generated. Workers will begin to comprehend themselves, according to symbolic interpretive organisations, if they grasp culture and the cultural meaning of actions, verbal communication, non-verbal communication, symbols, and objects (Hatch, 2019).

The symbolic interpretative viewpoint defines reality as what is felt through having emotions and feelings about what transpired. This information may help organisations connect with various cultures inside and outside of companies more successfully (Lundberg 2008). The symbolic interpretative approach outlines organisational structure and how employees may contribute to meaningful work by rebuilding structure via observation and engagement. Symbolic interpretation explains the reason why work is created in a certain manner by having solid routines in work via knowledge as well as social interactions to achieve organisational objectives (Hatch., 2019).

Symbolic interpretative groups perceive themselves as a community. Unlike a modernist organisation, the symbolic interpretative organisation does not rely on testing and experimenting to get concrete facts. In contrast to the modernist organisation, which performs well in a supportive environment but is less effective in an unstable environment owing to a lack of flexibility, the symbolic interpretative organisation is adaptable and responds well to an unstable external environment. Member traits are important symbols whose significance stems from a socially built process (Hatch, 2019). Member qualities influence both individual group member’s conduct and the collective behaviour of the group. The personality as well as communication features of the group may be influenced by the makeup of its members.

3.4.3 Postmodern Perspective

Postmodernism differs from the other two viewpoints in its refusal to seek Truth or make lasting ontological or epistemological claims, like those which give birth to modernist fields of scientific effort or figurative representations of interpretation or human meaning-producing activity. Postmodernists seem to vacillate between philosophical viewpoints when seen from these different angles.

They frequently hesitate to accept even a provisional philosophical posture because they feel that doing so favours some types of knowledge over others, which contradicts postmodern ethics. Hatch (2019) asserts that while modernist philosophers used scepticism to support knowledge assertions, postmodernists exposed and attacked unquestioned assumptions inside the modernist method, rejecting ambitions to objectivity or certainty in understanding and reason.

Post-modernism, like organisational symbolism, is related to the incorporation of disciplines like languages, psychology, anthropology, literary theory, as well as history into organisational culture studies. The impact of Foucault (1972) is that he highlighted the knowledge that words such as "organisation" and "culture" relate to linguistic constructions rather than reality (Kanter, 2019).

Organisational culture studies are still part of the same 'discursive formation' (Haveman and Wetts, 2019). White and Foucault were two of the most significant historical inspirations on postmodernism (Valeri, 2021). White is connected to a postmodernist stream that is influenced by a programmatic, though sarcastic, dedication to the return to story as one of its enabling presuppositions (Capper, 2018). Postmodernism has moved the focus away from archive research as the historian's skill, toward the rules and practises of writing as the historian's craft (Hatch, 2019). However, this means assuming that organisations are entities that use every available part of their expertise to strengthen dominance. Because there is no definite definition of a term or notion that can be completely validated, the connection between concepts is continually shifting. Essentially, these ideas are based on critically assessing the assumptions of key theories that aim to establish the whole of human experience. Through 'social development' and 'rationalisation,' post-modernism aims to refute the concept that history repeats itself in a coherent form of logic (Kanter, 2019).

The three viewpoints may be compared and contrasted by using the organisational structure which consists of the social and physical frameworks. The social structure of an organisation is described as the connection and interaction of individuals inside each department, while the physical structure refers to the architecture or geographical design of the company. Max Webber created the notion of social structure.

A systematic study of bureaucracy is a term used by contemporary theorists to describe the process of generating the division of tasks, hierarchy of power, and corporate rules and procedures (Valeri, 2021). From a modernist standpoint, structure distinguishes itself by having a flat or tall organisational structure. Tall organisational structures have numerous vertical hierarchy levels from top to bottom with less subdivisions, while flat organisational structures have more divisions but fewer hierarchical levels (Valeri, 2021).

Modernists believe that there is a significant association between social structure and performance, roles, and human behaviour. They concentrate on regulations to ensure that job performance is carried out successfully and effectively.

3.5 Systems theory

Von Bertalanffy (1972) a biologist, delivered his systems theory at a philosophy class at the University of Chicago in the 1930s. Von Bertalanffy pioneered the study of systems theory in the biological sciences, which evolved into the contemporary area of ecology. Ecology, as we know it now, is the study of natural systems. Von Bertalanffy (1972), argued that nothing could be grasped by focusing on only one aspect of a complex system. Bertalanffy (1972) explains his motivation for developing systems theory in his book "General Systems Theory: Essays on Its Foundation and Development", thus:

a. There is a broad trend toward integration in the scientific and social sciences.
b. This integration seems to be based on a comprehensive theory of systems.
c. Such theory might be a useful tool for achieving precise theory in nonphysical disciplines of study.
d. By developing unifying principles that flow "vertically" across the universes of the separate disciplines, this theory takes us closer to the objective of scientific unification.
e. This has the potential to lead to much-needed convergence in scientific education, Von Bertalanffy (1972).

According to Hammond (2019), socio-technical systems theory is concerned with the social elements of people as well as the technical aspects of machines and related technologies.

The term “socio-technical” refers to how an organization's social and technological issues are intertwined. The philosophy is based on collaborative optimization, with a shared focus on achieving excellence in technical performance while also improving the quality of people's lives (Sibanda & Iwu, 2021). The socio-technical theory has found fulfilment in the health sector, where all subsystems must work together to improve the health of all residents in any given nation (Sibanda & Iwu, 2021).

In accordance with the socio-technical framework, organizations are understood as a synthesis of social systems, consisting of individuals, teams, and organizational culture, and technical systems, encompassing tools, machines, and processes. This approach posits that alterations in either the social or technical realm will invariably exert an impact on the alternate domain. To attain utmost efficiency and soundness, it is imperative to give heed to the dynamic relationship between both entities.

The socio-technical approach acknowledges that organizational success cannot be solely reliant on technology, but also on social factors. The significance of comprehending and managing the social dynamics and human factors that impact the utilization and incorporation of technology in organizational settings is emphasized.

Von Bertalanffy (2008) established the theory of general systems and clearly acknowledged the significance of interactions between components in the production of biological complexity. Von Bertalanffy (2008) also recognised the properties of systems which have historically been addressed in the physics as well as the chemistry of organisms. He further acknowledged the research of living systems as being open to change via the interchange of energy and matter in systems, as well as in their surroundings. While von Bertalanffy (2008) depicted the system via the lens of scientific behaviour, the system stays focused on a specific discipline and the scientific premise of a mechanistic vision. Systems theory explains a subset of reality and a scientific discipline's perspective, encompassing the holism of cognition, decision-making, and action for the preservation of man or society via success in all human activities. As a result, the contributions of civic responsibility or human activities may assist in resolving today's issue and maintaining an organization's systems on a regular basis.

This is to say, if organisations recognised the systematic linkages that exist with internal and external environments, socio-economic development could be achieved by business working alongside society. Hence the role of stakeholder management as intended by this study.

Systems theory emergence in early years was also associated with biology in response to a demand for a set of systematically theoretical structures to describe the empirical reality (von Bertalanffy, 1972). In the sense that it tries to create a framework or structure of systems from which to hang the meat and blood of individual disciplines and particular subjects in an organised and cohesive body of knowledge, general systems theory is the skeleton of science (Burden, 2018). Another source of systems theory is mechanical engineering's cybernetic systems theory (Keevy, 2019). The word cybernetics relates to machine control and communication (Sibanda and Iwu, 2021). The notions of cybernetic systems theory, like those of general systems theory, have been proven beneficial in describing the behaviour of social systems derived from machine systems. Cybernetic systems, in particular, depend on various feedback or control techniques to assist the system keep a constant state. For instance, if a business's marketing plan fails to boost sales, customer and market feedback will compel the organisation to adapt its approach in order to remain and retain its intended aim of maintaining sales performance. Changes in the environment will therefore drive the system to adapt and change in order to preserve this state of equilibrium.

Structural functionalism is the third source of systems theory in organisational communication study (Burden, 2018). It focuses on the roles that system components perform when the system reacts to environmental demands. The four functions or actions, which include adaptation, goal achievement, pattern maintenance, as well as integration, are required to keep a system alive and functional, as well as to achieve the system's aim of finding equilibrium. Specifically, adaptation entails system components openly exchanging resources with the environment to sustain system growth. Goal attainment is concerned with the utilisation of resources to achieve objectives in relation to related systems in the surroundings. Pattern maintenance as well as integration are concerned with the creation and maintenance of a system's symbolic frames of reference, as well as the utilisation of resources for collaboration.

The ideas and components of systems theory are intended to be relevant to creatures and human behaviours in several fields due to the convergence of roots from numerous fields viz engineering, mathematics, biology, physics, and economics. As a result, systems theory may be seen as a macro-level theory that can be utilised to comprehend biological, physical, and social systems (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). By the 1970s, organisational scholars were actively embracing systems theory, owing partially to the recognition that classical models were insufficient for accounting for complex organisational behaviour.

Systems theory gained popularity during this period, particularly via a series of landmark publications directly related to corporate communication (Sibanda & Iwu, 2021). In contrast to conventional models that stress interaction minimization and autocracy, systems theory is founded on the foundations of interaction maximisation and democratic governance (Valentinov & Hadju, 2019).

Furthermore, the growing recognition of the complex and frequently changing character of organisational contexts drove the development of systems theory (Keevy, 2019). Systems theory, which differs from the machine metaphor, provides an alternate perspective for perceiving organisations as creatures (Burden, 2018). Not unexpectedly, systems theory was the cornerstone of significant theoretical development during the period, including the popular open systems approach (Burden, 2018). Because of the abstractness of systems theory, the contingency view was later postulated, emphasising the specific relationships within and among organisational subsystems as well as its connections with the environment in an attempt to comprehend how organisations operate and adapt in response to environmental conditions (Valentinov & Hadju, 2019).

Despite the dominance of interpretive-critical scholarship in the 1980s and 1990s, systemic thought was mirrored in organisational communication research through Weick's (1979), model of organising, which will be discussed further, later in this study. Furthermore, structural functionalism's emphasis on function fulfilments of system components aided the dominance of quantitative network analysis in the study of organisational systems (Valentinov & Hadju, 2019).

Hammond (2019), in response to the emergence of new systems theories such as chaos theory and complex adaptive systems theory, urged a return to systems techniques to examine organisational phenomena, particularly those that were apparently of interest to interpretive-critical research. Indeed, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, researchers, notably interpretative and critical scholars, used systems ideas to explore organisational communication subjects such as organisational transformation. In summary, systems theory is a conceptual framework of organisational ideas that has evolved into an essential basis of organisational study during the last 60 years. Systems theory has become "part of the DNA of organisational communication research" due to its ability to explain complex organisational behaviour while taking agency into account (Keevy, 2019).

The principle underlying Bertalanffy's systems theory is that nothing can be described by isolating a component of a system. His scientific reductionism mind pattern could not adequately describe a full system since it broke everything down into bits rather than analysing things (Keevy, 2019). The system as well as its holistic qualities have to be investigated to uncover the source of the issue in order to fully explain and obtain a deeper grasp of anything. When a system fails to adapt to changes and input from its components, it will eventually collapse and break apart. A great system will pursue homeostasis and equilibrium by interacting with its surroundings. A system interacts with its surroundings through feedback loops which instruct the system about how or what to alter in order to preserve system homeostasis. Exploring a system's function as well as its components may frequently provide knowledge as to why a system may fail.

An organisation is a composition of different constituent parts that are interdependent and interrelated. The parts all contribute to the success and continuity of the organisation as a whole; hence are vital to the organisation. The systems theory uses the general view of the whole organisation and considers its operations as a unitary structure. In an organisation composed of different departments that are referred to as sub-systems, general management applies the system theory to ensure that the overall organisation runs as a single uniform unit.

The systems approach considers both the long and short-term objectives of the organisation because of its overall continuity goal. Management focuses on the present success while planning for the organisation's future. This planning involves evaluation of both external and internal factors that either have negative or positive impacts. Structurally, the theory divides the organisation into smaller units based on features like departmental differences. These units are hierarchically arranged into sub-systems that, when brought together, form the organisation (Makadok & Coff, 2009:302).

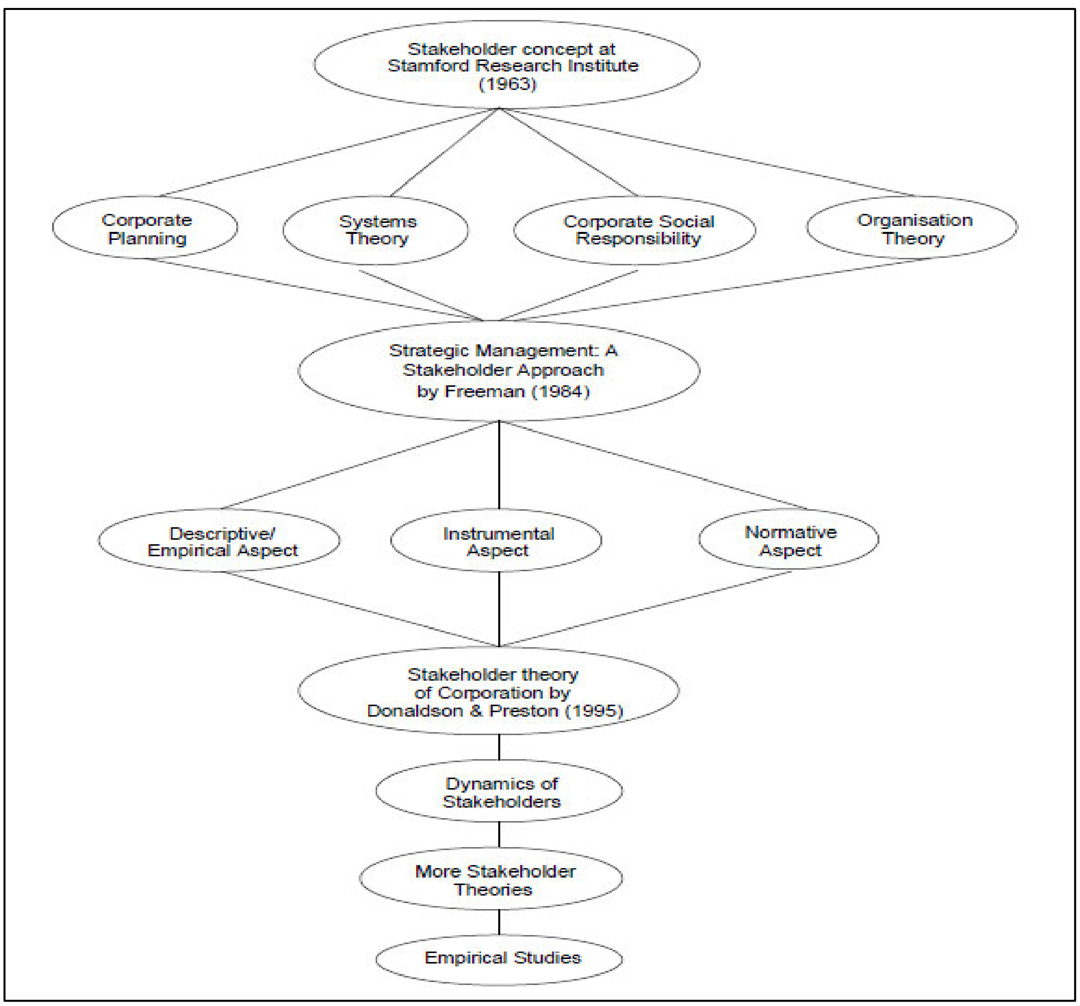
The System theory has distinct features that separate it from other theories. One of such features is the mode of study that involves studying the sub-systems as interrelated rather than isolating and analysing them separately. Through this, the element of the interdependence of the sub-systems is portrayed (Ceric, 2015:19). Production of unified results as an organisation involves arranging the sub-systems in an interrelated manner. The theory consists of the usage of the defined framework under which the internal and external boundaries are set. The limitations help in unifying the organisation, making it operate as a single unit. A series of the transformation process is involved for the information material and energy to be shared from and besides other systems, a system, therefore, does not exist in isolation (Chikere & Nwoka, 2015:6).

Systems are tuned to spot environmental changes and respond to them quickly. The changes are aimed at improving the whole system rather than considering the individual sub-system. The approach considers both general and specialised systems whereby the general approach deals with the formal organisation while specialised is concerned with analysis design, composition and planning of an organisation. These features distinguish the system approach theory from other approaches. The system approach can act as an essential tool in studying an organisation regardless of the complexity and bringing out the interdependence and interrelationship in functions like giving direction, control, planning and the processes of the organisation. The proximity indeed provides the approach with a preferential edge. However, some of the following aspects are limiting factors to the approach. The theory has no influence on the actual operations of most organisations as it is looked at merely as a theory with no practical strategies/applications. Through the system approach, the emphasis is based on the relationship within the whole organisation with few definitions of interdependence among the sub-systems (Horodecki & Oppenheim, 2013:5). There is also very little consideration of the internal and external environments and their relationships with the organisation and these limitations hinder the application of the approach in many organisations (Horodecki & Oppenheim, 2013).

3.6 Relationship between these theories and stakeholder theories, and relevance to business performance

Management consists of behavioural areas like organisational behaviour, organisation theory, system theory, and human resource management (Kaehler & Grundei, 2019). Managers must seek corporation and harmony across all these systems. All three arms of stakeholder theory: descriptive, instrumental, and normative, are interrelated and have intrinsic values for managers.

Figure 0.1 History of Stakeholder Theory: Literature Map



Source: Elias et al. (2002)

Stakeholder theory provides for the inclusion of the requirements and needs of each stakeholder in order to build a positive reputation, increase customer loyalty, attract and retain top talent, secure stable supply chains, and achieve regulatory compliance, all of which can contribute to increased profitability. Scientific management theory which is an aspect of organisational theory, provides automation and standardisation at the operations level (Taylor, 1903). When related to stakeholder theory, it is realised that through applying stakeholder theory to the management of an organisation, the management will view automation and standardisation as ways of improving the work condition and techniques of employees. In return, the probability of the organisation's success is greatly increased.

Employing stakeholder theory ensures that the employees work in an appropriate environment that has no negative effects on their emotions or health (Paramboor et al.,2016). People who work in conducive conditions with the right technology are more productive than those who strive in desperate conditions with poor technology. Consequently, stakeholder theory ensures that organisations balance their own needs and values with the diverse and often conflicting needs of their different stakeholders.

Whereas system theory provides that all these stakeholders must work together to promote the unitary larger system, stakeholder theory dictates that in cases where the stakeholder interests clash with each other, it is the role of managers to determine the best consensus that satisfies the larger shareholder group. When a manager does this, they have to coerce the other stakeholders who such decisions can impact, to accept the decisions for the betterment of the organisation, just as in systems theory. Stakeholder theory engages all stakeholders who put some value at risk to collaborate to achieve a shared objective (Jeffery, 2009).

Bonnafous-Boucher and Rendtorff (2016) opine that with stakeholder theory, an organisation would turn its attention to the "notions of interest and ensure the management of more or less stable relation both within and outside the organisation." Organisation theory focuses mainly on the organisation.

But, when stakeholder theory is incorporated as a management strategy, the organisation opens up and looks at both internal and external factors that affect and are infected by the business and the business begins to appreciate its internal and external environment.

Systems theory assumes that an organisation is a unitary whole with several sub-systems that are related and interconnected. It also organises these units in a hierarchical structure where decision making is for the prosperity of the unitary system rather than the sub-system. Since the success of the unitary system depends on that of the sub-systems, organisational theory provides that management must consider the needs of each department because these departments affect and are affected by the decisions of the unitary organisation. Shareholder theory provides that stakeholders have differences, and so are the departments of the organisation.

Mishra and Mishra (2013:256) comment that shareholder relations lead to new ideas about how a business can survive and flourish in any environment. It is vital for a for-profit organisation to pay close attention to how stakeholders perceive it (Matulevičienė & Stravinskienė, 2016). Paying close attention to how stakeholders feel about the organisation is vital for fostering authentic relations and earning the trust of stakeholders by being trustworthy in all activities.

The chapter has reflected on how those for-profit based organisations that work as systems could effectively integrate the concepts of stakeholder theory into their management and sustainability strategy and become trustworthy and an ethically recognised corporate citizen, thus maintaining its stakeholder's trust. Administrative theory, one of the organisational theories, relates to systems theory in that both consider the accomplishments of each department and their impact on the entire system.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an in-depth explanation of the management theories and their sub-theories. The first section explicitly discussed the organisation theory as a management strategy, and the second part discussed the organisation theory and its sub-theories. Systems theory is discussed in part three, showing the unitary nature of organisations that employ this theory of management.

The fourth section as discussed, has shown that all these theories are related to stakeholder theory since stakeholder theory is concerned with the needs of all stakeholders. Also, it has been shown that the relationship is beneficial since it ensures strategic management. In summary, stakeholder theory encompasses all the other theories.

From the literature reviewed in this section, it was discussed that the field of organizational theory entails the examination of the functioning of organizations and the crafting and administration of strategies to facilitate their goal achievement. This statement denotes that the field of study under consideration involves an extensive array of disciplines, notably sociology, psychology, economics, and management. Its primary aim is to elucidate discourse pertaining to the behaviour of both individuals and groups within the broader context of organizations, thereby comprehending the organizational structure and design in its entirety.

The organization theory, a large and multidisciplinary body of scholarly work that focuses on understanding organizations forms the basis for the establishment of management principles and guidelines, thereby enabling organizations to effectively assess their internal capabilities and limitations, while also identifying the potential opportunities and challenges presented by their external surroundings. The utilization of organizational theory provides organizations with the opportunity to enhance their decision-making capabilities, bolster their operational efficiency, and effectively attain their strategic objectives.

The Symbolic Interpretive Perspective presented in this section posits that apprehending the symbolic and cultural dimensions of organizations is indispensable for comprehending their operational mechanisms and for efficaciously administering them. The present conceptual framework emphasizes the significance of communication, leadership skills, and organizational culture in moulding the behaviour of firms. Furthermore, it underscores the role of organizational members in shaping and construing organizational significance.

Organizations can enhance their comprehension of how cultural and symbolic factors have an impact on their behaviour and decision-making by utilizing the Symbolic Interpretive Perspective. Accordingly, they are capable of devising appropriate plans that foster improved organizational performance and realization of goals.

This chapter concludes by introducing the systems theory viewpoint that organizations should be seen as a whole rather than as a collection of discrete, independent elements. It emphasizes the significance of taking into account the connections and interactions among various organizational components, such as between departments, workers, and the overall organizational environment.

Chapter Four
Research design and methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological approach used to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions. The sections covered in this chapter include research paradigms, methods, design, data collection methods, sampling, and study limitations. Substantial attention is given to the sequential model design as it explicitly gives details of how and why this method was chosen, and its relevance to this study. While this section does not intend discussing the methodology literature, it does refer to literature in order to rationalise the research methodology chosen and its correlation to the study objectives.

4.2 Aim of the Study

The current study intends to investigate the contribution of stakeholder management to business performance and stability at Mondi. The research will explore Mondi's existing stakeholder management processes and how they are incorporated into the company's overall approach. Furthermore, the level of social stakeholders' impact on Mondi's corporate decisions will be evaluated, including the way these relate to shareholder value creation. The study intends to investigate the pros and cons of stakeholder management (or lack thereof) in relation to social stakeholders for Mondi. It would also look at the collaborative stakeholder model that may be created to help Mondi define and improve relationships with social stakeholders.

4.3 Main Research Question

How could the stakeholder management contribute to the business performance and stability at Mondi?

4.3.1 Specific Research questions

- What are the current stakeholder management practices at Mondi, and how are these practices integrated into the business strategy?
- To what extent do social stakeholders have an influence in Mondi’s business decisions and how does this translate to shareholder value creation?
- What are the benefits or consequences of stakeholder management (or lack of) in relation to social stakeholders for Mondi?

- Which critical factors guide stakeholder management practice for successful implementation?

4.4 Research Philosophy

The development of the assumption of research, its concepts, and its meaning is referred to as research philosophy (Saunders et al.,2009). This research is driven by the pragmatism theory, which equates the relevance of ideas to their opportunity and ability to advance relevant activities or pursuits (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008).

Pragmatism in this study context, aims to strike a balance between facts and viewpoints, also between specialised and comprehensive experience, as well as different contextualization contexts. Pragmatists conclude that studies on both empirical, observable phenomena and subjective interpretations based on the study's research problems, may produce valuable information (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Pragmatism focuses on the practical, applied science in which multiple perspectives on a study and the respective research issue are useful in solving problems. It defines research as a mechanism in which principles and meanings (theory) are assertions of our previous actions and behaviours, as well as our interactions with our environment (Saunders et al., 2015). The problem statement and study priorities are inferred to be the most relevant indicators for the research design and strategy in pragmatist research (Elkjaer & Simpson, 2011).

Pragmatists acknowledge the presence of different ways of looking at the universe and doing analysis, believing that a particular opinion will never be adequate to study all perspectives while acknowledging the existence of various facts. This is not to say that pragmatists employ a variety of techniques. Rather, they employ methodologies that enable the gathering of precise, well-founded, highly credible, and substantive data that advances research (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008).

Table 4.1 below attempts to summarise the characteristics of pragmatism.

Table 0.1 Pragmatism world view

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRAGMATISM	
1.	Recognizes the existence and importance of the natural or physical world as well as the emergent social and psychological world including, language, culture, human institutions, and subjective thoughts.
2.	Views current truth, meaning, and knowledge as tentative and changing over time. Therefore, data obtained on a daily basis in research should be viewed as provisional truths.
3.	Offers a “pragmatic method” for solving traditional philosophical dualisms as well as for making methodological choices.
4.	Prefers action to philosophizing (pragmatism is, in a sense, anti-philosophy)
5.	Endorses practical theory. Different approaches can be complimentary
6.	Places a high regard on the reality ~~of~~ and influence of the inner world of human experience on actions.
7.	Knowledge is viewed as both constructed and based on the reality of the world we experience and live in

Source: Adapted from Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004).

A major tenet of pragmatist epistemology is the fact that understanding is often founded on perception. The individuals' societal communications influence their perceptions regarding their environment. Every individual possesses a distinct awareness since it is shaped by their individual experiences. Nonetheless, since it is derived from historically shared experiences, all this information is collectively shared. As a result, all intelligence is based on social interactions (Morgan 2014). Awareness, according to pragmatist epistemology, is built with the aim of better managing one's life and participating in the universe (Goldkuhl 2012). Biesta (2010:97), states that, “Pragmatism should not be understood as a philosophical position among others, but rather as a set of philosophical tools that can be used to address problems”. Pragmatism was applied to this mixed methods research, as it prioritizes the integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods to address research questions, aiming to capitalize on the strengths of each approach while mitigating their limitations. In addition, pragmatism advocates for using multiple methods to triangulate data and findings. By combining qualitative and quantitative data, this research can strengthen the validity and reliability of its results, enhancing the overall rigor of the study.

4.5 Research Approach

From broad declarations to knowledge collection, interpretation, and topic particulars, the research strategy requires arrangements and strategies to carry out the research process (Saunders et al., 2015). The characteristics of the analysis methodology, which is abductive, have a significant impact on the study's goal. Instead of moving from hypothesis to evidence or evidence to theory as in inference and reasoning, the abductive method goes backwards and forwards to apply deductive and inductive reasoning (Mantere & Ketokivi, 2013). Abductive reasoning is derived from evidence that is both old and new and is kept up to date as far as possible.

Considering the ability in both qualitative and quantitative methods, the present research takes an Abductive method, which combines inference and induction of some justifications. Deduction establishes the claim's basis, while inference forms consensus on one or more stages of the reasoning. Deductive and inductive reasoning are intertwined; deductive is used to create assumptions and show that there is a causal link stakeholder management practice and performance of the organisation, while inductive is used to establish conclusions and show that there is a causal relationship in these variables. Induction and deduction are also used to make inferences on cause-and-effect relationships (Huber & Snider, 2006). Johnson et al. (2007) appeared to have a unique perspective on how the two approaches could complement each-other at different stages of the research process.

4.5.1 Quantitative approach

Studies use the quantitative research approach to collect and analyse numerical data. This information develops patterns and averages and tests causal relationships among research variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Results from quantitative research approaches are generalizable to the general population more accurately than qualitative information, which is prone to biasness and individual opinion. Qualitative research methods apply for correlational, descriptive, and experimental research in which the study must develop operational definitions (Siedlecki, 2020). The descriptions convert abstract concepts into quantifiable measures.

Quantitative research is a critical component of every field. Numerical values can provide a factual basis for decision-making in stakeholder management and governance (With stakeholder management finding its popularity in the business management field, quantitative studies in this filed could help with conversations on issues affecting stakeholders using empirical data. Quantitative data, both financial and non-financial is indeed central to any business for planning, projections and management since it has its basis in science-proven efficiency.

Quantitative research is the basis for standardizing the other form of data and helping to generalize the results accurately. The accuracy of the data is easy to prove through replication of the study through existing protocols and previous study definitions of concepts. Moreover, the data from one setting can be reproduced and compared with similar data in other locations of different cultures, times, and participants. The relation to other studies is more direct, making comparison easier. Furthermore, using a quantitative approach allows the investigation to take up data from a large sample consistently and so, test research hypotheses accurately. It is more convenient to handle quantitative data without having to do any extra assignment of speculating which source of data to consider or not. Relying solely on quantitative data means that many insights into the research variables are out of consideration. Apart from these, the approach also implies that sometimes data must come from out-of-context setups, for example, laboratories.

4.5.2 Qualitative approach

Qualitative research is exploratory and seeks to answer the “why” and “how” questions of the study phenomenon (Ward, Comer, & Stone 2018). The approach involves the collection of textual data and minimal numerical quotations. Such information may be from interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and publications (Gephart, 2018:33-53). In social sciences, scholars have adopted interpretive sociology to understand the meanings people make of the world and their experiences. The qualitative approach helps to unveil the various insights behind stakeholder management practices.

Studies have used a qualitative approach to address stakeholder concepts in social and scientific setups (Pólvora et al. 2020). The process has covered multiple factors of studies concurrently and brought up ideas previous studies have overlooked.

In collecting primary data, the researcher can hear out respondents' new insights with an open mind. Though it could incorporate significant numerical facts, the answer to the general aim is skewed towards a qualitative solution. Furthermore, the study problem is complex, and a broad view is key to capturing every aspect that contributes towards such practices and is probably absent in publications, specific to the sample or unknown to the researcher.

Future studies have the opportunity to take up an approach that already exists in the field of the study area. This is because the company, alongside the researcher, can use a qualitative approach to learn such aspects as changes in attitudes within a given stakeholder management category. Similarly, researchers can apply the concept to understand stakeholder management practices and get insights that numbers alone may not reveal. "The approach is worth it because it allows for flexibility, and the researcher can be more speculative in their choice of investigation areas" (Miller, Chan & Farmer, 2018:240). It is also possible to narrow down the approach to concentrate on a specific sample group to speed up data collection and lower data collection costs.

Literature in this field acknowledges that the qualitative approach has multiple setbacks (Migdal & Leggett 2018). For an example, in selecting a sample, biasness may occur where specific anticipated outcomes are more favoured, or the company may demand staff to volunteer their views. Whether this occurs consciously or unconsciously, the consequence is unreliable data. Similarly, the data which respondents provide depends on the questions, so any concepts not included in the question will escape the researcher's attention. Furthermore, it is difficult for sampling in qualitative research to offer a true reflection of the views of the target population (Adams & Park, 2018).

4.5.3 Mixed Methods

This study adopted a mixed methods research strategy in line with the pragmatic worldview. There seems to be consensus within the field of mixed methods research that pragmatism is the rationale informing the mixed methods approach (Biesta, 2010, Creswell, 2009, Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Without using any philosophical assumption, the choice of a mixed approach is driven by the research questions this study seeks to answer.

For this study, the nature and scale od stakeholder management practice and its influence on business could be better understood using a mixed methods research strategy. However, more important is the opportunity this method presents in enabling the framing of such research questions (Biesta, 2010).

Johnson et al. (2007) described mixed methods analysis as a study in which components of qualitative and quantitative research techniques are merged by a researcher for different purposes of comprehension and substantiation scope and complexity. The primary justification for using the mixed analysis methods in this research would be to have an adequate view of the problems being investigated, as stated in Sekaran and Bougie, (2016). As a result, this research gathered and evaluated both objective (quantitative) and qualitative data, blended the collected data in a variety of ways, and analysed the results from both qualitative and quantitative analysis based on their suitability and ability to address the questions under consideration.

According to Creswell's (2013) definition, mixed method research refers to a delimited framework that encompasses research designs comprising of a minimum of one quantitative and one qualitative approach. Creswell et al. (2003:212) in earlier publication defined mixed methods research as “the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which data are collected concurrently or sequentially, are given priority and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages in the process of the research”. The utilization of quantitative data facilitated the identification of distinct correlations between variables, as well as disparities, thus enabling the researcher to undertake triangulation and assess the integrity of the qualitative data collection.

The Johnson and Owuegbuzie (2004) mixed methods research process models comprise of eight distinct steps which were adopted and followed for this research: (1) determine the research question; (2) determine whether a mixed design is appropriate; (3) select the mixed method or mixed-model research design; (4) collect the data; (5) analyse the data; (6) interpret the data; (7) legitimize the data; and (8) draw conclusions (if warranted) and write the final report.

Johnson and Owuegbuzie (2004) assert that even though mixed research starts with a purpose and research questions, the rest of the steps can vary in order, as they are not necessarily linear or unidirectional. In addition, the questions and/or purpose could be revised when necessary.

Using the mixed method of research helps the researcher to answer a broader and more detailed range of research questions because the researcher is not constrained by the requirements of a particular type of analysis (Saunders et al., 2009,2019). In addition, using both methods in a complementary way, will strengthen the research outcomes through intentionally integrating or combining these methods to draw on the strengths of each. Some limitations of using this approach in a single study, are that it can be difficult for a single researcher to handle due to its reciprocity (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2018). Furthermore, due to its duplicity in materials, mixed method analysis could be more costly and time intensive than any other method of research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Finally, since it is a hybrid of two distinct testing approaches, many academics and methodologists are yet to thoroughly resolve issues such as understanding contradictory findings, quantitative evidence, and paradigm mixing.

In a mixed approach, the researcher should use complementary methods with no overlapping weaknesses (Taylor et al. 2018). In a single study therefore, the researcher collects and analyses data and makes conclusions using qualitative and quantitative approaches. Previous studies have found the two methods to be insufficient independently. This is because quantitative data has advantages, but it misses some aspects only qualitative approaches can account for in a study. For example, stakeholder management is a complex subject in that the variables are interconnected, and the study cannot solely express these in numerical values. Or else, the analysis misses on providing holistic data for the research problem.

Mixed methods have found application in such topics as stakeholders' perspectives evaluation and significantly convincing results for the recipients (Hendren et al. 2022). The approach is helpful in social sciences, including management, which studies tend to assume, are qualitative.

However, numerical records have their reasons and factors that drive the example. The numbers of stakeholder management practices widely in place in the forestry division have specific driving forces. It is necessary that even when making decisions and policies, stakeholders have all the variables in mind. Such variables are only available in a single study, through a mixed approach.

A mixed approach is ideal for studies to validate data from the separate paths, analyse the research questions from different perspectives, and bring out unexpected findings (Hendren et al.,2018). It is possible to build a theory using this method and approach with qualitative and quantitative methods providing the basis for theory testing. Thus, there is room for creativity in research. The design allows a comprehensive understanding of the research problem using tools specific to the research context.

The data from this type of research is diverse, complete, and holistic, addressing the inadequacies of the different methods. There are significant benefits of using the mixed methods in this research as a solution to some of the weaknesses of the individual approaches. However, the approach has tossed up some challenges this study had to overcome to remain efficient in addressing the study problem. The design is complex and, therefore, time and resource-intensive from planning to implementation. The resolution of variations in interpretation demands the solution and application of the results of one method to the design of the other. And that is challenging.

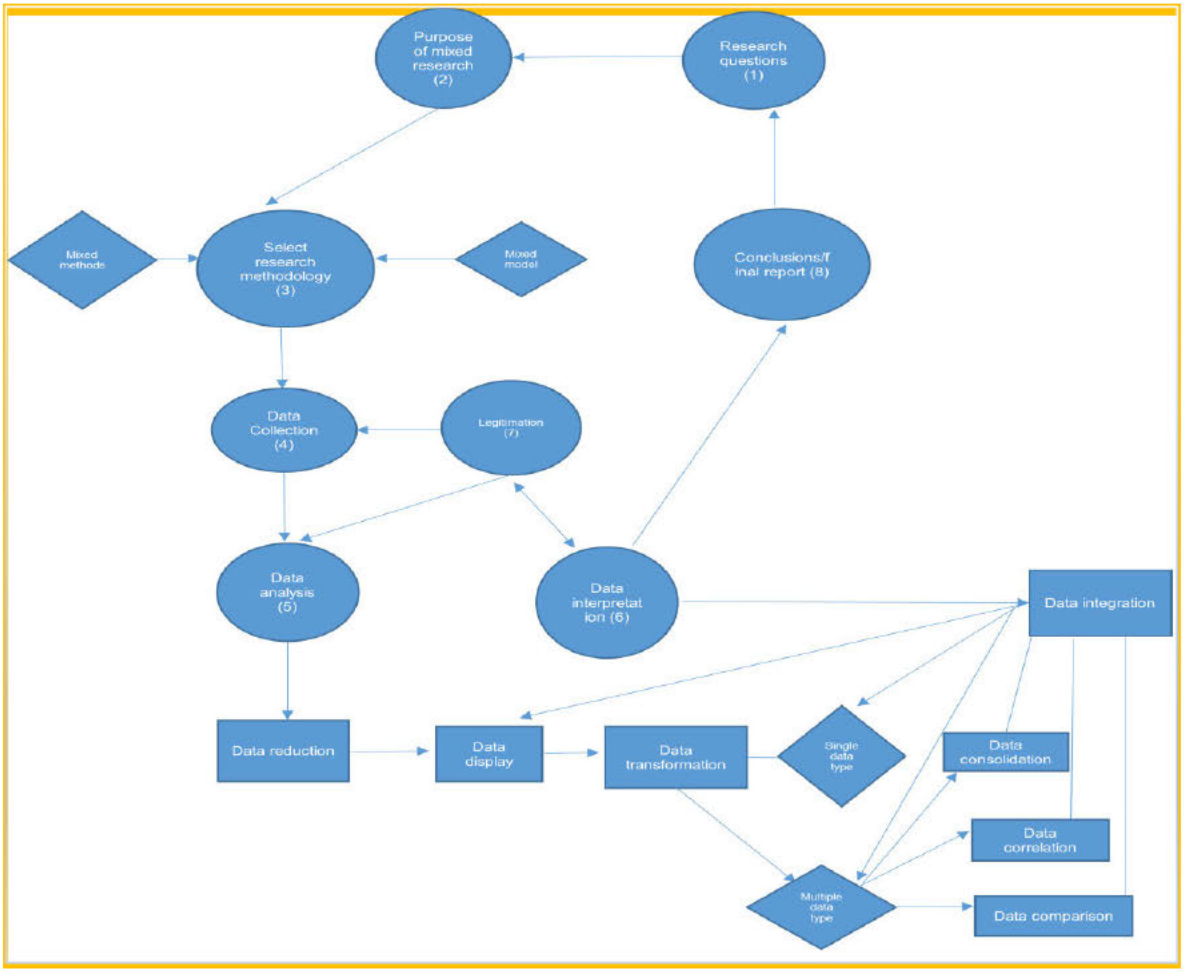
The researcher has to synchronize the approaches since this study intended to adopt the sequential exploratory method of mixed research. The use of mixed methods in a sequential or concurrent manner allows one phase of data collection in this study (qualitative and quantitative) to be conducted before the other, while in concurrent designs, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously.

Mixed research methods provide a comprehensive view of the study problem (Hendren, Luo, & Pandey, 2018), which is unlikely to be found in separate qualitative and quantitative methods. Furthermore, the approach allows one to develop research instruments that are specific to the research context. This is unlike having scanty data from a single method emanating from unreliable data collection tools.

Through the mixed approach, it is also possible to use the variety of data to develop theories from the research problem. A mixed approach is ideal for studies to validate data from the separate paths, analyse the research questions from different perspectives, and bring out unexpected findings (Hendren, Luo, & Pandey, 2018:904-916). It is possible to build a theory from this method, with qualitative and quantitative research providing the basis for theory testing. Thus, there is room for creativity in research. The design allows a comprehensive understanding of the research problem using tools specific to the research context. The data from this type of research is diverse, complete, and holistic, addressing the inadequacies of the different component methods. There are significant benefits to using the mixed methods in this research as it offsets the setbacks of the individual approaches.

On the other hand, the mixed method can be complex (Taylor et al., 2018). This is because the planning of one method relies on the results of the other whose application and planning may be difficult. The implication is that the method requires significantly more resources compared to other research methods. The research process involves planning each level of the study and ensuring they all work in synchrony. Moreover, there is the possibility of discrepancies in the results interpretation, the resolution of which could be difficult.

Figure 0.1 Mixed research process model



Source: Johnson and Owuegbuzie (2004:23)

Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) identified three ways in which data could be successfully blended to achieve results: connecting, integrating, and embedding. Connecting would refer to the mixture of quantitative and qualitative data connected by data analysis in the first phase of the research and data collection in the second phase of the research.

Integrating on the other hand, is when a researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and integrates or merges the two databases through transforming qualitative themes and comparing these descriptive quantitative data. Embedding would involve mixing both data sets where collected data (e.g., quantitative) is used to support the other form (qualitative).

In this study, collection of quantitative data was the first stage leading to the identification of participants for the qualitative set and testing the main research hypotheses on stakeholder management integration. However, the data collection could not occur concurrently but in a sequential form, where the quantitative element was the initial process.

Morse's (2003) contribution to the mixed methods research process was the development of notations, "+" to denote 'concurrent/simultaneous design', and an arrow "→" to denote a "sequence design". Depending on the weight of each method used, the prioritized set would be in capital letters (e.g., QUAN, QUAL). Johnson and Owuegbuzie (2004) formulated the following four groups as per Table 4.2 below, resulting in nine types of mixed methods designs:

4.5.4 Sequential Explanatory Mixed Method

Table 0.2 Mixed-method design matrix.

		Time order decisions	
		Concurrent	**Sequential**
Paradigm emphasis decision	**Equal Status**	QUAL + QUAN	QUAL → QUAN QUAN → QUAL
	Dominant Status	QUAL + quan QUAN + qual	QUAL → quan qual → QUAN QUAN → qual quan → QUAL

Source: Adapted from Johnson and Owuegbuzie (2004:22).

There are two stages to the sequential mixed-methods explanatory design: quantitative and qualitative (Creswell et al. 2003). In this design, a researcher collects and analyses quantitative (numerical) data first.

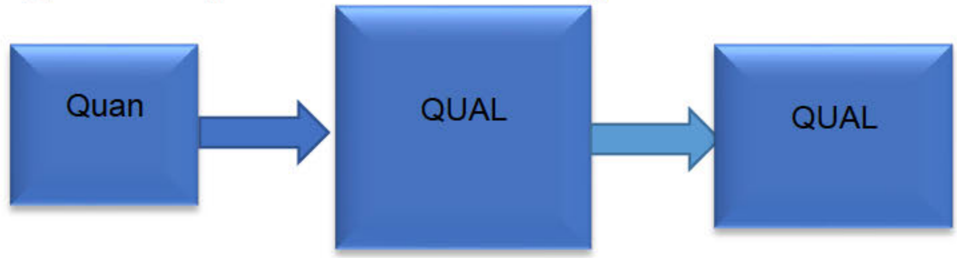
Secondly, qualitative (text) data is collected, interpreted, and then used to explain or build on the quantitative data achieved in the first phase. The qualitative second phase expands on the quantitative first phase, and the two phases are related in the interim phase of the study (Yin, 2006). This strategy is justified by the fact that quantitative evidence and subsequent study offer a broad view of the research issue. The qualitative evidence and interpretation clarify and justifies the statistical findings by delving further into the perspectives of the participants (Creswell 2003).

The sequential exploratory strategy for this study entails an initial quantitative phase that provides insight into the study problem as affirmed by Harrison, Reilly, and Creswell (2020). This entails collecting data on the people's understating and views of the concept in line with the study objectives. From the acquired information, the researchers developed a qualitative set based on the testable hypothesis of the initial quantitative element. The information included frequency of engagements and types of stakeholders engaged by Mondi. Researchers have used the strategy to explore relatively new study areas by seeking quantitative facts and progressing towards a more wholesome one. If the researcher believes that the qualitative data will explain and contextualize the quantitative findings, this design is recommended (George, 2022).

With the hypothesis from the initial quantitative study phase, the study moved to the second qualitative phase. The insights from the primary phase provided a background upon which to build the subsequent steps in the study. The initial investigation collected quantitative data to test the pre-stated research hypothesis. In most cases, the qualitative aspect provides subjective data, and the quantitative inquiry has different variables that are subjected to scientific testing. This design is usually ideal because the sequential arrangement facilitates the efficient handling of an otherwise complex subject. Furthermore, the concept has helped develop survey tools, intervention activities, and new variables for the study problems for other studies (Bakla, 2018). As such, other elements which were excluded in this research could be explored further, by using the same approach for future research e.g., external stakeholders and communities. The sequential progress guides the fundamental research, including the sampling, and allows testing of the built theories to establish generalizable results for the target population.

Table 4.2 on the following page illustrates the following sequence design in line with the objectives as well as the methods of this study.

Figure 0.2 Sequential mixed method design



Source: Self illustration

In this illustration, the sequential model is represented by the arrows, with quantitative data collection happening first. The first data collection on the qualitative process followed and represents the bigger pool of participants. The second qualitative process represents the last stage of the three phased sequential model for this research. Based on this model, the qualitative approach dominated this study both in data collection and analysis. Many real-life situations do not lend themselves to study by precise measurement and cannot be fully understood by the accumulation of statistical data. The theoretical framework for most qualitative research emerges from an interpretivist perspective.

The interpretivist paradigm is grounded in the understanding that in the realm of human and social sciences, research methods must differ from those employed in the physical sciences (Hammersley, 2013). This divergence is due to the fact that humans possess the ability to interpret their surroundings and subsequently act in accordance with these interpretations, while the external world lacks such agency. (Hammersley, 2013).

The advantages and disadvantages of this mixed-methods approach have been extensively explored in literature (Creswell 2005). It has a number of benefits, including simplicity and the ability to dig further into quantitative data. In the view of Tashakkori and Creswell (2007), the mixed-methods approach can be considered to be especially useful when the quantitative analysis generates unexpected results. The time required to capture and interpret all types of data, as well as the availability of resources, are the design's main drawbacks.

4.6 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research refers to a data processing and interpretation approach that emphasises quantification (Becker et al., 2012). The quantitative theory emphasises positivism, with ontology as a metaphysical assumption, implying that there is a single empirical truth that exists independently of human beliefs (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). From an epistemological standpoint, the researcher and the research subject under consideration are separate bodies in the sense that the researcher is free to analyse the phenomena without being influenced.

Quantitative analysis utilizes observational study under the premise that all occurrences should be reduced to statistical measures that represent the truth (Saunders et al., 2009). The quantitative approach focuses on an objectivist perspective which is based on a mathematical measuring method. It focuses on the quantitative measurement of factors and any relationships between variables. Since it excludes subjectivity but can complement the subjective data of qualitative analysis, the quantitative approach is considered one of the most objective and reliable tools for data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It seeks to explain the relationship between these measured variables with the purpose of predicting, controlling phenomena, and to confirm relationships in order to develop generalizations. Quantitative methods are used in social sciences to arrive at testable and accurate expressions for qualitative inferences. Quantitative analysis methods enable researchers to gather data from a greater sampling size, resulting in a true representation of the population (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

The quantitative element in this study, although minimal, used structured predetermined questionnaires self-administered by participants. This was the first stage of data collection and influenced further development of the qualitative data collection process through construct and review of relevant questions. The research questions were designed to illicit the following information:

1) *Employees who have exposure to external stakeholder interactions.*
2) *Departments that have direct exposure to stakeholder management.*
3) *The most prevalent stakeholders engaged by Mondi.*
4) *The general frequency of stakeholders' interactions.*

This quantitative inquiry was structured to establish whether Mondi's stakeholder engagement is indeed integrated, planned and forms part of the strategic management practice.

4.7 Qualitative Research

Lewis (2015) defines qualitative research as "a research method that employs inductive data processing to learn about participants' perceptions of a problem or topic by finding trends or themes." Rather than statistical evidence from an experiment, qualitative analysis examines data gathered from various sources such as written records, direct fieldwork findings, and in-depth open-ended interviews (Patton, 2005). The aim of qualitative analysis is to improve understanding and awareness of the research phenomena (Byrne, 2001). Qualitative analysis methods can comprehend the views, interpretations, and activities of a wide range of individuals. According to Richardson (2012), insight arises from the implication of several incidents in a qualitative approach. Furthermore, certain research choices assist researchers in exploring study participants' individual viewpoints as well as how these ideas are shaped by, and in, a given culture (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

According to Patton (2005), the study issue and priorities help to formulate the best research approach. Stakeholder engagement issues, processes and underlying management behaviour cannot be understood through a quantitative inquiry alone. Combining a quantitative and qualitative approach can aid the researcher in identifying the factors that influence market success and social standing of the business. Since it excludes subjectivity but can complement the subjective data of qualitative analysis, the quantitative approach is considered one of the most objective and reliable tools for data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

This study employs the qualitative strand of the mixed methods to offer a lucid description of the situation and to draw valuable conclusions. Consequently, this research aims for a comprehensive understanding of the underlying stakeholder management phenomena for the forestry division of Mondi including individuals' experiences and expectations, that leads to an improved comprehension of the mechanisms and behaviours within the organization towards stakeholder management practices.

This approach enabled the acquisition of first-hand knowledge and awareness, enhancing overall insight and analysis. The qualitative approach mostly uses inductive reasoning, which, according to Hesse-Biber et al (2015), means that the study begins with accumulation of specific data and the analysis of that data leads to a more general understanding of the problem. The quantitative approach on the other hand, mostly uses deductive reasoning which, according to de Vos et al (2011), begins with certain hypothesis and draw, logical conclusions from them.

The qualitative research element used open–ended questions and the quantitative approach used closed-ended questions as ways of collecting data. The open-ended questions for the qualitative approach allowed the process of interaction between the participant and the researcher to be flexible and participants could respond in their own words. Based on the analysis of the quantitative set, the second phase of the inquiry employing qualitative approach was structured to elicit the following information:

1) *Departments that are solely responsible for stakeholder management.*
2) *The frequency of stakeholder engagement.*
3) *The most prevalent issues during stakeholder interactions.*
4) *Systems in place to effectively manage and engage stakeholders.*
5) *The development of stakeholder management plan and its review process.*

The final phase of the inquiry process targeted senior managers and strategic managers to solicit the following information:

1) *The management's view of stakeholder management.*
2) *The type of stakeholder management strategy being used and how it is developed.*
3) *The influence of stakeholders and subsequent management of Mondi's policies and practice.*
4) *Perceived benefits of stakeholder engagement and risks associated with poor engagement.*
5) *The relationship between effective stakeholder management and business stability and performance for Mondi.*

4.8 Case Study

A case study is a comprehensive, in-depth collection of data that explores a restricted structure or a case over time, comprising numerous sources of knowledge and rich in material (Yin 2018). Case studies should provide data that can be analysed and represented on both a qualitative and quantitative level (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Selecting the case to be studied and determining the study's parameters are also important aspects of defining a case study (Flyvberg 2011). When established, case study research attempts to apprehend the dynamics of the phenomenon under study within its context (Eisenhardt & Graebner 2007), which relates to the associations between the case's focus and its context. A case study approach can extract information from in-depth examination of a concept in its actual setting, resulting in interesting, insightful interpretations and hypothesis creation (Yin 2018).

To gain insight into Mondi's (case study) stakeholder management practices, the case study would use data (qualitative and quantitative) collected through self-administered questionnaires (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative) to fully comprehend the case dynamics (Dubois and Gadde, 2002).

4.9 Population and Sampling

South Africa's economy ranks above average in the Sub-Saharan region even though below the world average (Ngouhouo & Nchofoung 2022). The economy ranked among the top five in Africa in terms of industrialization and technology incorporation in the operations of various sectors. The implication is that South Africa has considerably more registered companies and therefore, stakeholder management is now dominating the business management field which, partly, this research seeks to study.

In 2011, South African population was about R51.8 million. The results for the census of 2022 are not yet published and available. Projections are that South Africa will have a population of over 60,768,708 by June 2022, with a median age of 27 years (Garidzirai, 2020). The economy is highly dependent on agriculture [which has recorded significant growth from 2020, accounting for about 2.53% of the total gross domestic product (Matchaya, 2020). Other important contributors to the economy are mining and manufacturing.

Mondi as a forestry and pulp milling company falls under multiple economic sectors and so, gaining insight into its stakeholder practices is not only research worthy but also relevant for business.

The researcher's approach to the target participants from a specific group determines the exact prediction of processes, observations, and actions taken by individuals (Saunders et al., 2009). The population refers to the entire collection of cases or items from which a sample is drawn (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). After the in-depth analysis of the organisational structure, participants were drawn based on job and task relevance in relation to the objectives of the study.

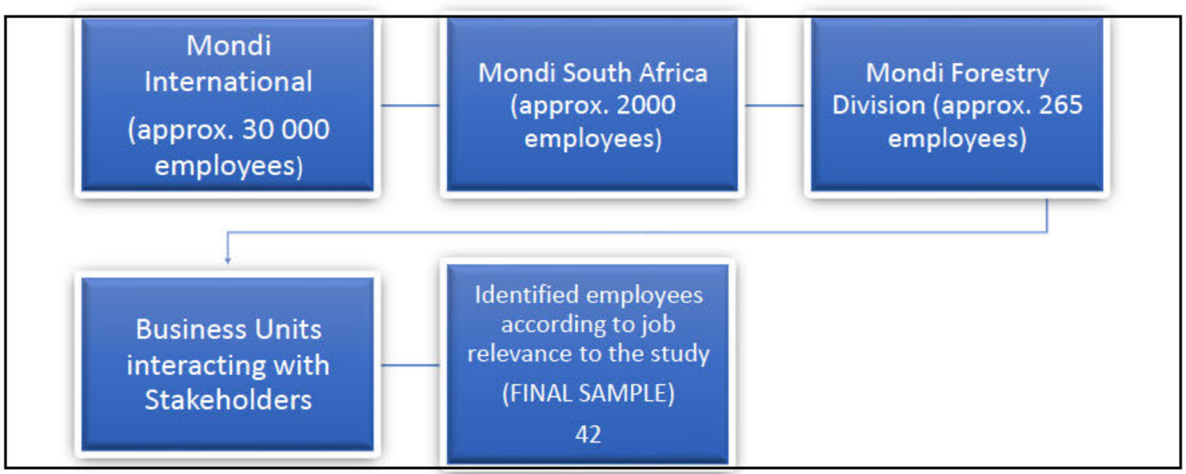
Sampling entails the specific principles that the study intends to employ in selecting the respondents from the study population in the survey (Andrade, 2021). The entire population would have been ideal to consider, but it is too large to work with in this study. Sampling, therefore, will result in accurate findings, timeliness in each process, and a significantly reasonable cost of the entire procedure. Acquiring a good sample entail defining the target population, sample frame, sample size, and sampling method and applying the same in practice. Researchers utilize sampling to extract population information from observations from a subset of the population rather than trying to analyse each person (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). A study's workload and cost can be reduced by reducing the number of participants, while making it simpler to collect reliable data. This must, however, be balanced by including a broad sample size of sufficient power to detect a dominant relationship (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2018). The target population falls into several categories that will depend on their role allocations and specific work divisions. According to Andrew Fisher's formula, a sample of 10% of the target population should be sufficient (Yeswa & Obui 2019) based on the nature and scale of the study.

In the current analysis, a non-probability purposive sampling method was used to gather data. The data was collected from identified Mondi employees in accordance with the study’s research objectives. Purposive sampling is grounded in investigators’ decree concerning the participants in a study technique (Sarstedt, Bengart, Shaltoni & Lehmann, 2018).

It is a non-random method that does not rely on statistical models or a set number of participants (Tongco, 2007). Non-probability methods produce intrinsic rather than external validation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Purposive sampling limits the analysis of observations to the population under study. Purposeful sampling, when done properly, is a realistic and effective strategy that is almost as efficient as, if not more practical than, random sampling (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016).

The participants for the study were purposefully selected using a non-probability sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique involves the construction of a particular sample that allows the researcher to effectively fulfill the specific requirements of their project. Sampling entails the specific principles that the study intends to employ in selecting the members of the study population in the survey (Andrade 2021). Accordingly, purposive sampling entails the selection of units (which may be people, organizations, documents, or departments), with direct reference to the research questions being asked. This sampling technique allows a researcher to select only those participants that have the requisite knowledge and are in position to answer the research questions. Narrowing down from a population of 265 employees, participants as research respondents were selected according to their role categories which included employees from finance, human resources, environmental, production operations and corporate affairs department.

Figure 0.3 Population and sampling process



Source: Self illustration

The figure above illustrates the sampling process departing from Mondi's global operations to South African operations and narrowing it down to the Forestry Division in South Africa. The Forestry division of the company was purposively chosen by the researcher to gather primary data that meet the objectives of this study. The Forestry division falls under the operational section that can provide credible data regarding the managerial operations of the company. Purposive sampling method enable the researcher to source experienced and knowledgeable employees who are interested in operations of Mondi (Creswell, 2008; Lewis-Beck et al, 2013).

4.10 Measuring Instruments

Measurement instruments are the tools the researcher intends to employ to achieve the study objectives (Pandey & Pandey, 2021). These could include questionnaires, interviews, observations, group discussions, and experiments that facilitate the collection of data from respondents. Data is all the information and facts relevant to the subject (Malgieri & González Fuster, 2021). Such data helped to structure the survey through the mixed research design by providing insight into the topic and evaluating the hypotheses. The tool choice was dependent on the study type and sample size. The Research Instrument was chosen by the researcher and linked to the research technique (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2018).

Two measurement instruments are used in this mixed methods research. The qualitative research element used open–ended questionnaire and the quantitative approach used closed-ended questionnaire as ways of collecting data. The open-ended questions for the qualitative approach allowed the process of interaction between the participant and the researcher to be flexible and participants could respond in their own words. For this study, this qualitative approach characteristic was critical because the researcher in this context, needed to make participants comfortable in responding to questions and be able to articulate issues in their own way. The quantitative element, although minimal, used structured predetermined questionnaires which were self-administered by participants. This being the first stage of data collection, influenced further development of the qualitative data collection process.

The electronic survey questionnaire was created using google forms. A survey link, together with QR Code, was generated and distributed to participants thought emails. A QR code is a type of pf matrix barcode with advantages of fast readability and greater storage capacity compared to standard UPC barcodes (Pandya & Galiyawala, 2014). The survey had 15 questions, formulated by the researcher to solicit responses that can lead to a greater understanding of Mondi's stakeholder management practices. The QR Code and survey link sent to respondents was intended to allow participation and convenience since the survey form could be accessed on either computers or mobile devices. The form was pre-tested and produced an average completion time of 6-8 minutes if there is no network interruption.

Online survey facilitates a study to collect primary data from the respondents. The participants receive and return the questionnaires online., These responses help the researcher to generate variables that lead on to the stage of the qualitative study. The initial questionnaire comprised of closed questions to allow for maximum expression of the respondent's views and still remain objective bound. The approach is less demanding in terms of cost and time.

4.11 Reliability and Validity

In every study, the critical qualities of a good survey are accuracy and consistency, which are assessable by validity and reliability (Story & Tait, 2019). The validity of research instruments refers to the extent to which they measure what they are intended to (Almanasreh, Moles, & Chen 2019). For example, in this study, a questionnaire is valid if it can provide insights into stakeholder management in a form that is/would be useful in collecting quantitative data. This means the tools are in line with the study objectives.

Reliability, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which a research instrument can give the same results if the researcher retakes measurements under the same conditions (Knekta, Runyon, & Eddy, 2019). The two concepts are interrelated in research; however, data collection tools can be reliable and yet not be valid. The questions can provide wrong information consistently hence the need for review before and during data collection.

The reliability of the instruments used for data collection was examined. A pre-test was used to determine the adequacy of the questions and their interpretation, allowing a small number of participants to be used to test the efficacy of the quantitative instrument (Questionnaire). A total of 10 respondents were recruited for the pre-test and they included, former Mondi employees, current employees previously employed under Forestry Division but moved to other divisions, and employees of other neighbouring companies who share similar stakeholders with Mondi. A test survey link was sent to all pre-test respondents and 6 also participated in the interview process for the qualitative element. This helped to overcome any flaws before the instrument was sent to respondents through a questionnaire, mitigating prejudice (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The pre-testing procedure guarantees the questionnaire elements are accurate and relevant (Field, 2013).

The responses from the pre-testing enabled the researcher to modify the questionnaire in terms of context and phrasing, and also clear up any ambiguities before the final administering of the questionnaire to the larger group. The interview questions for the qualitative process of the research were assessed by an independent consultant with extensive expertise and skills (both academic and practical) in stakeholder management. This was done to determine if the interview structure is accurate and has a reasonable degree of trust.

Triangulation has been defined in academic literature as the utilization of different research approaches, methods, and techniques in a given study to mitigate any potential bias and limitations that may arise from adopting a single-method approach (Hussey and Hussey ,1997). According to Burton and Obel, (2011) similar definition of triangulation refers to using multiple, different approaches to generate better understanding of a given theory or phenomenon. Likewise, the assurance of validity and reliability enhances transparency and reduces the likelihood of introducing researcher bias in qualitative research.

Reliability was achieved through the standardized interview questionnaire which ensured consistency (Livingstone, 2018). Furthermore, reliability and validity were tested through dissecting the data collection process into three main projects: internal (quantitative), individual interviews (qualitative) and lastly, strategic managers within Mondi's business leadership. In this study, triangulation at the data collection level, and methodology was employed. These are important processes in modern research, as they are used to enhance the accuracy of the assessment and evaluation of a research work (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The validity and reliability of the measuring instruments are highly dependent on the credibility of the respondents and sources of secondary data (Hawkins et al. 2020). It is difficult to determine the respondents' honesty in an online survey. Therefore, purposive sampling helps to lock out potential respondents who would likely provide unreliable information. The research design entailing mixed methods also helps to reduce the chances that the tools will miss any research variables or insights. The mixed methods, therefore, helps in mitigating the shortcomings of either the qualitative or the quantitative data collection.

4.12 Statistical Testing

The following statistical tests were administered for data analysis on the quantitative set:

1) Descriptive analysis

Heeks and Wall (2018) pointed out that in an analysis of data, the researcher calculates one number or a few numbers that reveal something about the characteristics of large sets of data. In this section the results are presented using descriptive statistics in the form of graphs, tables and charts of the quantitative data collected.

2) Inferential statistics testing

Inferential statistics is mostly used to estimate a big group (or population) and draw conclusions from data using hypothesis testing procedures. Sample data are used in inferential statistics because they are more cost-effective and time-efficient than data gathered from the whole population. It allows one to come to reasonable assumptions about the larger population based on the characteristics of the sample.

3) Factor analysis

The data set was subjected to the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Principal Axis Factoring (PAF or PFA). The items were examined for high and low factor loadings and a minimum was set of 10 was acceptable factor loading (Ramrakhiani, 2017). The PCA with Varimax Rotation was used to determine the scale construct validity.

To determine if the sub-scales were appropriate for factor analysis, two statistical procedures were administered. The Bartlett Test of Sphericity was used to examine if the subscales of the scale were inter-independent and then, the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was used to examine sample sufficiency.

4) Correlation matrix

According to Wegner (2018), correlation matrix is a statistical method used to evaluate the strength of the relationship between two quantitative variables; one of which is dependent and the other, independent. In this analysis, dependent variables (DV) were identified, namely the business strategy integration. The independent variables (IVs) were measured against the "between-groups sum of squares (BPS).

5) Chi-square test

Chi-square tests were carried out to establish the influence of social stakeholders in Mondi’s business decisions and shareholder value creation, and the major findings are discussed in the next chapter. According to Wegner (2018), the p-value is the probability of obtaining a test statistic equal to or more extreme than the result obtained from the sample data, given that the null hypothesis is true. In other words, a p-value less than 5% indicates that there is an association between social stakeholders in Mondi’s business decisions and shareholder value creation. Conversely, a p-value above 5% implies that there is no statistical evidence to indicate that there is an association between social stakeholders in Mondi’s business decisions and shareholder value creation. The main hypotheses are addressed in the next chapter.

6) Regression equation

Regression analysis mathematically describes the relationship between a set of independent variables and a dependent variable (Wegner, 2016). Linear regression analysis finds the straight-line equation representing the relationships between two numeric variables: the independent and the dependent variables. This can be useful for understanding the relationships between variables, making predictions, and identifying important factors that influence the outcome variable.

However, it is important to note that the accuracy of these predictions may be limited by the assumptions and limitations of the regression analysis, and by the quality and representativeness of the data used to derive the equation.

7) Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination is a statistical measurement that examines how differences in one variable can be explained by the differences in a second variable, when predicting the outcome of a given event (Kumar, 2019). In other words, this coefficient, which is more commonly known as R-squared (or R^2), assesses how strong the linear relationship is between independent and dependent variables.

4.13 Ethical Considerations

The concept of ethical consideration is a critical component of any research, and in recent times, nearly every subject has to consider this (Reijers et al., 2018). This is because the law cannot provide for everything and sometimes fails to protect societies. Where the law does not have access, ethics preserve a community's well-being and dignity. “With an increase in the public concern about the limits of the inquiry and legislative changes in human rights and data protection, the ethical considerations have come to the forefront in social research” (Parveen & Showkat, (2017:2).

Studies incorporate the ethical concept in various stages of the research to be compliant. This involves considering the view of the participants and protecting those that cannot be in control or are disabled. Any study design is prone to possible ethical matters that need to be catered for to effectively remove or solve them (Saunders et al., 2009).

Because humans are generally emotionally disposed, research trials with individual subjects are bound to contain a larger amount of ethical issues (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Ethical and confidentiality issues were seriously considered in this study. To this end, the target respondents' approval was sought in the form of verbal and written consent.

Furthermore, the necessary documentation was obtained from the authorities before commencement of the research. A letter from the supervising institution (DUT) was procured to assist in discussions with Mondi., This facilitated access to respondents and other related information that might be needed for the study.

A briefing session with company management was arranged to discuss the following:

- Title of the proposed research
- Study objectives
- Research process and methods
- Purposive sample and attributes of respondents
- Business risks for participation and mitigations thereof
- Benefits of the study for the company
- Feedback process to the company

After the institutional authorisation, individuals who were purposively identified as respondents were approached to request their voluntary participation in the study. A letter of information was then forwarded to all identified respondents including the consent form. To guarantee the protection of the people involved in the study (respondents), approval from the authority hierarchy of Mondi was obtained.

Thereafter, a survey link was sent through email, which also included member data and consent form, to prospective respondents for the quantitative process of the data collection. The recipients were asked to click on the link to the online survey and complete it, together with their consent form.

The estimated time for the survey and interview was announced before each report. The survey time was approximately about fifteen to twenty minutes, whilst the interview time ranged between twenty-five to thirty minutes. Because of ethical considerations in the testing process, the entire set of respondents was specifically informed of the study's targets. They were informed that their comments are confidential and will only be used for analysis reasons. The informants were also asked for permission to digitally record the interview.

The respondents' names were removed from the official transcripts and reports, and pseudonyms used instead. Since this was a corporate inquiry, the researcher needed to ensure that, where possible, participants responses cannot be traced back to any particular individual. The quantitative data questionnaires were completed anonymously. The analysis of data would not be linked to any individual, but assumptions and conclusions would be drawn on behalf of the business. Furthermore, part of the data collection involved online tools. This meant that the study had to access the sample population remotely, and respondents had a choice of either to participate or not. This means therefore that, no participant who is uncomfortable with the survey is under any obligation to participate. This also ensured anonymity which many participants welcomed for safety and privacy.

4.14 Data Analysis

This research is focused on hybrid approaches, and data was collected from Mondi company employees. The study entails mixed methods involving qualitative and quantitative data analysis, with specific strategies for each. Another critical aspect of the research is that it takes two sequential phases of study and data analysis. The quantitative data analysis organizes the data into presentable variables and hypotheses for testing and validation in the qualitative stage. Whereas analysis of the data from qualitative methods provides the final trends and factors concerning the study problems.

Using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and excel, the quantitative results were evaluated using descriptive statistics to describe the final data collected from participants.

First, the analytical data interpretation was carried out using demographic data frequency estimates. The Pearson correlation between stakeholder management activities and perceived stability levels of the company was used to determine the correlation. Linear regression was utilized to measure the influence of stakeholder management on business stability and performance.

The procedure entails testing the fitness of the collected data for this type of analysis through the seven universal principles of linear regression. SPSS, when in use, is the critical analysis software in checking the assumptions, generating the model summary, and the ANOVA table into which the results are processed for presentation. From the tables a graph is developed on the variables indicating their relations in a line of best fit, to see if a linear relationship exists. The data analysis process guides the last section of the study. The linear regression results help determine the relationships among the various study variables. These results determine the study conclusions and subsequent presentation of the complete dissertation.

The qualitative analysis was subjective and entailed making sense of the textual information from respondents, which was time-consuming. Therefore, the researcher had to develop a code for every possible variable in the data relevant to the study problem.
The most common trends from the coded data formrd the basis for developing data collection tools for qualitative research. The results of this analysis are theories and relevant research themes.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze contextual data and followed a six-step process: (a) familiarization with the data, (b) generating original codes, (c) looking for themes, (d) checking themes, (e) identifying and naming themes, and (f) writing up the paper as suggested in Braun and Clarke, (2006). The NVivo software was then used to analyse the qualitative interviews. The advantage of using the thematic analysis is that it enables the researcher to blend analysis of code frequency with analysis of their more implicit interpretations, allowing for more nuance in conceptual investigations (Joffe, 2012).

4.15 Conclusion

This chapter was able to provide an understanding of the research methodology and strategies employed during data collection and analysis. The different methodologies and rationale were discussed to provide a framework for data collection and analysis. In addition, what this chapter managed to achieve, is to clearly demonstrate that data collection strategies and decisions should be designed to suit the objectives of any inquiry, using, and adapting the empirical knowledge and literature.

The sequential model adopted in this study and discussed herewith, is a clear example of how the mixed methods research process could be designed for the desired research outcomes. This chapter expounds upon the mixed research methods, also referred to as mixed methods research, as an approach whereby qualitative and quantitative research techniques are conjoined within a singular study or research project. The discourse draws upon relevant literature and research objectives. The process encompasses the gathering, scrutinization, and synthesis of both quantitative and qualitative data in order to obtain a more exhaustive comprehension of a subject under investigation.

Chapter Five

Data presentation and results

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented a detailed process, rationale and purpose of the research design adopted in this study. The mixed methods approach, which combined elements of the quantitative and qualitative inquiries was designed to elicit data in accordance with the research purpose. This chapter presents the research results and analysis for both the quantitative and qualitative studies. It begins by discussing the data collection process, and then presents the quantitative results with analysis. The challenge presented by the Covid-19 pandemic in conducting the data collection is also discussed through the presentation of the alternative approaches used. The following section presents the qualitative research results. Thereafter, results are integrated in Chapter Six for detailed analysis and discussions.

5.2 Data collection process

The quantitative element, although minimal, used structured predetermined questionnaires, that were self-administered by participants. This was the first stage of data collection and influenced developments in the qualitative data collection process. The online self-administered questionnaires were issued to the selected participants after consent has been sought. Participants were given a time frame of 3 weeks to access the online questionnaire and submit their input.

The survey inquiry constituted phase 1 of the data collection process. The second phase was a qualitative study targeting the employees who have been identified according to their roles, to have stakeholder engagement responsibilities. The interviews were conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams due to Covid 19 restrictions forbidding physical interactions. The final phase of the inquiry was again a qualitative study targeting senior management of Mondi Forestry division. These interviews were also conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams and issues of clarity were addressed through email and telephonic discussions. All virtual interviews were recorded and transcribed for seamless interpretation and analysis.

The table 5.1 below presents the participation rate for all research phases. Against the identified employees, based on their role categories, the participation was 98% for Phases 1 and 2 and 100% for phase 3.

Table 0.1 Rate of participation.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Survey Inquiry (online)	Interviews (Virtual)	Interviews (virtually)
26 participants	11 participants	5 participants
Percentage: 98%	Percentage: 98%	**Percentage: 100%**

Source: own illustration

For this study, the purposive sample was further reviewed to work out the minimum number of respondents required for a statistically significant inquiry. However, this study is primary a qualitative inquiry. The quantitative approach was used in this study based on the principles of known variables through a standardised instrument to gather large sample size from stakeholders' management practices at Mondi Forest operations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). For this reason, the confidence level and the margin of error was reviewed and adjusted to arrive at the minimum sample required based on the available pool of respondents, and the objectives of the study. The table 5.2 below illustrate sample calculation for small sample indicating 26 or more measurements/surveys that are needed to have a confidence level of 95% that the real value is within ±11% of the measured/surveyed value.

Table 0.2 Sample size selection

Confidence level	Margin of error	Minimum sample size	Target sample
95%	11%	**26**	30

Based on the table above, a 95% confidence level means that the margin of error computations will be wrong only 5% of the time. The number of respondents would be determined using the following formula from Sauro and Lewis, (2016):

$$N = K^2 \frac{s^2}{m^2}$$

The variables in the formula are:

- *K* is a constant (1.96 for 95% confidence level)
- *s* is for standard deviation as a proportion of the mean
- *m* is the desired margin of error, also expressed as a proportion of the mean (0.15 corresponding to 15% or 0.20 corresponding to 20%)

Sekaran (2013) assets that for simple experimental research with tight experimental, successful research is possible with samples as small as 10 to 20 in size. Moniruzzaman and AL-Muaalemi (2022) argued that rather than looking at the nature of sample procedures, choosing sampling approaches should be determined by research objectives, study scope, and availability of sampling frame.

5.2.1 Online data collection during Covid-19 pandemic

The South African Government, designated under Section 3 of the Disaster Management Act 2002 (57 of 2002), declared a national state of disaster published in the government Gazette number 43096 on 15 March 2020 in terms of Section 27 (2) of the Act. Among the restrictions imposed by the government were, social distancing, no traveling across provinces, no office work and no physical gatherings. Many of these restrictions remained in force when the country was adjusted to different levels of lockdown. Concomitantly, many organizations adopted the ‘work from home’ practice and much of this has continued to this day. The Covid-19 restrictions did not only disrupt the economic activities of the country, but the academic sector was also severely affected as many study subjects and participants were suddenly not available for data collection.

Needless to say, that the Covid-19 seriously affected research method choices for researchers considering the slow migration to digital methods. After discussions with Mondi (the company under study), it was agreed that the use of online platforms might be appropriate for this research. The following was the adapted data collection process for this study.

5.3 Phase 1: Survey

The distribution of electronic survey questionnaires was done at no cost through google forms. A survey link with a QR Code was generated and distributed to participants through emails. A QR code is a form of matrix barcode that offers benefits such as rapid readability and increased storage capacity when compared to traditional UPC barcodes (Pandya & Galiyawala, 2014). The QR code, commonly known as Quick Response code, serves as the designated identifier for the two-dimensional barcode system. The effective storage of information involves the utilization of the four standardized forms of encoding, which include numeric, alphanumeric, byte/binary, and kanji (Mishra & Mathuria, 2017). The survey questionnaire had 15 questions which were crafted to solicit responses to get an understanding of Mondi’s stakeholder management practices.

5.3.1 Specific Research Question:

What is the current stakeholder management practice at Mondi forestry operations?

Responses to this specific research question were retrieved, exported to Excel, encoded, and then analysed to generate statistical data. In addition, SPSS programme was used to run statistical tests and to provide more in-depth data analysis.

5.4 Presentation of descriptive statistics

5.4.1 Demographic analysis

According to and Wall (2018), during an examination of data, the analyst determines a single or finite number of statistics that offer insights into the features of large data collections. In this section, the outcomes of the study are presented through the application of descriptive statistics using graphical representations, tabular structures, and visual presentations employed for the purpose of analyzing and depicting the quantitative data that has been gathered.

5.4.1.1 Occupation of the participants

Figure 0.1 Occupation of the participants

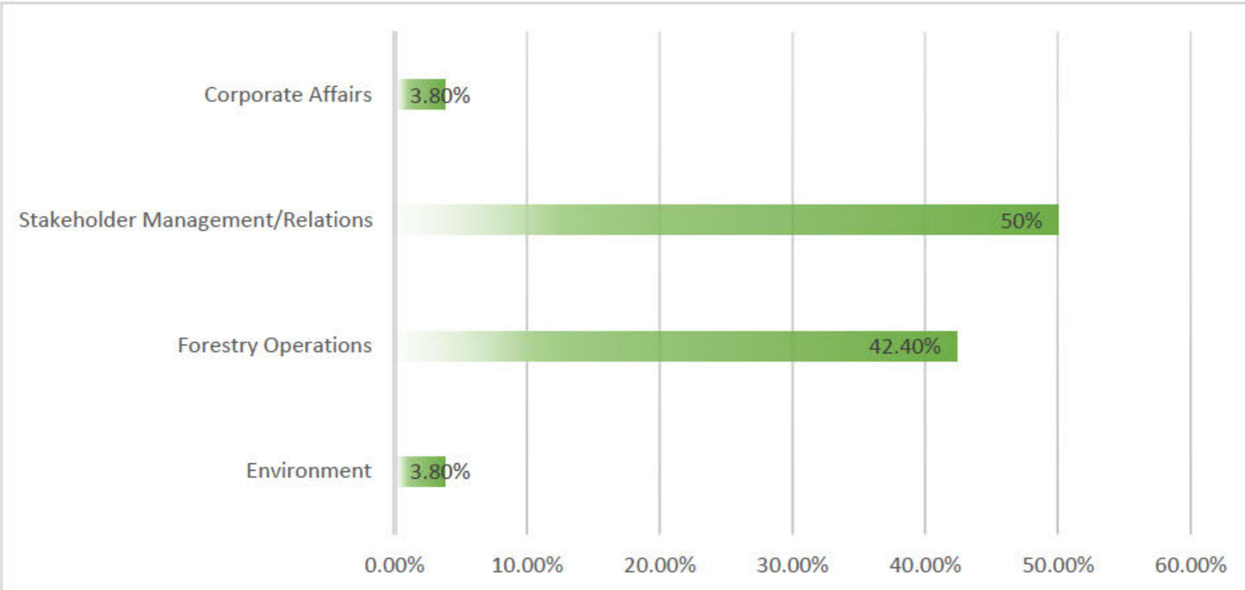


Figure 5.1 above reflects the occupations or employment sector of the respondents in the study group. The largest number of respondents (50%) from the study group were employed in the stakeholder management/relations department, followed by the participants in the forestry operations department that amounted to 42.4% Two departments polled the same response rate of 3.8%, namely, corporate affairs and environment. The results are not surprising as the purposive sampling process was biased towards employees who have some interface with external stakeholders and the Forestry division has a dedicated department responsible for stakeholder management (Creswell, 2008; Lewis-Beck et al, 2013).

5.4.1.2 Operational Area of the respondents

Mondi's Forestry operations are centred in 3 areas across 2 provinces. The main operations are in KwaZulu Natal, covering the Midlands and Zululand areas. Other operations are in Mpumalanga around Piet Retief and surrounding areas. Combined, these operations are the backbone of timber supply to Mondi's Paper Mills for local and international pulp trading. The Forestry Division is headquartered in Pietermaritzburg (HQ) and Durban is the corporate Headquarters for Mondi South Africa. Respondents were asked to identify areas where they operate, and the geographical spread is presented in the table 5.3 below:

Table 0.3 Operational Area of the respondents

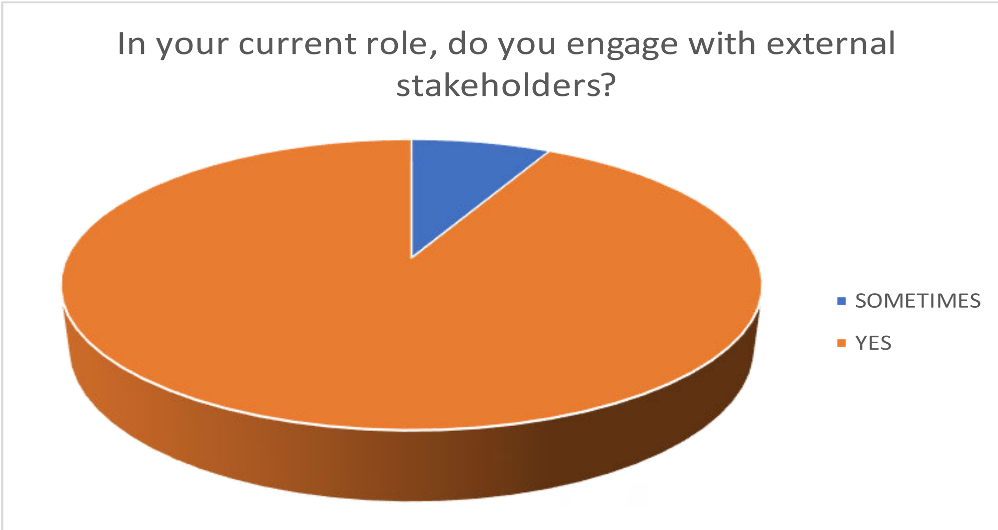
	Frequency	Percent
Durban HQ	2	7.7
Pietermaritzburg HQ	4	15.4
Midlands Operations	7	26.9
Zululand Operations	7	26.9
Piet Retief Operations	6	23.1
Total	26	100%

Table 5.3 above reflects the distribution of participants in their operational areas earlier mentioned as Durban HQ; Pietermaritzburg HQ; Midlands Operations; Zululand Operations' and Piet Retief Operations. Two operational areas polled the same largest response rate of 26.9%, namely, Midlands and Zululand area. The largest number of respondents (26.9%) from the study group were operating in Midlands and Zululand operation, followed by the participants who operate in Piet Retief that amounted to 23.1%. The participants that operated at the PMB HQ polled 15.4% whilst the lowest number of respondents (7.7%) indicated that they were stationed at the Durban HQ.

5.4.1.3 The engagement of respondents with external stakeholders

As shown in figure 5.2 below, regarding the question "In your current role, do you engage with external stakeholders?", almost all the respondents (92 %) indicated that they do engage with stakeholders while 8% of the respondents answered "sometimes".

Figure 0.2 engagement with external stakeholders

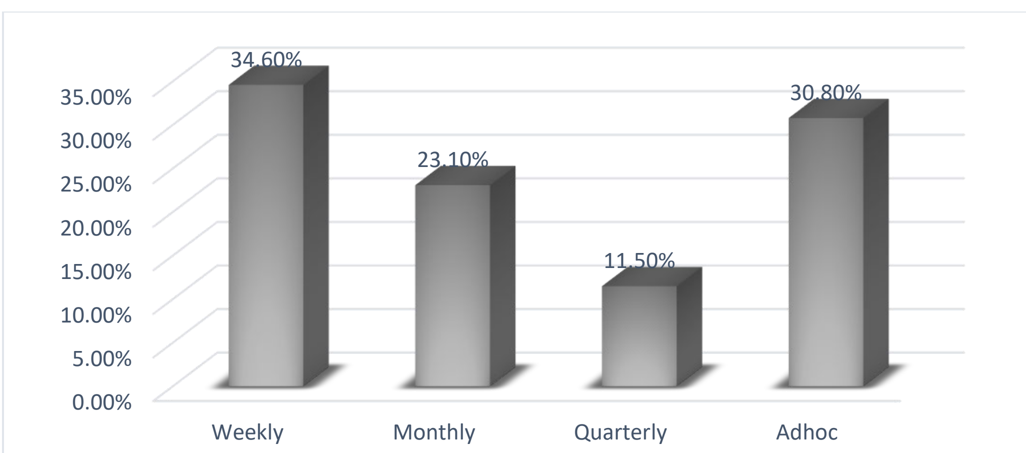


The implication of these results is that almost every employee of Mondi engages with stakeholders in order to improve business image and performance. Reading the responses in relation to the previous question, it is evident that stakeholder engagement is not only centred within the Stakeholder Relations function, but other units are expected to engage stakeholders as per business demands and requirements.

5.4.1.4 Frequency of engagement with different stakeholders

Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of engagement with different stakeholders, and their responses are reflected in Figure 5.3 below.

Figure 0.3 Frequency of engagement with different stakeholders

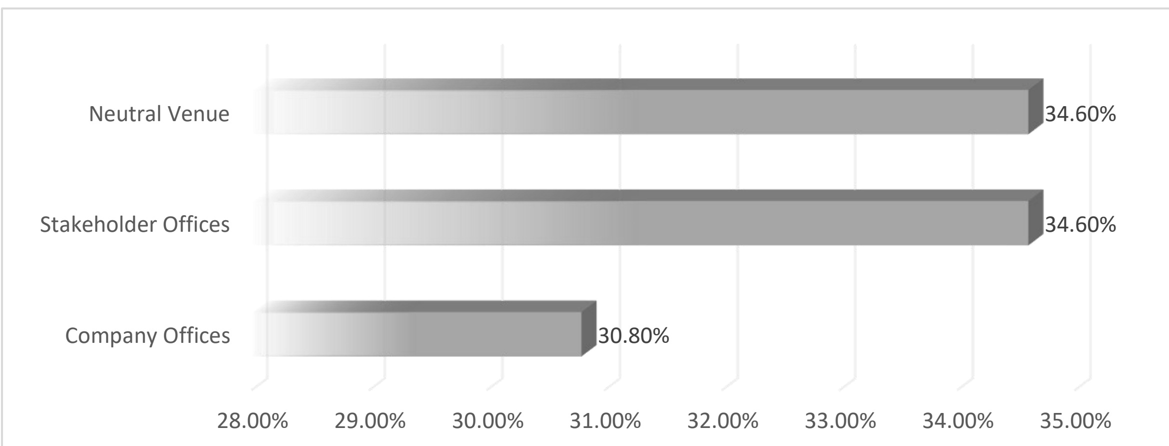


As depicted in Figure 5.3 above, the largest number of respondents (34.6%) indicated that they engage with stakeholders on weekly basis; 30.8% of the respondents engaged with stakeholders when the need arises (ad-hoc); 23.1% of the respondents engaged with stakeholders on monthly basis, and 11.5% of the respondents indicated that they engage with stakeholders on quarterly basis. From these results, it may be suggested that stakeholder engagement is mainly done on weekly or on ad-hoc basis, with some engagements on a quarterly and monthly basis.

5.4.1.5 Place of engagement with stakeholders

The frequency and dispersion of the responses pertaining the place where engagements with stakeholders took place is reflected in Figure 5.4 below.

Figure 0.4 Places of engagement with stakeholders



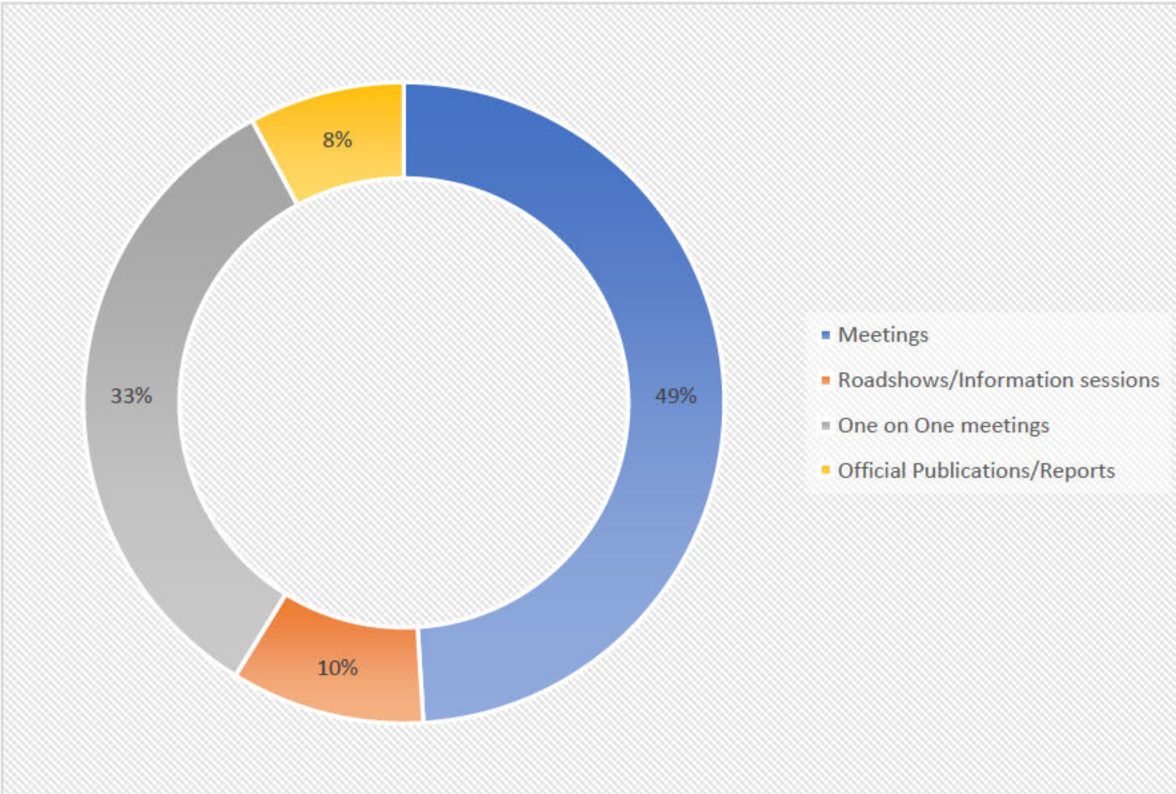
In analysing the responses to the question "Where do you often engage with your stakeholders", a total of 69.2% of the respondents indicated neutral venues (34.6%) or stakeholder offices (34.6 %) as places of engagement, while 30.8% of the respondents indicated that they use company offices for stakeholder engagements. The results indicate that much of the engagement takes place externally with employees travelling to either stakeholder offices or arranged neutral venues.

5.4.1.6 The forms of communication used to engage stakeholders.

Figure 5.5 below reflects the cumulative responses of participants within the study group regarding the forms of communication used to engage stakeholders.

Respondents were given an option to select more than one response to better represent individual form of communication with stakeholders.

Figure 0.5 The forms of communication used to engage stakeholders.



An analysis of the results in Figure 5.5 reveals that the largest proportion of respondents (49%) indicated that they use group meetings as form of communication in engaging stakeholders; in addition, 33% of the respondents indicated that they used one on one meetings to communicate with different stakeholders . A proportion of respondents (10%) also indicated that in engaging with stakeholders they use roadshows/information session as form of communication. The least proportion of respondents (8%) also indicated the use of official publications or reports as form of communication during stakeholder engagement. These results further confirm Mondi's stakeholder management as individualistic in practice as the form of communication is largely through -meetings and one-on-one engagements.

5.4.1.7 The types of external stakeholders that are engaged by Mondi.

Several options were presented to respondents indicating the types of external stakeholders that engage with Mondi, and their responses are presented in Table 5.6 below.

Table 0.*4* The types of external stakeholders that engage with Mondi.

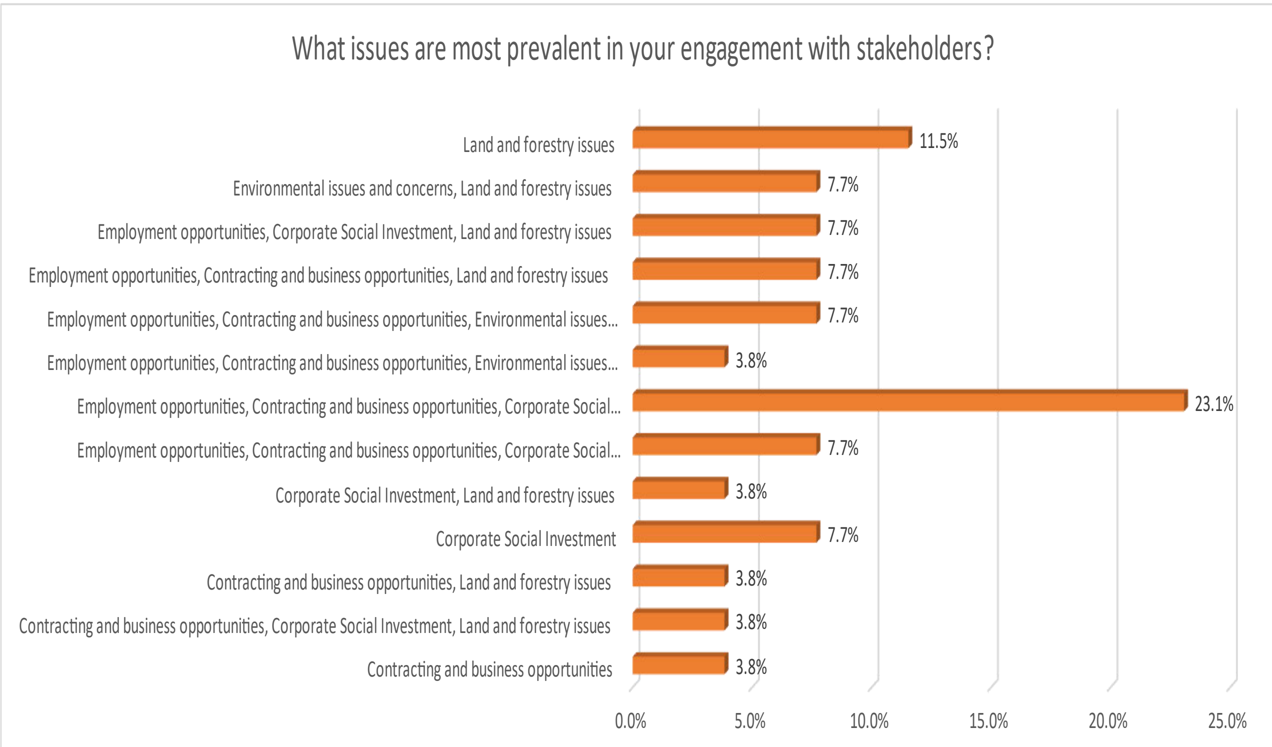
External Stakeholders	Frequency	Percent
Communities	5	19.2%
Government, Communities	1	3.8%
Government, Communities, Regulatory authorities	1	3.8%
Government, Other Companies, Communities	7	26.9%
Government, Other Companies, Communities, Regulatory authorities	2	7.7%
Government, Other Companies, Communities, Regulatory authorities, Customers	2	7.7%
Government, Other Companies, Regulatory authorities	3	11.5%
Other Companies	1	3.8%
Other Companies, Communities	3	11.5%
Other Companies, Communities, Regulatory authorities	1	3.8%

As illustrated in Table 5.4 above, the largest percentage of respondents (26.9%) stated that they engage with communities, government and other companies. Again 11.5% of the respondents also indicated that government, other companies and regulatory authorities is the external stakeholder that they engage with. About 19% of the respondents indicated that the external stakeholders they deal with are exclusively communities whereas, communities also were selected by at least 96% of the respondents. Clearly, the community stakeholders top the list, and their importance should be understood against the background of the land reform process as discussed in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the forestry operations are mainly located in rural areas as they demand large pockets of land, and the communities neighbouring these plantations would by default become Mondi's 'affected' stakeholders.

5.4.1.8 Issues arising during stakeholder engagements.

The aim of this question was to establish the most prevalent issues discussed or raised during Mondi's stakeholder engagements. The diversity of the responses pertaining to issues arising during stakeholder engagements are reflected in figure 5.6 below.

Figure 0.6 Issues arising during stakeholder engagements.



As illustrated in figure 5.6 above, the largest percentage of respondents (23.1%) stated that during stakeholder engagement they discuss about employment opportunities, contracting/business opportunities and CSI. The land and forestry issues also dominate the engagements at 11.5%. The reported issues for discussion with community stakeholders are aligned with Mondi's social stakeholder environment, where some of the forestry land is leased through community Trusts, and where communities consider themselves as both 'shareholders' and affected parties.

5.4.1.9 In the last 12 months, how many external incidents have you recorded relating to social stakeholders.

This question was designed to assess the external incidents experienced relating to social stakeholders as recorded in the last 12 months. The question was intentionally designed to elicit responses that could help fully understand/grasp the issues of stakeholder management processes in Mondi. Respondents were required to tick the number of incidents recorded, and their responses are reflected in table 5.5 below.

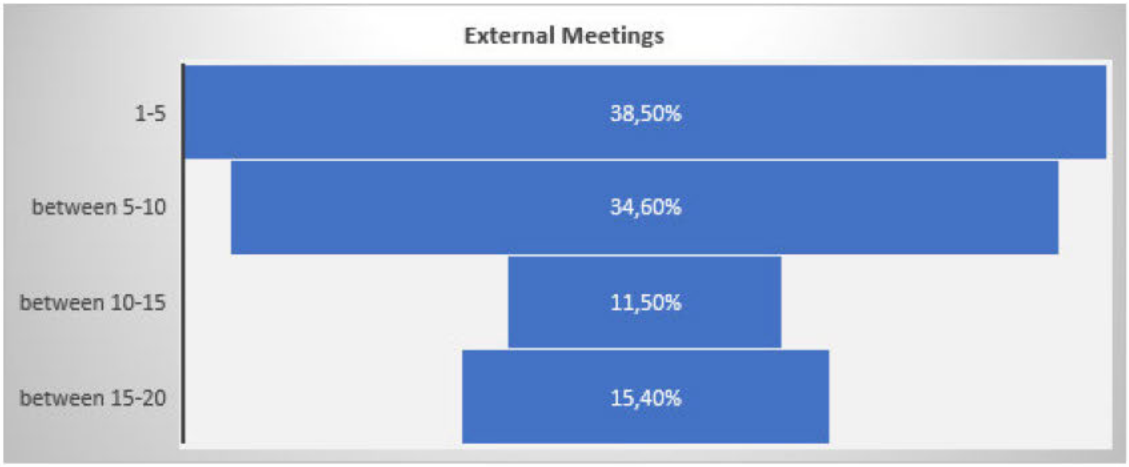
Table 0.5 External incidents recorded relating to social stakeholders.

External incidents	Frequency	Percent
1-5	17	65.4%
between 5-10	6	23.1%
between 10-15	2	7.7%
between 15-20	1	3.8%
Total	26	100.0%

The largest percentage of respondents (65.4%) indicated that 1-5 incidents had been recorded over the last 12 months; with only 23.1 % of the respondents indicating that between 5-10 incidents had occurred over the 12 months; 7.7 % of the respondents indicated that between 10-15 incidents occurred and 3.8 % of the respondents indicating incident occurrence of the range between 15-20 over the last 12 months. The incident management process forms a crucial part of stakeholder management practice when dealing with communities. The credibility of the stakeholder management process relies on how the complaints and grievances are processed and resolved.

This question aimed to establish the visibility and accessibility of Mondi in dealing with and responding to community issues. The number of external meetings attended as requested by external stakeholders to address a particular issue in the last 12 months, is displayed in Figure 5.7.

Figure 0.7 External meetings attended per request of external stakeholders.

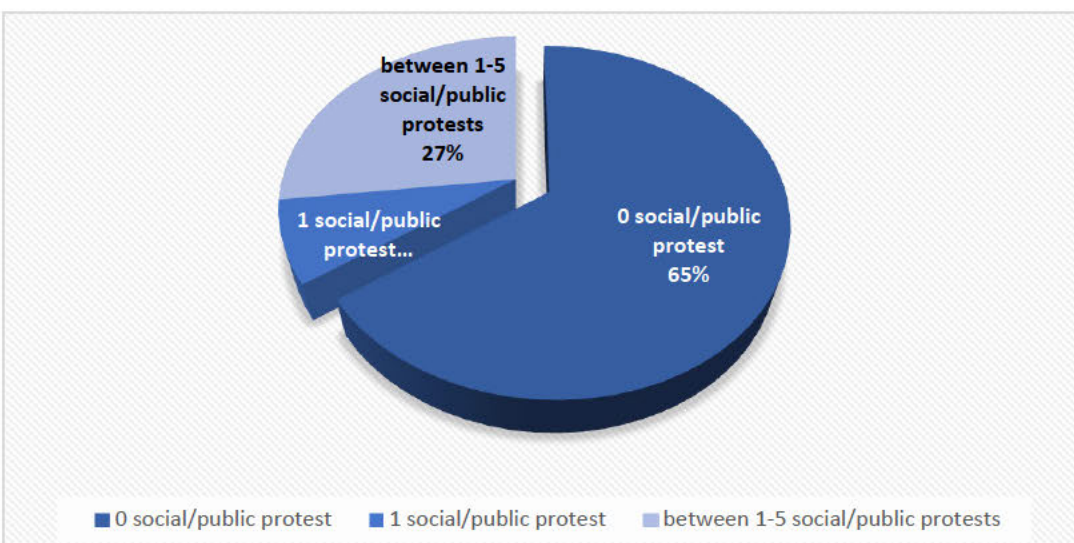


As shown in Figure 5.7 above, a total of 73.1% of the respondents indicated external meetings that were attended as requested by external stakeholders to address a particular issue in the last 12 months were either 1-5 (38.5%) or between 5-10 (34.6%); 15.4% of the respondents indicated that between 15-20 meetings took place, and the remaining 11.5% indicated that between 10-15 meetings occurred.

5.4.1.10 The number of social/public protests against Mondi recorded in the last 12 months.

Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of social/public protests against Mondi recorded in the last 12 months, and their responses are reflected in Figure 5.8 below.

Figure 0.8 The number of recorded social/public protests against Mondi.

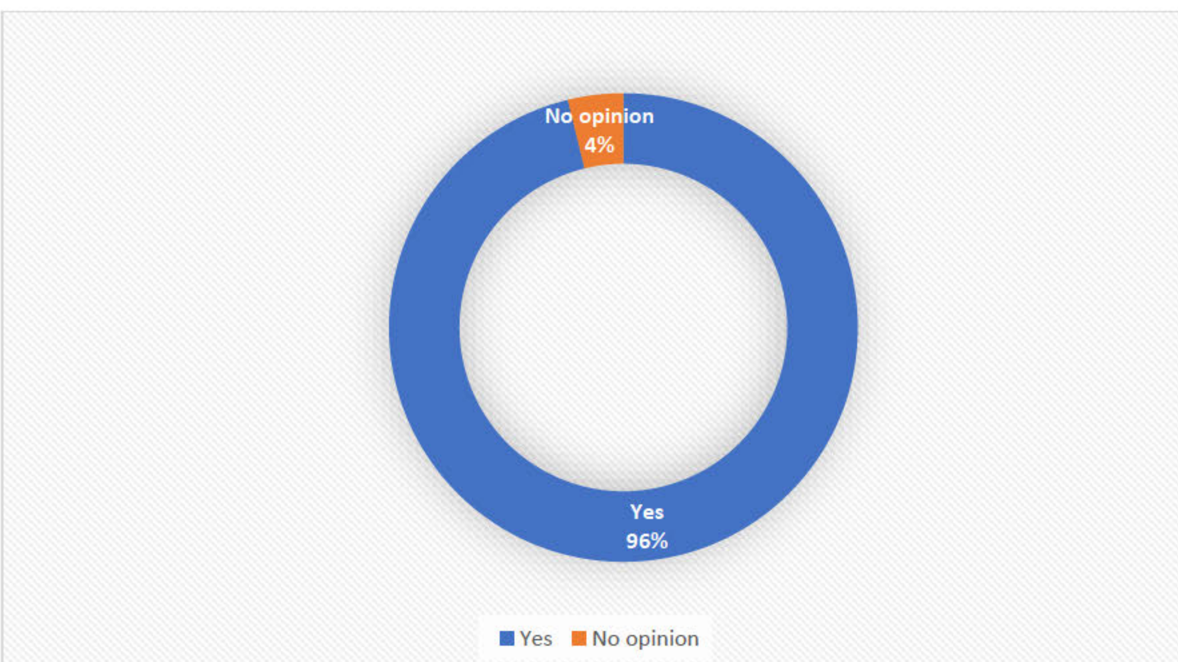


As depicted in Figure 5.8 above, most of the respondents (65%), indicated that no social/ public protest occurred; 27% of the respondents revealed that between 1-5 social or public protests occurred, and 8% of the respondents indicated the occurrence of only one social/public protest in the last twelve months. From these results, it may be suggested that external stakeholder engagement is important in diffusing mistrust, and this will reduce social or public protests by the communities.

5.4.1.11 The opinion about spending resources, and time engaging external stakeholder as a good business strategy.

The frequency and dispersion of the responses to the question pertaining to the spending resources, and time spent engaging external stakeholder being considered as good business strategy are reflected in Figure 5.9 below.

Figure 0.9 The opinion about spending resources, and time engaging external stakeholder as a good business strategy.



As illustrated in Figure 5.9, most of the respondents (96%) indicated that the resources expended and time spent to engage the external stakeholder is a good business strategy, whereas only 4% of the respondents indicated otherwise. The purpose sample was primarily drawn from employees who have some level of interface with stakeholder engagements, and therefore, is not surprising that the majority of respondents would support this statement since to a great extent, their core duties are centred around stakeholder engagement.

5.4.1.12 The benefits of stakeholder engagement to Mondi

Figure 5.10 below displays the cumulative responses of the participants surveyed regarding the benefits of stakeholder engagement to Mondi.

Figure 0.10 The benefits of stakeholder engagement to Mondi

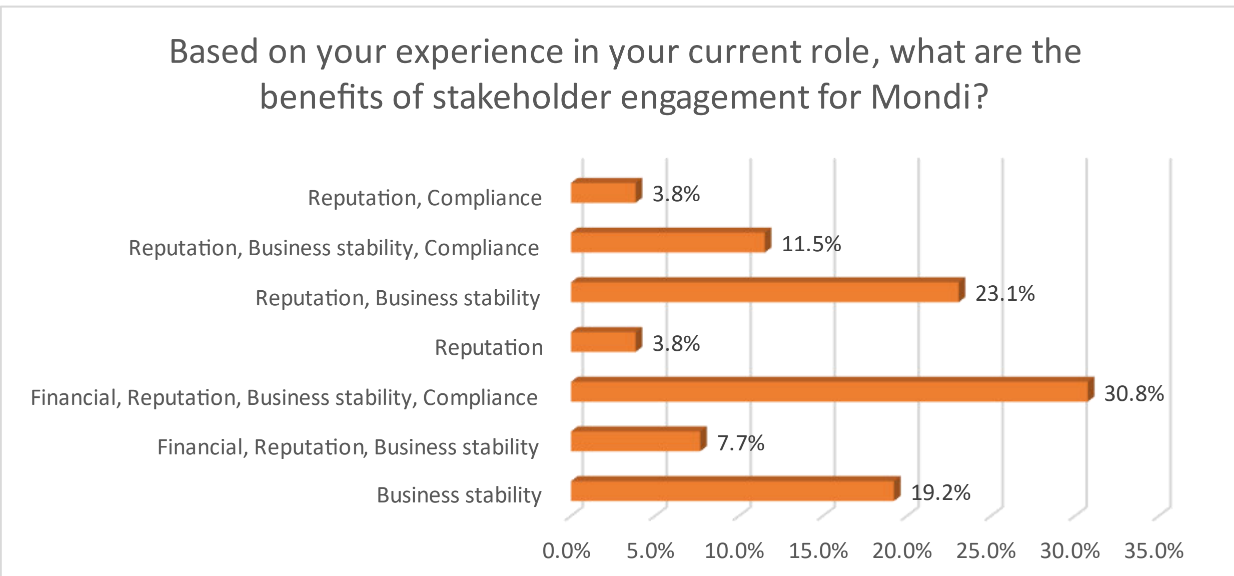


Figure 5.10 indicates responses to the question “Based on your experience in your current role, what are the benefits of stakeholder engagement for Mondi”. The respondents were given an option to select more than one response to represent their views on the benefits of stakeholder engagement. Thirty percent of the respondents indicated that Financial, reputation, business stability and compliance as core benefits. Reputation and business stability attracted 23% and business stability at 19% as separate selection. About 3.8% of the respondents who indicated that compliance and reputation

is the least benefit. Most respondents indicated business stability as the primary benefit of stakeholder engagement.

Noting that many respondents are stakeholder engagement practitioners on behalf of Mondi, the perceived benefits are based on individual opinions, and are likely to drive the stakeholder engagement agenda for Mondi.

5.4.1.13 The risks associated with lack of stakeholder engagement.

The objective of this question was to establish if respondents see any perceived risk(s) associated with lack of stakeholder engagement, and Table 5.6 below reflects the cumulative views of participants within the study group.

Table 0.6 The risks associated with lack of stakeholder engagement.

Risk item	Frequency			Percent		
	Yes	No	**Total**	Yes	No	**Total**
Loss of profitability	11	15	**26**	42,30%	57,70%	**100%**
Loss of reputation	24	2	**26**	92,30%	7,70%	**100%**
Business instability	23	3	**26**	88,50%	11,50%	**100%**
Non-Compliance	12	14	**26**	46,20%	53,80%	**100%**

As indicated in Table 5.6 above, analysing the risks associated with lack of stakeholder engagement in terms of loss of profitability, only 42.3% of the respondents indicated that it was a risk and the majority 57.7 % of the respondents indicated that loss of profitability was not risk stemming out of lack of engagement with stakeholders. In addition, 92.3% of the respondents indicated that loss of reputation was a risk associated with lack of stakeholder engagement. Most of the respondents (88.5 %), also indicated that business instability is a risk associated with lack of stakeholder engagement.

A significant proportion of respondents (53.8%) also indicated that poor stakeholder engagement or total lack of it, would not necessarily results in non-compliance. Drawing from the responses to the previous question, it appears that reputation is high on Mondi's stakeholder management agenda, while business stability and profit realisations are also important. These results are encouraging since they are in line with the literature review, as research has shown that the major risks associated with lack of stakeholder engagement among others, are loss of reputation and business instability.

Figure 0.11 Word cloud of risks and benefits associated with lack of stakeholder engagement for Mondi.

5.4.1.14 The link between corporations practicing stakeholder management and enterprise's performance, profit, stability, and growth.

The respondents were asked if they agree with the statement: "Corporations practicing stakeholder management will be relatively successful in performance, profit, stability and growth". Table 5.7 below depicts the link between corporate practising stakeholders' management, enterprise performance, profit, stability, and growth,

Table 0.7 Corporations practicing stakeholder management and other variables.

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	24	92.3	92.3
	No	2	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	

As illustrated in Table 5.7, most of the respondents (92.3%) indicated that corporations practicing stakeholder management are more likely to achieve improved performance, profit, stability, and growth, whereas 7.7% of the respondents indicated there is no link between corporations practicing stakeholder management and the enterprise's performance, profit, stability and growth.

5.4.2 Findings of inferential statistics

Inferential statistics principal job is to estimate the size of a large group (or population) and make inferences about the data using methods for testing hypotheses. Sample data are used in inferential statistics because they are more economical and time-efficient than data gathered from the complete population. It allows one to come to reasonable assumptions about the larger population based on the sample's characteristics. Regression analysis and hypothesis testing are two categories of inferential statistics. In hypothesis testing, confidence intervals are frequently employed to look at population features. Hypothesis testing is used to test assumptions and draw conclusions about the population from the available sample data. A null hypothesis and an alternative hypothesis must first be established, and then a statistical test of significance must be carried out.

A conclusion is drawn based on the value of the test statistic, the critical value, p-value, and the confidence intervals while regression analysis is used to quantify how one variable will change with respect to another variable. In this study both hypothesis testing and regression methods were used.

McCruaig and Di Prospero (2016), and Collins and Norman (2018), have established that parametric tests can be used to analyse ordinal data. Moreover, the aforementioned authors concluded that parametric tests were generally more robust than nonparametric tests when analysing ordinal data, such as that seen in Likert scales, even when statistical assumptions (such as the normal distribution of data) were violated. In this study the analytical tools that were used, include the Factor analysis, spearman's correlation matrix, and regression equation.

5.4.2.1 Testing hypotheses

Initially, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Principal Axis Factoring (PAF or PFA) were conducted on the data set with items. The minimal allowable factor loading of 0.499 was established after the items' high and low factor loadings were studied (Ramrakhiani, 2017). The lowest acceptable coefficient is 0.3, but ideally, a component should have at least three factors loading it with a coefficient value of 0.7 (Cole, 2017).

The scale construct validity was determined using PCA with Varimax Rotation. Two statistical tests were used to evaluate if the sub-scales were suitable for factor analysis. The first was the Bartlett Test of Sphericity, in which it was examined if the subscales of the scale were inter-independent, and the latter was the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO), which examined sample sufficiency. As shown in Table 5.8, O=0. 624 (roughly 0.60) showed that the sample data were eligible for factor analysis (Cole, 2017).

HO3**:** There is no significant association between social stakeholder management practises and business performance and stability.

HA3**:** There is significant association between social stakeholder management practises and business performance and stability.

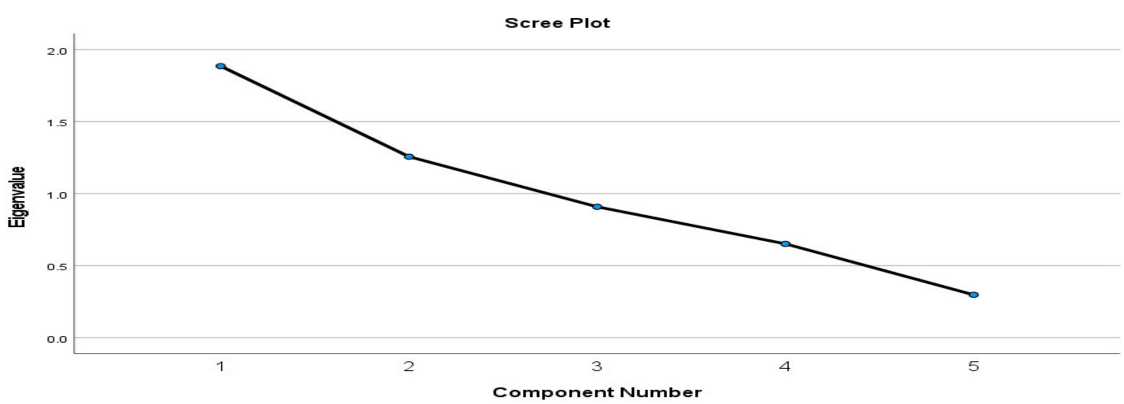
This table 5.8 below shows two tests that indicate the suitability of the data for structure detection indicating the proportion of variance in variables that might be caused by underlying factors.

Table 0.8 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.624
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	19.641
	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

A scree plot of the factor analysis results demonstrated the high eigenvalue of the first component (1.885) with diminishing values for components 2 through, beyond which the eigenvalues dropped below the required 1.0 value. Figure 5.13 presents the scree plot of eigenvalues.

Figure 0.12 Scree plot of eigenvalues



These outcomes demonstrate the principal component technique of extraction's unrotated factor loadings for each of the factors. The variances (eigenvalues) of the first two factors were more than 1. The percentage of variability explained by Factor 1 was 37.701 %, and the percentage of variability explained by Factor 2 was 25.138%. The scree plot shows that the first two factors accounted for 62.839% as total variability in the data. The other variables account for a very small part of the variability and are most likely insignificant. From this, it can be concluded that the scale had two factors.

A Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation was used to confirm the scale construct validity. The results of the factor analysis, the factor loadings and the variance explained were given in Table 5.8, as shown below, and three factors with eigenvalues greater than one were identified. Table 5.8 displays the two factors as follows:

Factor 1

- Employment opportunities
- Contracting & business opportunities

Factor 2

- Land & forestry issues

The table 5.9 below presents PCA results with Varimax Rotation where the number of variables were reduced, while preserving as much information as possible.

Table 0.9 Results of PCA

Rotated Component Matrix[a]		
	Component	
	1	**2**
Employment opportunities	.887	.158
Contracting & business opportunities	.807	.242
Environmental issues & concerns	.146	.614
Corporate Social Investment	.606	-.402
Land & forestry issues	.001	.832

***HO3a*:** There is no significant association between employment opportunities, contracting and business opportunities, environmental issues and concerns, corporate social investment, land, forestry issues and business performance and stability.

***HA3a*:** There is significant association between employment opportunities, contracting and business opportunities, environmental issues and concerns, corporate social investment, land, forestry issues and business performance and stability.

Hence it can be concluded that in terms of analysing the factors (issues) that influence stakeholder engagement, only 3 factors out 5 were deemed to be very important. On these three factors, the 62.839% variation in stakeholder engagement was explained by them and the remaining percentage was explained by the other two factors as shown in the scree plot Figure 5.13

Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, implying that employment opportunities, contracting and business opportunities, land and forestry issues do impact business performance and stability. This further implies that Mondi's stakeholder management practice addresses these issues and concerns during engagement and that, the successful management of these results in business stability.

5.4.2.2 Correlation matrix

According to Wegner (2018), correlation matrix is a statistical method used to evaluate the strength of the relationship between two quantitative variables. One of these variables is dependent and the other is independent. In this analysis, dependent variables (DV) were identified, namely the business strategy integration. The independent variables (IVs) that were measured against the (BPS) were IV1 and IV2, as displayed in Table 5.8. In other words, the correlation matrix seeks to answer the following hypothesis:

HO1: There is no significant association between stakeholder engagement practices and business strategy integration.

HA1: There is significant association between stakeholder engagement practices and business strategy integration.

Thus, this section aims to analyse how Mondi's stakeholder engagement practices are integrated into business strategy.

Let:

IV1: In your current role, do you engage with external stakeholders?

IV2: In the last 12 months, how many external meetings that were requested by external stakeholders to address a particular issue, did you attend?

IV3: In your own opinion, do you think spending resources, and time engaging external stakeholders is a good business strategy?

The Spearman correlation matrix, which is used to investigate the dependence between multiple variables at the same time is presented in table 5.10 below, containing the correlation coefficients between each variable.

Table 0.10 Spearman Correlation matrix

IVs	DV	Coefficient	P-Value	Comment
IV1	IV3	-0.058	0.779	There is insignificant/ weak/ negative relationship between employees' current role and business strategy integration
IV2	IV3	0.042	0.838	There is insignificant weak positive relationship between having external meetings attended which were requested by external stakeholders to address a particular issue as a good business strategy

HO1a: There is no significant association between employee's current role and external stakeholders' engagement with business strategy integration.

HA1a: There is significant association between employee's current role and external stakeholders' engagement with business strategy integration.

The results showed that IV1 ($r = -0.058$, p-value = 0.779) was insignificant and there was a weak or negative relationship between engaging with external stakeholders and spending resources, and time engaging external stakeholder as a good business strategy.

Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted, and it can be concluded that employee's current role and external stakeholders' engagement has no association with business strategy integration.

5.4.2.3 Pearson correlation coefficient

The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to investigate the relationship between the following hypotheses of the study. Also, linear regression was used to find the association and strength of the relationships. Pearson correlation and linear regression tests were run using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

1. A significant relationship will be observed between the area of operations (V2) and frequency of stakeholder engagements (V4)
2. A correlation will be observed between role category (V1) and where the stakeholders are often engaged (V5)
3. A significant correlation will be observed between role category (V1) and type of stakeholders engaged (V7)
4. A significant correlation will be observed between the area of operations (V2) and issues most prevalent during stakeholder engagements (V8)
5. A correlation will be observed between role category (V1) and most prevalent issues raised during stakeholder engagements (V8)
6. A correlation will be observed between the area of operations (V2) and the number of incidents recorded in the last 12 months (V9)
7. A correlation will be observed between the area of operations (V2) and the number of protests against Mondi in the last 12 months (V11)
8. A positive correlation will be observed between the role category (V1) and opinion on spending resources and time on the engagement of external stakeholders (V12)
9. A correlation will be observed between role category (V1) and opinion on benefits of stakeholder engagement (V13)
10. A correlation will be observed between role category (V1) and risks associated with lack of stakeholder engagement (V14)
11. A correlation will be observed between role category (V1) and opinion on stakeholder management and performance, profit, and stability (V15)

Table 5.11 presents the Pearson correlation coefficient used to measure the strength of a linear association between two variables.

Table 0.11 Correlations

Variables	V1	V2	V4	V5	V7	V8	V9	V11	V12	V13	V14
V1	**1.00**										
V2	-.307	**1.00**									
V4	.119	-.002	**1.00**								
V5	-.169	.008	.253	**1.00**							
V7	.000	-.103	-.389*	-.209	**1.00**						
V8	.000	-.153	.041	.096	.291	**1.00**					
V9	.046	-.033	-.162	.381	.070	.223	**1.00**				
V11	-.278	.119	-.160	-.035	.254	.054	-.018	**1.00**			
V12	.104	.033	-.223	-.257	.126	-.402*	-.133	.275	**1.00**		
V13	-.257	.050	.194	.303	-.064	.275	.091	.207	.205	**1.00**	
V14	.023	.076	-.144	.018	-.374	.109	.174	-.179	-.206	-.244	**1.00**
V15	.542**	-.075	.143	-.192	.000	.193	.016	-.210	-.058	-.089	.109

*ρ < .05; **ρ < .001

The relationship between different variables of the study was analysed using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The test is used to measure the strength of the relationship between two variables and is measured on a scale that varies from + 1 through 0 to – 1. The outcome of the analysis only revealed a significant and positive relationship between role category (V1) and their opinion about stakeholder management and performance, profit, and stability (V15) (r=.542**, p < .001). On the other hand, a negative and significant relationship was reported between the opinions of the participants about spending resources and time on the engagement of external stakeholders (V12), and the most prevalent issues during stakeholder engagement (V8) (r=-.402*, p < .05). Furthermore, a negative and significant relationship was identified between the frequency of stakeholder engagement (V4) and the type of stakeholder engagement (V7) (r=-.389*, p < .05).

5.4.2.4 Chi-square test

Chi-square tests were carried out to establish the influence of social stakeholders on Mondi's business decisions and shareholder value creation. The major findings are discussed hereunder.

According to Wegner (2016), the p-value is the probability of obtaining a test statistic equal to or more extreme than the result obtained from the sample data, given that the null hypothesis is true. In other words, a p-value less than 5% would indicate that there is an association between social stakeholders in Mondi's business decisions and shareholder value creation. Conversely, a p-value above 5% would imply that there is no statistical evidence to indicate that there is an association between social stakeholders in Mondi's business decisions and shareholder value creation. The main hypothesis to be addressed is as follows:

HO2: There is no significant association between social stakeholders, business decisions and shareholder value creation.

HA2: There is significant association between social stakeholders, business decisions and shareholder value creation.

5.4.2.5 The relationship between shareholder value creation and external meetings attended on/per the request by external stakeholders to address a particular issue.

Another objective of the study was to ascertain whether there was a relationship between shareholder value creation and external meetings attended on the request by external stakeholders to address a particular issue. Or whether the opposite is true Table 5.12 below shows the meeting between stakeholders to address issues on value creation.

Table 0.12 Chi-Square Tests on shareholder value creation and external meetings attended.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.651[a]	6	.463
Likelihood Ratio	6.968	6	.324
Linear-by-Linear Association	.203	1	.652
N of Valid Cases	26		

HO2a: There is no significant relationship between shareholder value creation and external meetings attended per the request by external stakeholders to address a particular issue.

HA2a: There is significant relationship between shareholder value creation and external meetings attended per the request by external stakeholders to address a particular issue.

Through the analysis of the Pearson Chi-Square test result (table 5.12) the p-value of 0.463 revealed that statistically, there was an insignificant relationship between shareholder value creation and external meetings attended on the request of external stakeholders to address a particular issue, or the lack of these meetings, pertaining to their businesses. In this case, the null hypothesis is accepted. This finding implies that external meetings attended on the request of external stakeholders to address a particular issue does not improve shareholder value creation.

5.4.2.6 The association between shareholder value creation and corporations practicing stakeholder management.

Regarding the relationship between shareholder value creation and corporations practicing stakeholder management, an analysis of the Pearson Chi-Square test result in table 5.12 revealed a p-value of 0.002.

Table 0.13 Chi-Square Tests on shareholder value creation and corporations practicing stakeholder management will be relatively successful in performance, profit, stability and growth.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.557[a]	2	.002
Likelihood Ratio	5.966	2	.051
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.852	1	.016
N of Valid Cases	26		

***HO2b*:** There is no significant association between shareholder value creation and the assumption that corporations practicing stakeholder management will be relatively successful in performance, profit, stability, and growth.

***HA2b*:** There is a significant association between shareholder value creation and the assumption that corporations practicing stakeholder management will be relatively successful in performance, profit, stability, and growth.

The analysis in table 5.13, rejected null hypothesis. The above results imply therefore that, statistically, there was a positively significant relationship between shareholder value creation and that corporations practicing stakeholder management will be relatively successful in performance, profit, stability, and growth. Hence, corporations practicing stakeholder management will be relatively successful in performance, profit, stability, and growth increase the shareholder value creation.

5.4.2.7 Regression equation

Wegner (2016) defines regression analysis as the mathematical description of the connection between a set of independent variables and a dependent variable. Linear regression analysis finds the straight-line equation representing the relationships between two numeric variables: the independent variables, and the dependent variable. As presented in table 5.14 below, regression analysis was used to assess the strength of the relationship between variables.

Table 0.14 Regression analysis

			S.E.	**β**	**t**	**ρ**
V2	→	V4	.215	-.002	-.010	.992
V1	→	V5	.220	-.169	-.839	.410
V1	→	V7	.220	.000	.000	1.00
V2	→	V8	.128	-.153	-.759	.455
V1	→	V8	.207	.000	.000	1.00
V2	→	V9	.120	-.033	-.160	.874
V2	→	V11	.082	.119	.586	.563
V1	→	V12	.053	.104	.514	.612
V1	→	V13	.200	-.257	-1.301	.206
V1	→	V14	.023	.111	.913	.196
V1	→	V15	.062	.542	3.157	.004

Linear regression analysis was performed to investigate the strength of the relationship between different variables of the study. Most of the relationships were non-significant, and findings revealed only a single positive significant relationship between role category (V1) and their opinion about stakeholder management and performance, profit, and stability (V15) ($\beta = .542$, $p < .01$). Thus, it can be concluded that the role category of the participants influences their opinion about stakeholder management and performance, profit, and stability.

5.2.4.8 The relation between 'Role Category' and other Variables

The relationship between role category and other variables such as the frequency of stakeholder management, place of engagement, and the number of incidents recorded in the last 12 months was presented through pie graphs. As shown in Figure 5.14, participants from stakeholder management are dominant in each frequency graph. Interestingly, they have entirely dominated the quarterly graph. Thus, it can be concluded that people from the stakeholders' management team mostly interact with their stakeholders on a quarterly basis. Furthermore, the graphs also show that people from forestry operations mostly engage with their stakeholders on an ad-hoc basis.

Figure 0.13 The relationship between role category and frequency of engagement

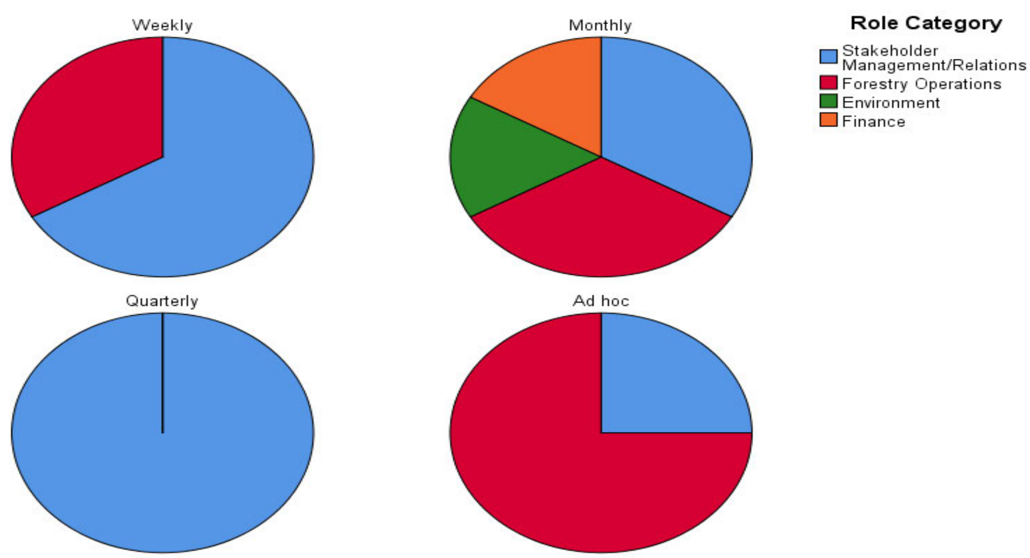


Figure 5.15 shows the relationship between role category and the place of engagement. It is observed that participants from stakeholders' management and forestry operations engage with their stakeholders at company offices, neutral venues, and stakeholders' offices. However, participants from finance and environment usually engage with their stakeholders in the company offices and stakeholders' offices alternatively.

Figure 0.14 The relationship between role category and the place of engagement

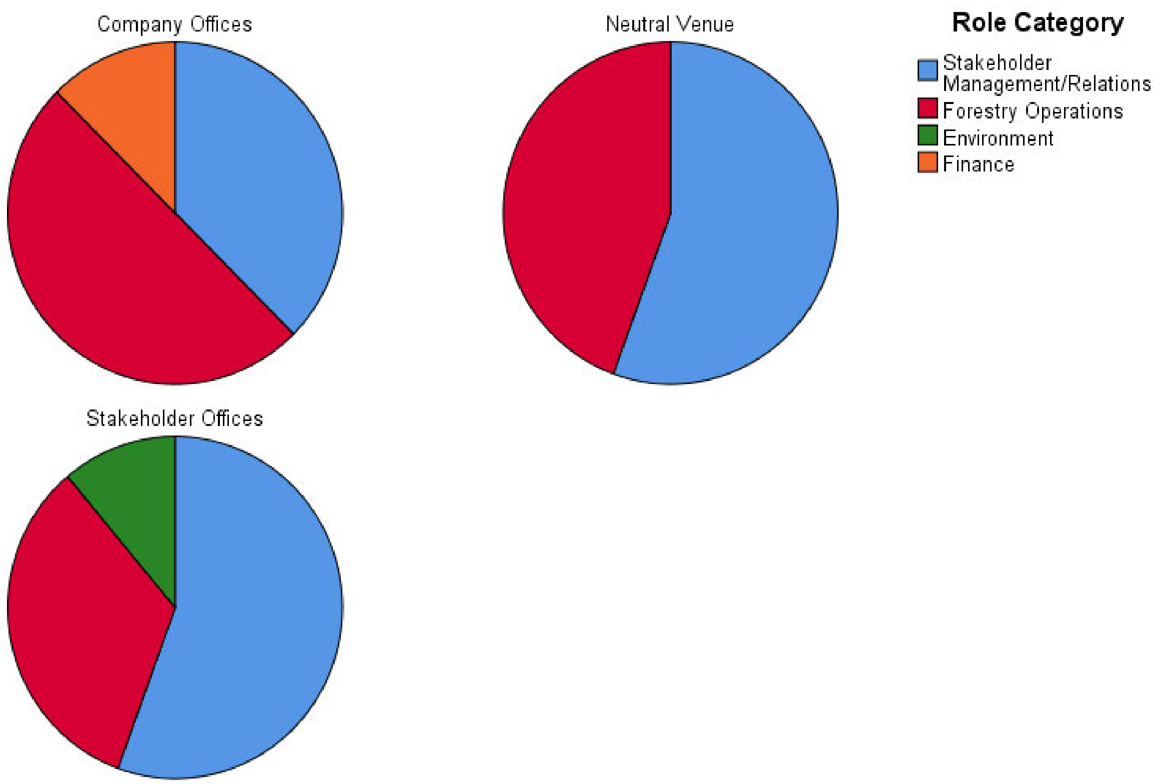
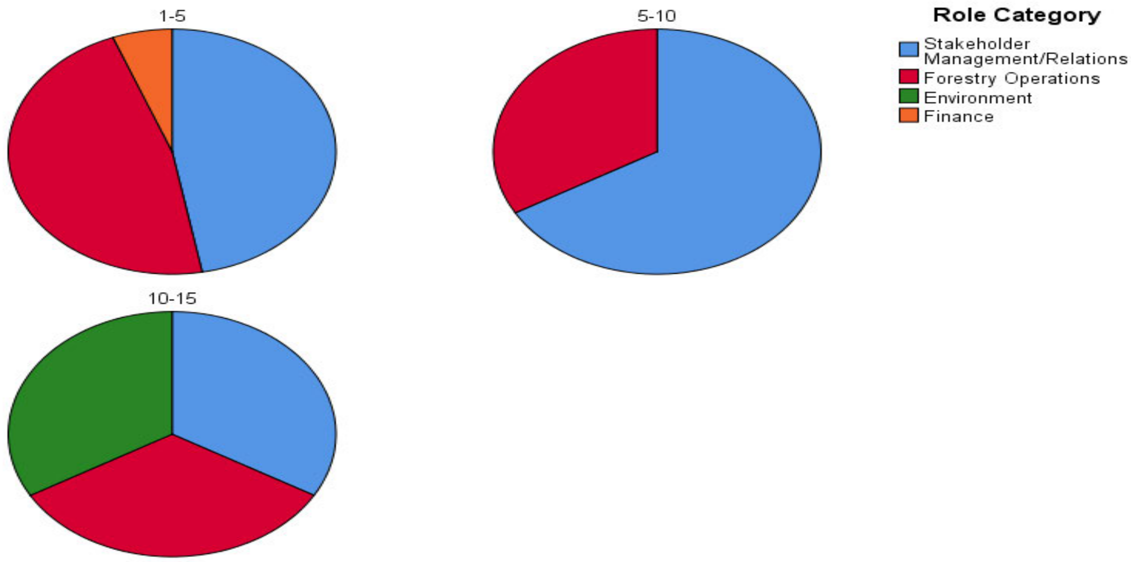


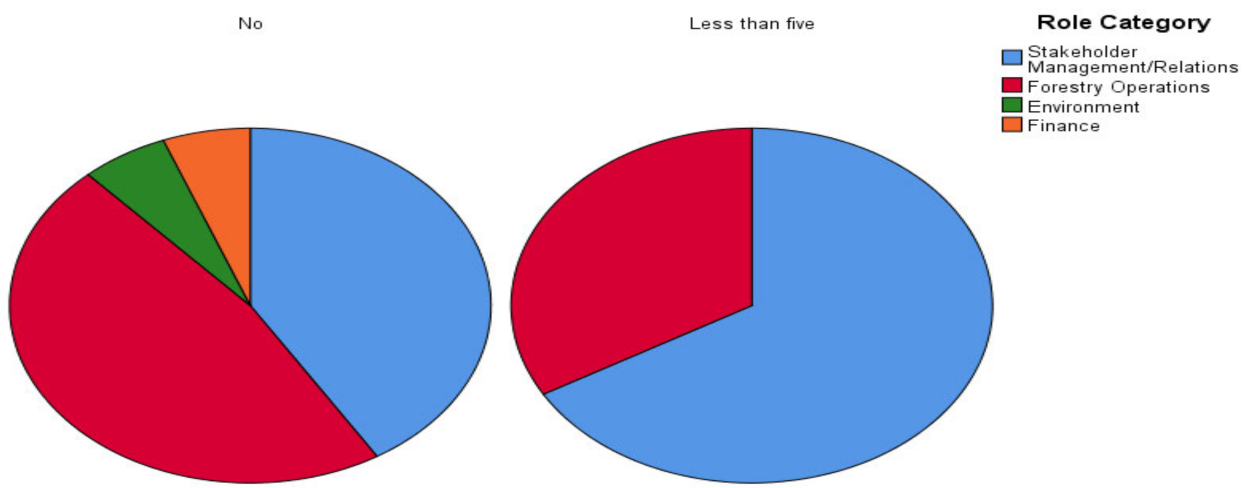
Figure 5.16 shows the relationship between external incidents recorded relating to social stakeholders and the role category of the participants of the study. The majority of the participants from stakeholders' management have recorded 5-10 events for most of the time. However, some participants from stakeholders' management groups have also recorded 1-5 and 10-15 events. Similarly, participants from forestry operations have recorded events ranging from 1-15. But all participants from finance and environments groups have recorded 1-5 and 10-15 events respectively.

Figure 0.15 The relationship between role category and the number of incidents recorded in the last 12 months.



Similarly, Figure 5.17 shows the relationship between the role category of the participants and the number of protests recorded by the participants in the last twelve months. Participants from the stakeholder management group has recorded the most number of protests, whereas people from environment and finance groups have recorded no protests at all.

Figure 0.16 The relationship between role category and the number of protests against Mondi



5.2.4.9 ANOVA Tests

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the variance in the variables. Frequency of stakeholder engagement, place of engagement, number of incidents recorded in the last 12 months, external meetings requested by external stakeholders, number of protests against Mondi in the last 12 months were used as factors, whereas role category and area of operations were used as dependent variables. As shown in Tables 5.15 and 5.16, the findings revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between any factor based on role category and area of operations.

Table 0.15 ANOVA table for the role category

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1) Frequency of Stakeholder Engagement	Between Groups	3.821	3	1.274	2.711	.070
	Within Groups	10.333	22	.470		
	Total	14.154	25			
2) Place of Engagement	Between Groups	.834	2	.417	.720	.497
	Within Groups	13.319	23	.579		
	Total	14.154	25			
3) Number of Incidents Recorded in the last 12 Months	Between Groups	.938	2	.469	.816	.454
	Within Groups	13.216	23	.575		
	Total	14.154	25			
4) External Meetings requested by External Stakeholders	Between Groups	2.139	1	2.139	4.272	.050
	Within Groups	12.015	24	.501		
	Total	14.154	25			
5) Number of Protests against Mondi in the last 12 Months	Between Groups	1.095	1	1.095	2.012	.169
	Within Groups	13.059	24	.544		
	Total	14.154	25			

Dependent Variable: Role Category

Table 0.16 NOVA table for the Area of Operations

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1) Frequency of Stakeholder Engagement	Between Groups	3.650	3	1.217	.826	.493
	Within Groups	32.389	22	1.472		
	Total	36.038	25			
2) Place of Engagement	Between Groups	3.816	2	1.908	1.362	.276
	Within Groups	32.222	23	1.401		
	Total	36.038	25			
3) Number of Incidents Recorded in the last 12 Months	Between Groups	1.480	2	.740	.492	.617
	Within Groups	34.559	23	1.503		
	Total	36.038	25			
4) External Meetings requested by External Stakeholders	Between Groups	3.693	1	3.693	2.740	.111
	Within Groups	32.346	24	1.348		
	Total	36.038	25			
5) Number of Protests against Mondi in the last 12 Months	Between Groups	.509	1	.509	.344	.563
	Within Groups	35.529	24	1.480		
	Total	36.038	25			

Dependent Variable: Role Area of Operations

5.2.4.10 Summary and conclusion of the quantitative phase

The study aimed to investigate the stakeholder management practices at Mondi South Africa. The findings of the study revealed that most of the participants engage with external stakeholders. Although the frequency of stakeholder engagements varies, the majority of the participants engage with their stakeholders on a weekly basis. The findings also revealed that the loss of reputation, loss of profitability, non-compliance, and business instability were some of the major risks associated with lack of stakeholder engagement, whereas the role category of the participants influences their opinion about stakeholder management and performance, profit, and stability. Furthermore, a negative but significant relationship was reported between the opinions of the participants about spending resources and time on the engagement of external stakeholders and the most prevalent issues during stakeholder engagements, whereas a negative but significant relationship was identified between the frequency of stakeholder engagement and the type of stakeholder engagement.

5.3 Presentation and discussion of Qualitative results

5.3.1 Introduction

The qualitative research element used open–ended questions and the quantitative approach used closed-ended questions as ways of collecting data. The open-ended questions for the qualitative approach allowed the process of interaction between the participant and the researcher to be flexible and participants could respond in their own words. For this study, this qualitative approach characteristic was critical because the researcher in this context, needed to make participants comfortable in responding to questions and be able to articulate the issues in their own way. This chapter presents the qualitative research results, and begins with articulating the procedures followed, data organisation, identification of themes and discussions.

5.3.2 Phases 2 and 3: Interviews

The interviews were conducted through the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in real-time, and essentially Microsoft Teams. Morison et al. (2015, p. 227) note that asynchronous online interviews are similar to face-to-face interviews as they review the respondents' thoughts and their feedback about the topic to get enough insights from their attitudes, experiences, and ideas. Unlike the online survey which can be totally administered remotely and independently, the nature of engagement, data collection for qualitative research requires a high level of participant-researcher interaction. The research studies by Faherty et al. (2019), was able to conduct focus group discussions for approximately 90 minutes with school and stakeholders from across the United States using online virtual platforms.

From among many platforms, Microsoft Teams was chosen for the online interviews. Some reasons for choosing Microsoft Teams were its network reliability, recording function, video capability and transcription option. The major disadvantage of this method was that the use of video had to be limited sometimes in order to improve the voice quality of the interactions. The video interaction is essential to maintain that researcher-participant relationship but more importantly, to determine essential non-verbal cues to facilitate the interaction. Phase 2 of the data collection process had 10 open-ended questions crafted to solicit responses to the following research question:

5.3.2.1 Specific Research question:

How is stakeholder management integrated into the forestry business strategy?

The final phase of the data collection process had 6 questions to answer the following strategic questions:

1) *To what extent is stakeholder management practice having an influence in Mondi's forestry business decisions?*
2) *How does the practice of stakeholder management translate into shareholder and stakeholder value creation?*
3) *What are the critical factors that guide stakeholder management practice for successful implementation?*

Overall, the data collection process went smoothly with minimum glitches, and it was an important learning and innovative way of conducting research during the Covid-19 era.

5.3.2.2 Procedures followed.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze contextual data following a six-step process: (a) familiarization with the data, (b) generating original codes, (c) looking for themes, (d) checking themes, (e) identifying and naming themes, and (f) writing up the paper as suggested in Braun & Clarke, (2006). The NVivo software was then used to analyse the qualitative interviews. The advantage of using thematic analysis is that it enables the researcher to blend analysis of code frequency with analysis of their more implicit interpretations, allowing for more nuance in conceptual investigations (Joffe, 2012).

a) Familiarisation with the data

The process of familiarisation with the data begun with the task of developing the transcripts. The software used to conduct interviews (Microsoft Teams) has a transcription option when recording interviews and this made the process much easier. Much of the work was done in checking that the data is recorded properly as the software tends to misinterpret some of the words. Some of the respondents would use their mother tongue to respond to questions or sometimes mix it with English in one sentence. All such expressions were then translated into English and put into brackets next to the original wording.

Where the recording was not clear, the researcher was able to revert to the respondent for clarity. Both phases of the qualitative study amounted to over 30 000 words.

b) Generating Initial Codes

The researcher generated both latent and semantic codes for the interviews. The coding for phase 3 of the interviews was mostly semantic and latent for the senior executive. The sematic coding process involved looking for explicit and obvious meanings attached to data sets. The coding process for senior executives was latent, which involves finding out the implicit and underlying meanings attached to responses.

The coding was mostly inductive to allow the focus on participants' perspectives and meanings attached to stakeholder management in general and its benefits specifically. The coding was not deductive as the researcher did not focus on theoretical perspective to code. The researcher coded all the words of the participants, leaving nothing out.

c) Generating Initial Themes

In total, thirty (30) codes were generated for the Nvivo project using data from the phase 2 interviews. Another thirty (30) codes were generated for the Nvivo project using data from the phase 3 interviews which were held with senior officials. The codes generated from phase 2 of the interviews were then clustered into four themes. For phase 3 interviews, the generated codes were clustered into seven themes. This was done through the identification of patterns within the codes to allow for clustering for theme development.

d) Reviewing themes

This next step involved reviewing codes under each theme. In this stage, codes were merged and demerged. In reviewing themes, the researcher focused on themes that are relevant to the research questions. As a result, some themes were recreated, renamed, and some discarded.

e) Issues with the data

Following are some of the issues identified during the interviews and during the data transcription process:

- Some responses were in a mixture of English and Zulu. It should be stated however that participants were in fact, encouraged to respond using the language they are most comfortable with.
- Some participants avoided probing questions and limited their responses to the questions initially asked.
- The 'speech to text' transcription process from Microsoft Teams sometimes misspelt, misquoted, and/or recorded the incorrect interpretation of the responses. The recording was replayed over and over again to ensure the accurate capturing of the data for each interview.

5.4 Presentation of Biographic information

In line with the purposive sampling structure of this study, participants were identified according to their role categories aligned with the objectives of the study. The key criteria were that identified participants should be employees who have some interface with the stakeholder management practice of the organisation. The following table (Table 5.17) represents the identified participants from different Business Units who were interviewed for Phase 2 of this study:

Table 5.17 List of Phase 2 participants

No	Participant Code	*Area*
1	S P C	Durban HQ
2	L M: Midlands	Pietermaritzburg
3	L M: Central	Piet Retief
4	L M: Zululand	Richardsbay
5	C D F 1	Pietermaritzburg
6	C D F 2	Richardsbay
7	C D F 3	Piet Retief
8	En S	Richardsbay
9	A M: Iswepe	Piet Retief
10	A M: Mfolozi	Melmoth
11	A M: Mkhomazi	Pietermaritzburg

The final phase of the data collection involved identified strategic managers within the Forestry Division and from Public Affairs on behalf of Mondi South Africa Division and summarised in table 5.18 below.

Table 5.18 List of Phase 3 participants

No	Designation	*Place*
1	Public Affairs and Transformation	Durban HQ
2	Stakeholder Relations	Pietermaritzburg
3	Director of Operations: Forestry and Land	Pietermaritzburg
4	Head of Operations: Central	Piet Retief
5	Head of Operations: Zululand	Richardsbay

5.4.1 Thematic analysis: Qualitative findings

The summarised thematic areas are presented in table 5.19 below:

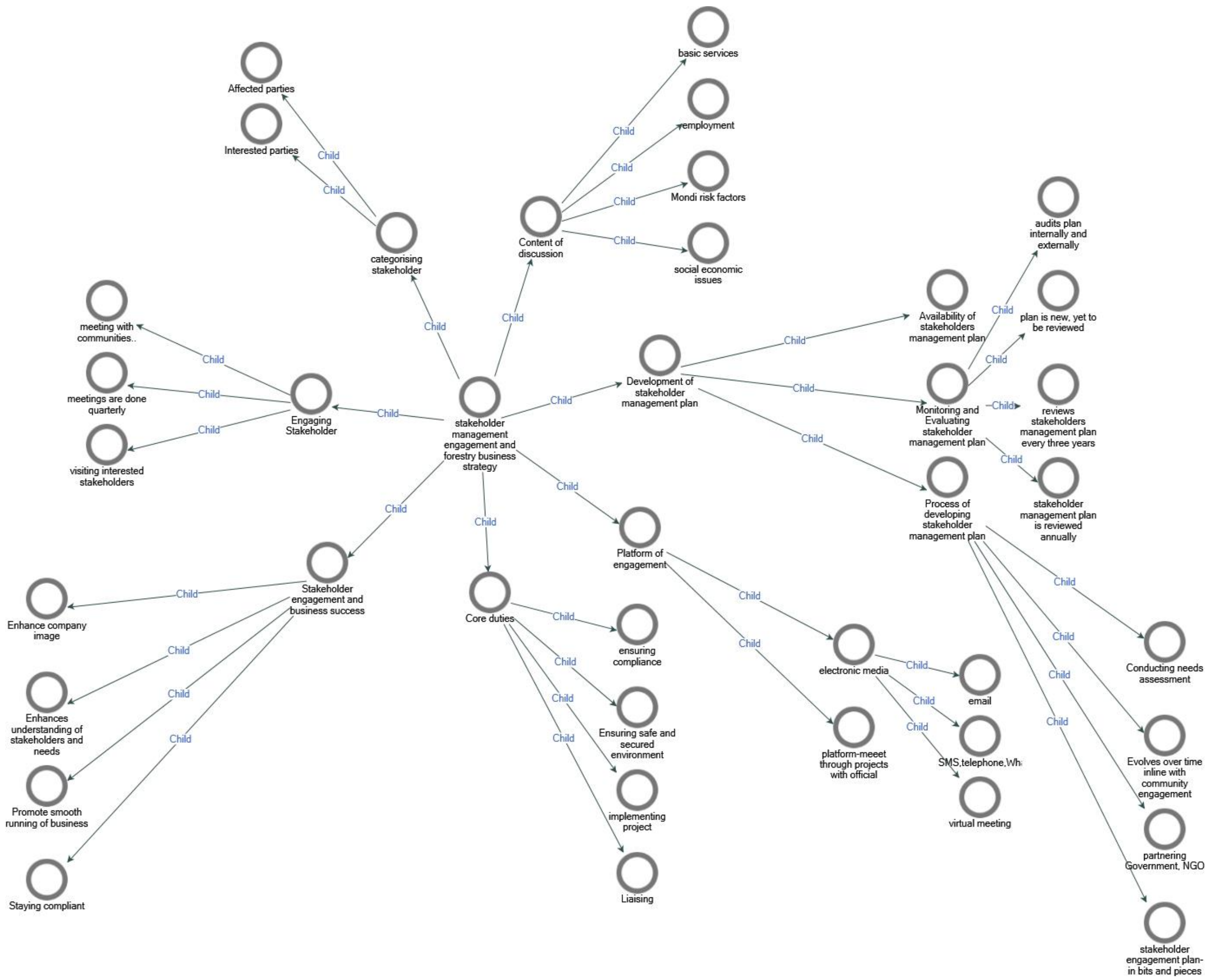
Table 5.19: Thematic areas

Theme	Code	Extract
Theme1: Stakeholder category	Affected parties	"They are divided into three: it's the neighboring communities, those that are at the borders of our plantation within the/a five-kilometer radius and then those that are residing on Mondi land"
	Interested parties	"And then we will have the municipalities who are interested, stakeholders and government departments"
Theme 2: Stakeholder Issues	Socio-economic issues	"And then when it comes to operations and their direct benefits is always around procurement and contracting opportunities for local businesses. So, I think that's one of the main areas of discussion that's coming up quite a lot in the recent years."
	Unemployment	"Unemployment. Imeeting ayipheli kungakhange kukhulunywe ngendaba (you will never get through a meeting without discussing the issue of unemployment) ye unemployment. Uh and income generating projects you know people interested in iindawo zokulima(land for farming). Uh, but

		basically unemployment is the main thing that is always a standing item”
	Mondi risk issues	“So that we discuss, and also some issues that are affecting Mondi and the assets like timber in terms of fires, uhm, theft and uhm some illegal activities that are happening in the plantation. So we do discuss those on the committees.”
Theme 3: Employee core duties	Compliance	“…ensuring compliance and trying to make everybody around me understand why if something is a no or a yes, why it is that? And it's not from us. It's because of the legislative requirements.”
	Operations	“OK. My core duties, I'm in charge of the (*Area M), all the management and stakeholder, safety, environment, and the operations uhm, of the area. So overall, uh, everything even in security and also around through land though, around (*Area M).” **Location removed to protect the identity of the employee*
	Project Implementation	“Uhm, in terms of stakeholder engagement, that's my role. And then in terms of CSI I'm also responsible for implementing and identifying some of the corporate social initiatives in communities; so understanding the needs of amacommunities ethu (our communities) through our engagement, through doing surveys in our communities, and then sort of putting together project proposals and partnerships with other stakeholders and implement our CSI programs.”
Theme 4: Development of stakeholder management plan	Availability of stakeholder management plan	“Yes, we do have a stakeholder management plan.”
		“Yeah, that I’m not sure, it's a good question and I've never, I've never really uhm, had that discussion with (T) around the engagement plan.”
		“eah, yeah, not in a complete compiled way. But you do have bits and pieces. i If one wants to engage with the

		company, you'll find bit and piece of that.”
	External audit	“Yeah, yeah we do the internal audit, and we also do the outside, the outside of Mondi audit, FSC under the name of SGS.”
	Review of the plan	“Sure, no. It’s so new we haven't reviewed it yet, so I won't be able to answer that. It kind of started this year.”
		“It's on a three-year basis because you know, you can't review it on a yearly basis? You can, yes you can pick up uhm, things on a yearly basis, but it doesn't make sense you know, reviewing it every year”
		“Every year we implement. And for the next phase, then we review with the communities; we go back towards the end of the year, we go back and remind them to say, remember in our three-year plan or year 2, this is what we said we're going to do. Is it still relevant?”
Theme 5: Business stability	Reputation	“We always want to be seen as a good corporate, as a business and I think it's important that we are able to portray that through our engagement with our stakeholders.”
	Promote smooth running of business	“Uhm, and I think also the value of having good stakeholder relations with your communities means that you are less impacted by any civil unrest directed to you. You are better prepared for situations such as that because you know you've engaged, you’ve provided opportunities for people to voice out their opinions, you've also provided yourself an opportunity to provide constant feedback. So I think it's proven to be quite valuable in that space”.
	Compliant	“So a lot of our engagement is really to make good neighbors. And then with having good neighbors we have a lower risk and then it also gives us license to operate. It gives us the ability to run our business. And do

		what we need to do with less of a threat and less of a worry because basically we got more frames out there, we got more support out there”.



Theme	Code	Extract
Theme 6: Community stakeholders	Forestry operations	“The community forms a broader part of the landscape that we operate in. Number one, remember things like FSC have got three legs and one of them is the community. But more so is that we need to coexist with the community. Number one, our activities should not impact only

		livelihoods negatively, but it should impact positively".
	Reputation and risks	"Our licence to operate depends on the relationship we hold necommunity (with communuities). We are so vulnerable that any misunderstanding between uMondi and the community is got a huge financial implication because in our industry all disputes are settled with fire".
	Benefits	"Thina,(Us) we get a reduced risk. We do. We get reduced business interruption risk. We get reduced actual financial risk in terms of losses so, so, so is business interruption that is minimized is a financial implication in when we do have fires"
Theme 7: Value creation	Stakeholder management practice	"Whoa, uhm, answering that question, you saw where I was coming from. So the way I see it, it's about if you're investing in stakeholder management, uh, I don't see that as a separate or separate from the holistic business, I think it's complementary and you had us talking about uh, accretive value earlier on, so I think it's complementary to our shareholder value creation. It complements that, and it enables us as a business to have a competitive edge or a competitive advantage. If done correctly, it can actually differentiate you to your competitors. To us, it's one holistic view, you know, (with) the manner that it's

		handled. It's a balanced approach."
Theme 8: Stakeholder management practice	Standards and procedures	"the FCC standards and criteria I think under principle three and four captures that really nicely in terms of what is expected as a standard and what criteria needs to be used, so which basically is in our processes already, it's firmly embedded there".
		"A couple of years ago, we made a decision not to use the Mondi SEAT process that had been done in the past. We decided to go the ISO 26 000 route, so we got a company in from Cape Town to actually come and do that. It's a voluntary process".

5.4.1.1 Theme 1: Stakeholder category

This theme describes the major groupings into which Mondi forestry stakeholders are divided for engagement. The participants stated that the stakeholders are categorized as either 'affected' or 'interested' parties. The participants went further to give examples of what these stakeholders are, and gave the following descriptions of parties engaged:

- traditional authorities
- schools
- Non-governmental Organisations
- Business forums
- Government

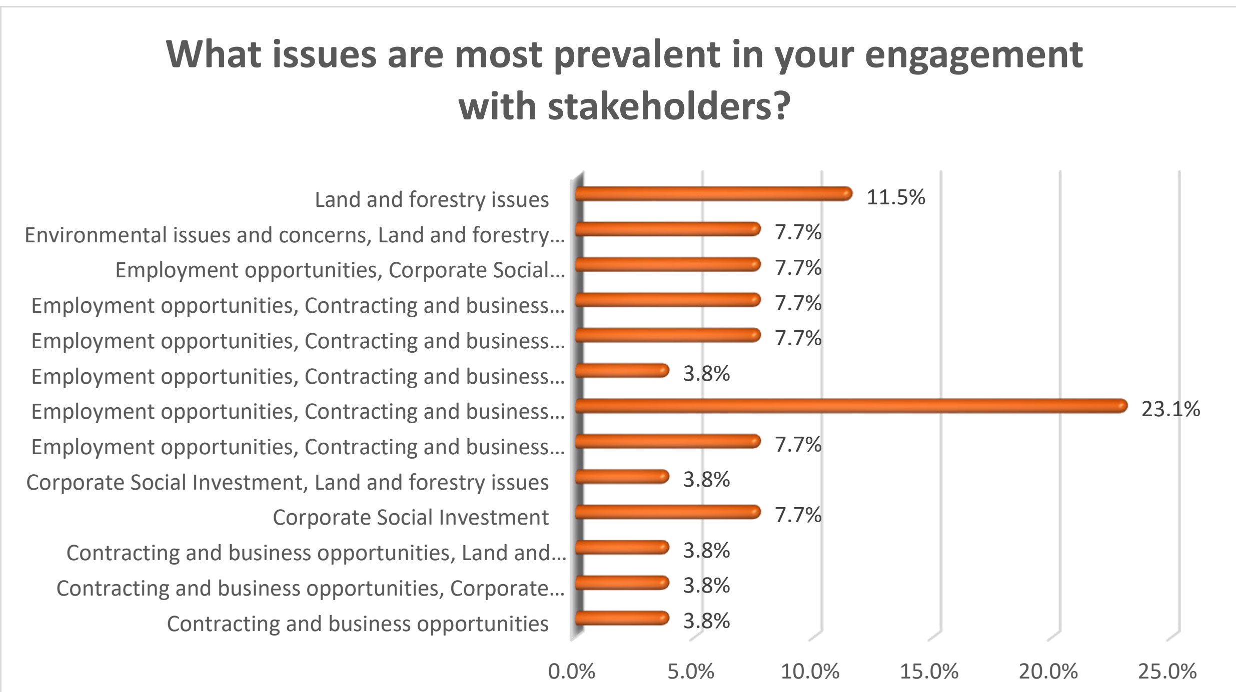
"They are divided into three: it's the neighboring communities, those that are at the borders of our plantation within a five-kilometer radius and then those that are residing on Mondi land."

“And then we will have the municipalities who are interested uhm, stakeholders and government departments”

5.4.1.2 Theme 2: Stakeholder issues

The theme focuses on the issues that are mostly discussed during stakeholder engagements. The participants emphasized that the most prevalent content of discussions at stakeholder engagements include health services, food security, employment opportunities, forestry, fires, sand and business opportunities. From the initial survey, the participants reported the following issues as more prevalent during stakeholder engagement:

Figure 5.17 The most prevalent issue discussed during engagements.



These results were further confirmed during the interviews as the initial coding revealed these issues as dominant during stakeholder engagements.

“Unemployment. I meeting ayipheli kungakhange kukhulunywe ngendaba (you will never get through a meeting without discussing the issue of unemployment) ye unemployment. Uh and income generating projects you know people interested in

iindawo zokulima (land for farming). Uh, but basically unemployment is the main thing that is always a standing item."

5.4.1.3 Theme 3: Employee core duties

This theme describes the roles of participants in Mondi's forestry operations. These participants have the responsibility of ensuring Mondi forestry operation remain licensed, the forestry environment is safe and secured, implement projects, and liaise with Mondi's forestry stakeholders. The respondents were asked to describe their core duties at Mondi Forestry operations and the responses revealed ensuring 'compliance', 'operations and project implementation' as the dominant duties.

"…ensuring compliance and trying to make everybody around me understand why if something is a no or a yes, why it is that? And it's not from us. It's because of the legislative requirements."

The respondents' own description of their job descriptions shed some light on how they perceive their job to be, and how it is integrated into Mondi's stakeholder management practice. The Area Managers and Environment Department aligned their stakeholder management activities more to compliance related tasks, whereas the stakeholder management team mentioned project implementation as it related more to CSI as the core stakeholder activity. The Operations teams mentioned additional stakeholders like 'Fire Associations' and 'Farmers' as the main stakeholders dominating their external stakeholder networks.

"Uhm, in terms of stakeholder engagement, that's my role. And then in terms of CSI I'm also responsible for implementing and identifying some of the corporate social initiatives in communities; so, understanding the needs of amacommunities ethu (our communities) through our engagement, through doing surveys in our communities, and then sort of putting together project proposals and partnerships with other stakeholders and implement our CSI programs."

5.4.1.4 Theme 4: Development of stakeholder management plan

This theme describes the availability of a stakeholder engagement plan, the process of the development of the plan and how the plan is evaluated and monitored. The participants indicated that they engage stakeholders using a stakeholder management plan that is developed through a thorough understanding of the needs of the communities. Although the participants indicated that the plans were developed internally, the content of the plan was determined using information collected from communities on their needs. Furthermore, the participants stated that the plans are reviewed annually to reposition the plan according to the realities of the communities.

> *"…It's so new we haven't reviewed it yet, so I won't be able to answer that. It kind of started this year."*

This question provided conflicting responses from different participants. In general, the respondents made reference to a 'plan', but some were not sure how it was formulated or how it was reviewed. Some mentioned that the plan is reviewed annually, and others referred to a 3-year cycle. Within those responses, they seem to have been referring to their 'Community Engagement Plans' which are done for all areas of operations but should be linked to a broader stakeholder management plan or framework. From the documents requested for review from Mondi, there was no Stakeholder Management Plan' as a strategic framework and it was concluded that such document does not exist.

> "… *not in a complete compiled way. But you do have bits and pieces. Like, let me talk about conflict. You'll find some guidelines. Let me talk about uhm… if one wants to engage with the company, you'll find bit and piece of that. But to, if I may say to you uh, go to that and you will find the uh, a manual, which will help you to guide you in terms of how to do the approach, the engagement things like that, we don't have something like that. To my mind, I don't remember anything like that."*

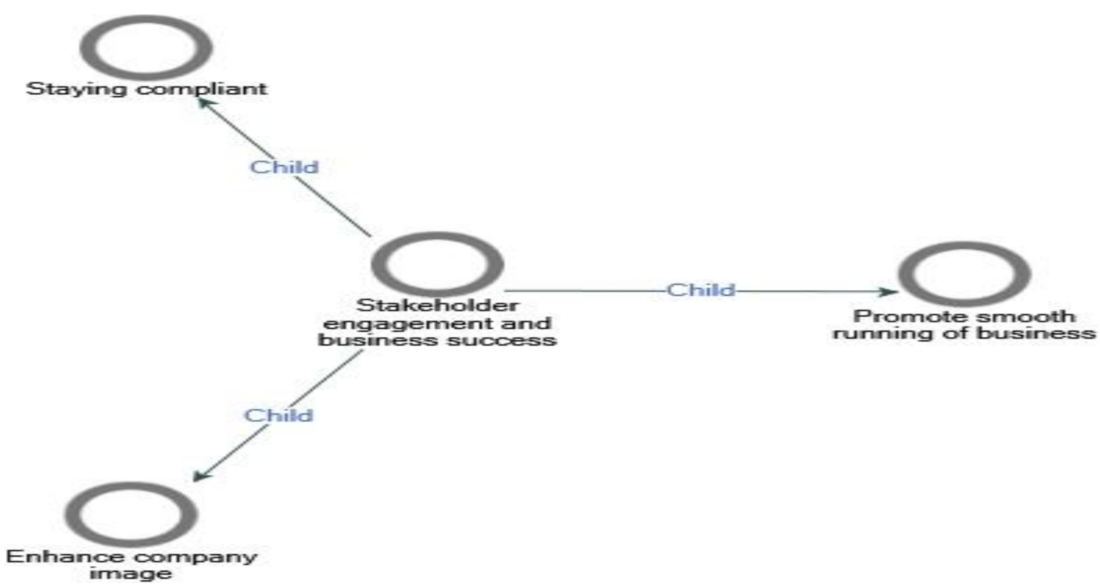
5.4.1.5 Theme 5: Business impact and stability

This theme describes the impact of stakeholder management engagements on the success of Mondi. The participants indicated that the management engagement enhances Mondi's image among the affected and interested stakeholders. The participants also indicated that stakeholder management engagement promotes the smooth running of the business. The engagement also helps the business remain licensed. The participants further stated that stakeholder management engagement allows the company to understand who their communities are and what these communities expect of the company. According to the respondents, Mondi's forestry operations depend on the following stakeholder management outcomes to achieve their desired results:

- Reputation
- Industrial peace
- Compliance with statutory laws and regulations.

The respondents emphasized 'reputation' as a critical outcome needed for achieving good relationships and thereby maintaining stability for the forestry operations.

Figure 5.18: Themes for benefits of stakeholder management



> *"…and I think also the value of having good stakeholder relations with your communities means that you are less impacted by any civil unrest directed to you. You are better prepared for situations such as that because you know you've engaged, you've provided opportunities for people to voice out their opinions, you've also provided yourself an opportunity to provide constant feedback. So, I think it's proven to be quite valuable in that space."*

5.4.1.6 Theme 6: Community Stakeholders

This theme is centered around communities as stakeholders, whom Mondi described as 'affected'. These are communities that are either hosting or neighboring Mondi's operations. Being unique in their nature, each community has a different influence on operations and therefore requires a separate and sometimes a totally different management strategy. When respondents were asked about the types of stakeholders they engage with, and how they classified their stakeholders, communities featured most in all the responses. From the responses, there seems to be a consensus that communities as stakeholders have much influence in the success or failure of Mondi forestry operations. The influence is centered around the following management areas:

- **Operational issues:** community stakeholders are engaged with a view to mitigating issues that might threaten business and forestry operations.
- **Managerial Issues:** where policies are developed to address issues raised by communities.
- **Strategic Issue:** community stakeholders are engaged to influence the broader corporate strategy. This applies more to 'claimant communities' where Mondi is leasing the land that is claimed by communities as part of government's land reform and restitution programme.

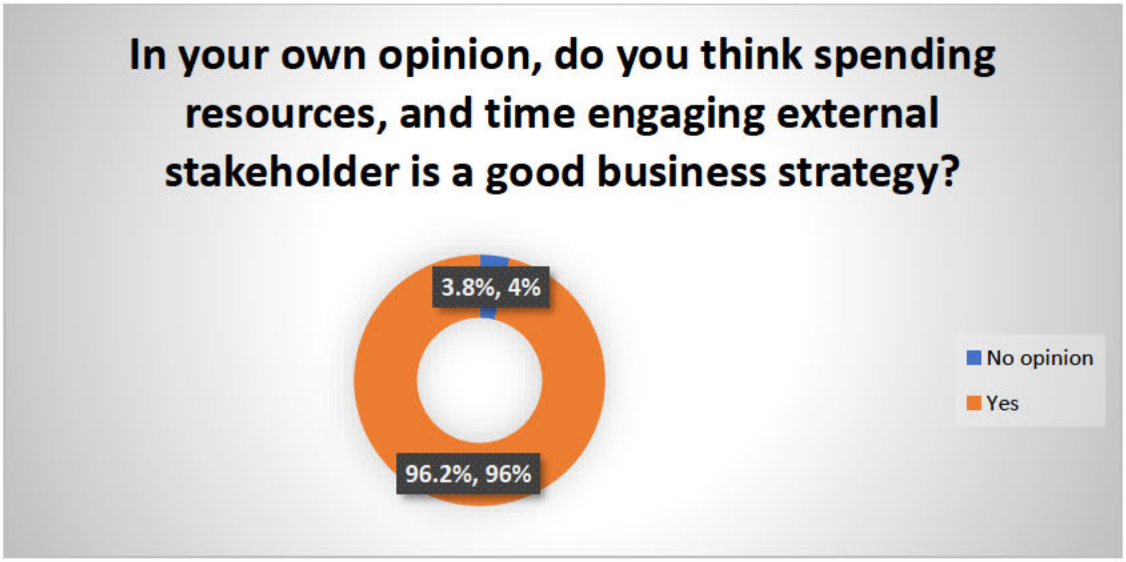
"… the stakeholder engagement is for the company to understand how they impact the neighboring communities or those that are on Mondi land, or the claimant communities and gives the company an overview and an objective assessment to say this is where we can assist the communities when they are asking for certain things. But on the other side it also gives the company an opportunity to understand who their communities are and what is it that is expected of the company to render to the communities."

5.4.1.7 Theme 7: Value Creation

The theme describes the two-way benefits to both community stakeholders and Mondi, as part of the stakeholder management practice. Respondents stated that communities benefitted through Corporate Social Investment (CSI) Projects which focused on basic services like health, food security as well as quality education from Mondi.
In return, Mondi is awarded the trust of the communities which is converted to reputation as a currency to be used when operations are threatened.

This theme further analyses the impact of stakeholders in the creation of shareholder-value. For all business enterprises, the primary objective is the creation of shareholder-value in the form of profits and increased equity value. Within the value creation process there are other stakeholders, with their own financial and/or non-financial objectives, which could impact on a company's overall financial performance. The stakeholder management practice assists in identifying stakeholder-groups which could impact a company, and so, formulate a model in addressing its objectives. During the survey, respondents were asked if spending resources, and time engaging external stakeholders is a good business strategy. The responses in figure 6.4 indicate a strong opinion about the value of stakeholder engagement as reflected below:

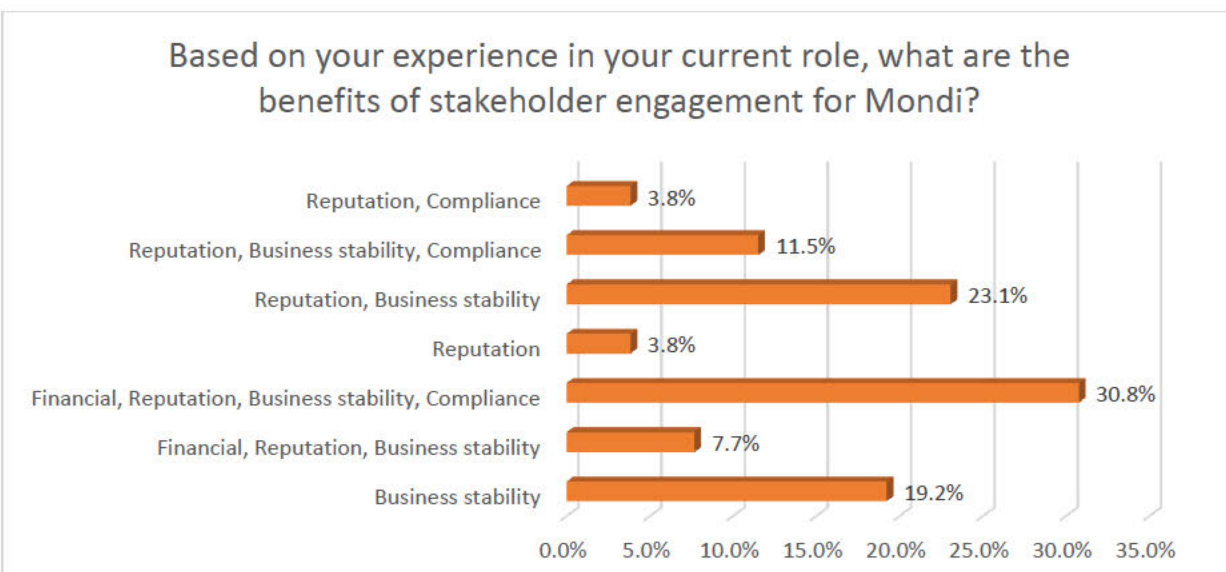
Figure 5.19 Opinions about spending resources in stakeholder engagement



The respondents also indicated that the benefits of stakeholder engagement allow Mondi to maintain its 'social license to operate' and enable the forestry division to produce and supply fibre without any interruptions.

"So to answer your question very candidly is investing in our communities enhances our business performance as Mondi because it stabilizes the environment in which we operate."

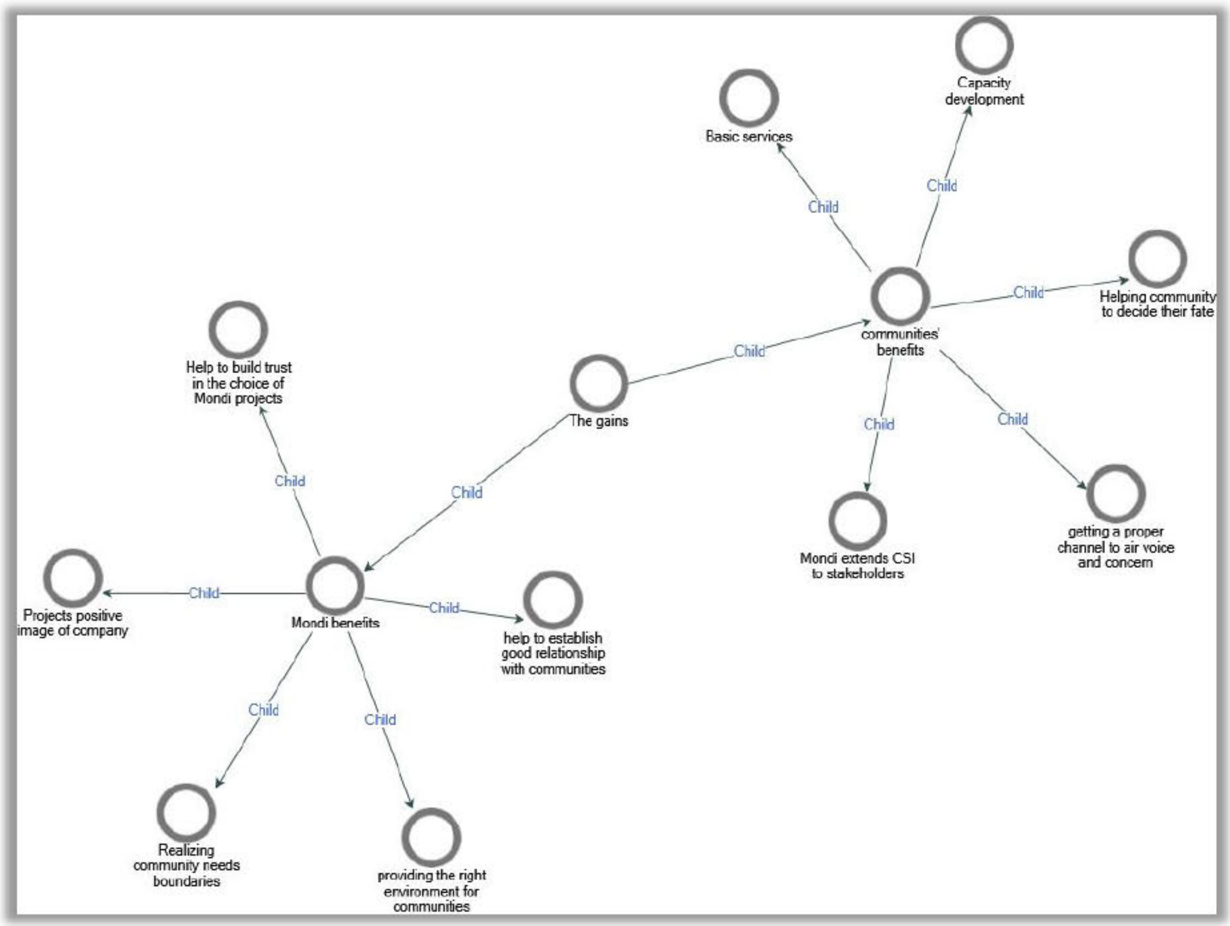
Figure 5.20: Benefits of stakeholder engagement



The same sentiment was shared by respondents during quantitative interviews (figure 6.5 above) that stakeholder management allows the business to function uninterruptedly. For shareholder value creation, this stabilizes operations, thereby maximizing profits which ultimately translates into value creation for shareholders. Similarly, for stakeholder value creation, communities benefit through strategic CSI initiatives, rental income, and stumpage.

> *"Thina,(Us) we get a reduced risk. We do. We get reduced business interruption risk. We get reduced actual financial risk in terms of losses so, so, so is business interruption that is minimized is a financial implication in when we do have fires. Those are the 2 main benefits that engicabanga ukuthi thina sinawo (that I think we have)."*

Figure 5.21: Themes and codes for benefits of stakeholder *engagement.*



5.4.1.8 Theme 8: Stakeholder management practice

The theme describes how the stakeholder management practice at Mondi Forestry division is formulated, practiced, and managed. The responses from the officials in Phase 2 of the study provided rather conflicting responses about the stakeholder management plan. While some claimed that the plan existed and is reviewed annually or in 3-year cycles, others were not sure if it really exists. There were some references to different pieces of documents which guide the stakeholder management activities but a management framework in this regard could not be verified.

The Senior management officials interviewed made reference to other governance policies and standards which guide Mondi's stakeholder management practice at a strategic level. The most relevant of these were the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) and ISO 26000 standards.

"So everything that we do must adhere to the law: country's law; to modest policy; to community expectations. Not always though. Please remember community expectations might not necessarily be the right ones but as far as we can…. an organisation like the FSC, and then Health, NOSA, stuff like that."

"We decided to go the ISO 26,000 route…. It's a voluntary process. But it uses ISO principles. It's actually well-defined and that was really nice to see that and get feedback from that process. So we basically using those three processes to measure ourselves."

5.5 Conclusion

The results hereby confirm that Mondi Forestry's stakeholder management practice is strategically executed to maintain industrial peace to ensure that operations are not affected. In addition, the stakeholder management practice is necessary to maintain compliance, which also influences the smooth running of the operations within the law and industry standards.

From the literature presented in this study, stakeholder theory challenges the neoclassical assumption that business organisations exist solely for the purpose of maximizing profits which are then filtered back to shareholders in the form of dividends and equity (Dadson, 2017). The literature also tells us that companies cannot solely exist for the purpose of profits to investors, but they have a responsibility to address stakeholder concerns in strategically and practically germane ways (Dadson, 2017, Freeman et al. 2004).

We also learned from the interviews that community stakeholders have benefited in their interactions with Mondi. The shareholder-stakeholder debate has been central in the evolution of the stakeholder theory. Milton Friedman (1970), in his controversial article challenged the stakeholder theory and insisted that capitalism was good for business. Friedman wrote that business had and should only have one purpose: to maximise profits and should be indemnified from any social responsibility.

The major difference between Freeman and Friedman is that the later believed that business' sole purpose and responsibility is about maximizing profits, while Freeman maintained that the fundamental drivers in maximising profits are in fact stakeholder relationships (Freeman et al. 2004). As posited by Smith (2003), the shareholder and stakeholder theories share an important similarity with regard to their emphasis on relationships, albeit with differing expressions. Specifically, the shareholder theory emphasizes the economic dimension of relationships, while the stakeholder approach considers relationships central to achieving a competitive advantage.

A number of scholars share the belief that business is indeed about profit and only profits. This school of thought is ascribed to Milton Friedman. On the other hand, a number of practitioners, organisations and indeed scholars believe that organisations have a responsibility towards the environment, and people affected by the business. This school of thought is ascribed to Edward Freeman (Saint & Tripathi, 2010). This argument created a shareholder-stakeholder debate in what is referred to in the literature as the Friedman-Freeman debate.

While the theory on shared value is in its infancy, this study provides opportunities for further research into how shared value is created, managed, and measured within the stakeholder value chain. Mondi's alignment with FSC principles, ISO 26000, King IV, and other statutory requirements indicate an acceptance that business has a responsibility beyond maximising profits through extension of benefits to stakeholders. The socio-political environment under which the forestry industry operates, demands nothing less than proper stakeholder management. The government's Land Reform programme was a precipitant that forced forestry companies to redefine their relationships with stakeholders other than their shareholders. Furthermore, those corporates like Mondi with large land holdings had to deal with the uncertainty of land claims implemented by the government after 1994, placing communities directly as affected, interested and influential stakeholders. Consequently, the findings suggest that critical stakeholder issues, particularly in relation to social stakeholders, who are non-market in nature both in theory and practice, are now at the forefront of Mondi's corporate relationships.

Chapter Six
Results and discussions

6.1 Introduction

This research aimed to study the stakeholder management practice of Mondi SA's Forestry division in order to understand how this practice is implemented and managed to sustain the operations. The results of this empirical research were presented in the previous chapters, for both qualitative and quantitative elements. In order to bridge the gap between relevance and theory, this section attempts to interpret the results for management intervention and for the further development of the body of knowledge and literature in this area of study. In another attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice, this section will draw on the strength of the research results to draw analysis and interpretations, and present recommendations that are relevant to the study context in the next chapter. The findings are indeed significant for Mondi, the company under study, but they also provide a theoretical context of the nature and extent of stakeholder management and its contribution to value creation.

6.2 Summary of findings: Literature Review

6.2.1 Systems and organizational theories of the firm

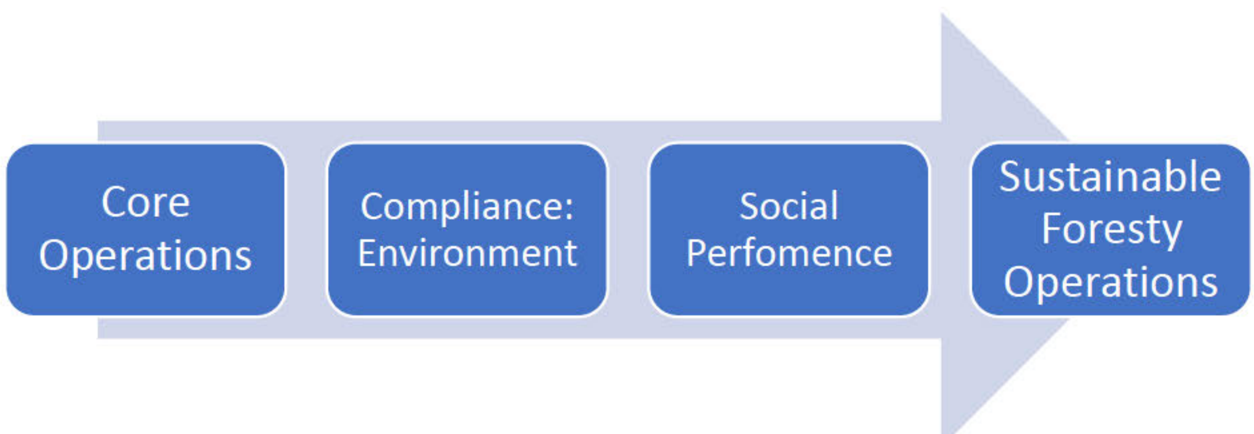
The findings of this study partly revealed that 'relationships' are essential in the sustainability of Mondi Forestry operations. The stakeholder management practice is implemented to foster, manage and nurture the relationships with stakeholders, and communities in particular, to safeguard Mondi's social license to operate while contributions are made to the socio-economic development of the host and neighboring communities. Positive engagements with stakeholders produce 'corporate trust' "an essential prerequisite for any for-profit organisation that wants to enable and safeguard its long-term economic and organisational performance sustainably in a competitive environment" (Ingenhoff & Sommer, 2010:339).

The elements of Mondi's stakeholder management practice were reviewed in this study (i.e., frequency and nature of engagements, types of stakeholders engaged, strategic issues for engagement, benefits, and threats of stakeholder engagement) and the relationship between Mondi and stakeholders including the strategic alignment of Mondi's stakeholder management practices with their long-term economic and organisational performance. From the review of literature, we learnt that Freeman and McVea (2001) attempted to clarify how the stakeholder theory was developed using four distinct elements of organisational management:

a) Strategic organizational planning
b) Systems theory
c) Corporate social responsibility
d) Organizational theory

In his arguments, Freeman maintains that both systems and organisational theory are based on the ideology that "organisations are open systems that interact with diverse third parties and thus it is necessary to set out collective strategies that perfect the systems as a whole beyond the actual recognition of all relationships on which companies depend for their own survival" (Mainardes et al., 2011:228). Using the respondents' role categories in this study, the findings suggest that the forestry division is structured into different diverse divisions that are strategically integrated to deliver on the core mandate of producing and supplying sustainable fibre to customers (see figure 7.1 below). An administrative theory of organisations which is based on departmentalization (Hose-Ryan, 2017; Bacud, 2020) categorises related tasks into departments or groups and then accomplishes these tasks to achieve the organizations' common goal.

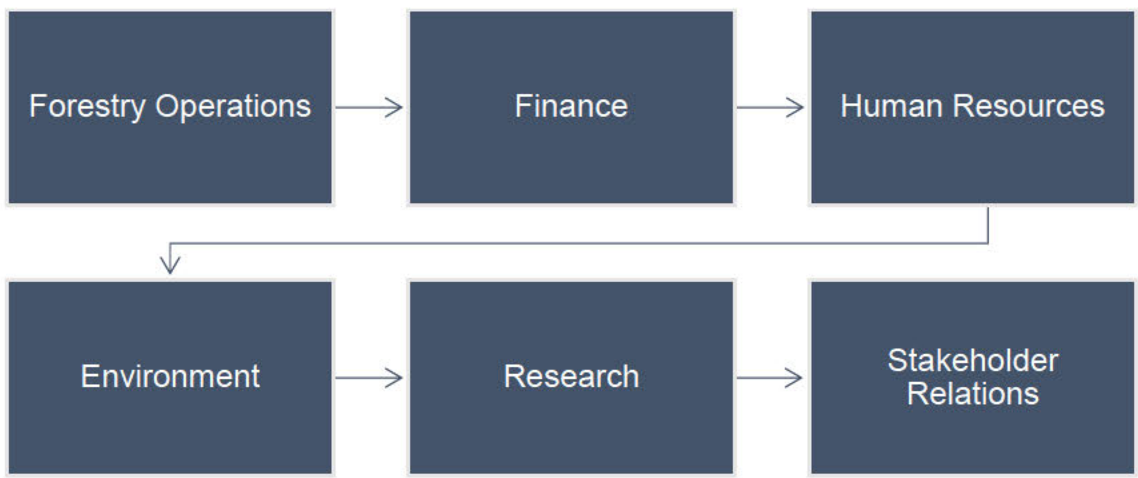
Figure 6.1 Stakeholder Management integration into operations



Source: Self Illustration

While figure 6.1 above represents a lean structure which influences and drives the stakeholder management responsibilities of the forestry division, other departments are integrated into the division's structure for a complete business integrated model as part of Mondi Group. The figure below depicts this integration and the different departments forming Mondi Forest's corporate structure.

Figure 6.2 Forestry Division department dashboard



Source: Self Illustration

Figure 6.2 above reaffirms what the literature on systems theory says about organisations being a composition of different constituent parts that are interdependent and interrelated. All these parts contribute to the success and continuity of the organisation as a whole; hence are vital to the organisation. The theory uses the general view of the whole organisation and considers its operations as a unitary structure.

In an organisation composed of different departments that are referred to as sub-systems, general management applies the system approach theory to ensure that the entire organisation runs as a single uniform unit. Structurally, the theory divides the organisation into smaller units based on features like departmental differences. These units are hierarchically arranged into sub-systems that, when brought together, form the organisation (Makadok & Coff, 2009: 302).

The approach takes into consideration both the long and short-term aspects of the organisation because of its overall continuity goal. Management focuses on the present success while planning for the organisation's future. This involves evaluation of both external and internal factors that have either negative or positive impacts on the organisation.

While the stakeholder theory is positioned and explored as the macro-theory that underpins all the ancillary theories that are applied in this study, the organisation and systems theories are central to understanding the application and practice of stakeholder management. A full grasp of this would help one to fully understand and comprehend Mondi's stakeholder model.

6.2.2 Stakeholder category

The literature presented in this study discussed different stakeholder classification and identification models. As the basis for practice, the literature presented the stakeholder theory as being divided into three types: descriptive (empirical), instrumental and normative (prescriptive) based on the work of Donaldson and Preston (1995).

The descriptive or empirical theory in application, describes the nature of a company, its business characteristics, and behaviours in the management of stakeholder management elements. Based on these attributes, the stakeholder theory also provides the patterns of thought and action managers adopt to achieve organizational goals. Applying this rationale based on this research study, Mondi would have strategic policies and processes that define their strategic objectives, company context, and relative behavioural attributes that will drive the entire organisation towards success.

"The theory is used to describe specific corporate characteristics such as the nature of the firm and its context (e.g., country), the way managers think about managing, how corporations are managed, or how board members think about the interests of constituencies" (Susnienė & Sargūnas, 2011:3). The instrumental approach is the type of stakeholder theory that identifies relationships between managers and stakeholders in achieving organizational objectives.

The traditional function of the organization to generate profit for shareholders is maintained and insisted on in the instrumental approach (Donaldson, 1995). The instrumental approach should guide management to concentrate on identifying ways of creating good business environment to achieve profit and sustainability. The strategies involve connections with workers to improve production, customers to persuade them to purchase, stockholders by generating profit, and suppliers to ensure proper supply of quality raw materials (Brin & Nehme, 2019).

Instrumental stakeholder theory assists in trying to explain complex relationships between stakeholders and the company and, between the practice of stakeholder management and the achievement of various corporate performance goals (e.g., profitability, growth). From the practical point of view, the instrumental approach should guide Mondi to design performance improvement plans, operational plans and stakeholder engagement plans that are integrated and directed at achieving the company's objectives and delivering on margins. The instrumental approach is hypothetical in nature, as it addresses 'what' needs to be done, 'how' it should be done and 'who' should be part of the process internally and externally.

The third purpose of stakeholder theory is the normative interpretation, which identifies values, principles, and guidelines for enhancing smooth organizational operations (Donaldson, 1995). In a normative way, this theory provides guidelines about ethical and moral execution of business objectives in a way that benefits all stakeholder groups.

In summary, descriptive stakeholders are groups that are affected, could be affected, or potentially could affect the business. The instrumental stakeholders are identified by management as relevant and instrumental in achieving the business objectives. And, finally, normative stakeholders claim to have valid normative claims in the operations of the business.

Evidence from this research shows that stakeholders play the most significant role in the formulation of an overall business strategy. To manage stakeholders effectively, the business organization must have a strong stakeholder management plan (Gultekin, 2018). Various stakeholder theories have been recognized depending upon different business requirements and trade environments.

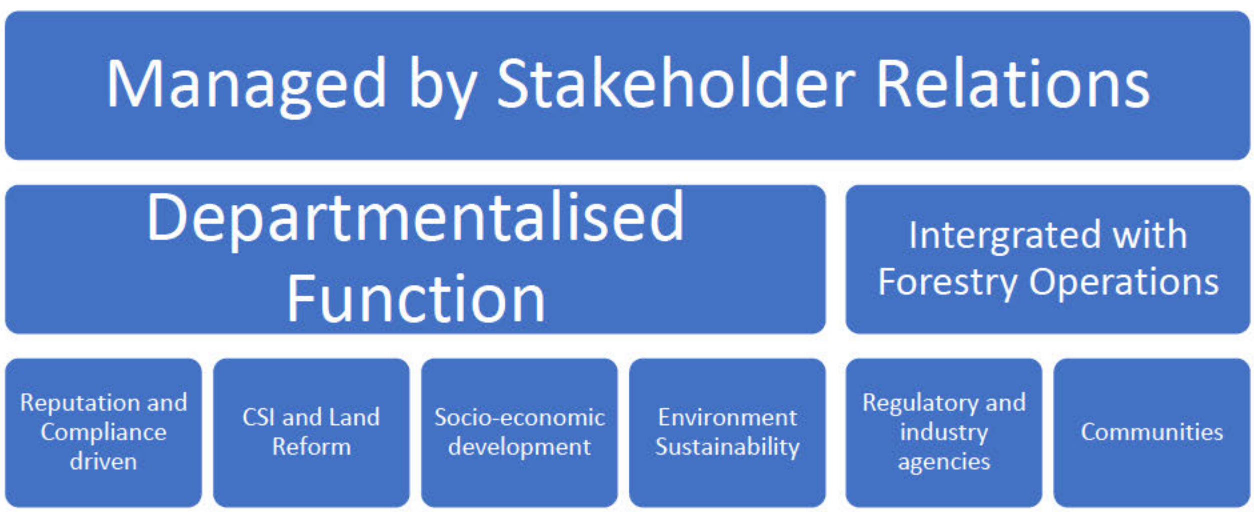
It is also the general finding of this study that, stakeholders, if managed effectively, will influence progress and business growth. The management of stakeholders can become an important and effective management tool. In order to support business growth ambitions, strategic stakeholder management can be influential as it allows the business to deal with all the externalities at their ends while leading the organization towards an effective strategy building.

6.3 Summary of the results: Quantitative study

This section summarizes the empirical results that were generated from the quantitative studies and presented in the previous chapter. Since this study is a mixed methods study, the quantitative and qualitative methods are integrated together to produce findings that "are greater than the sum of their parts" (Woolley, 2009:7), the results presented in this section include not only findings generated from the quantitative and qualitative studies separately, but also the integrated findings that were obtained from the combination of the two approaches.

6.3.1 Current stakeholder management practice at Mondi forestry operations.

Figure 6.3 Stakeholder management practice dashboard



Source: Self Illustration

The in-depth analysis of the stakeholder management practice for Mondi Forestry revealed that this function is managed by a single department of Stakeholder Relations which has a staff complement of 16 employees (figure 6.3).

The core duties for these employees are to manage the relationships with stakeholders who are mainly community stakeholders. The strategy and practice is centred around community engagement, delivery of CSI programs and social risks identification and management through stakeholder engagement. Unlike other corporates, Mondi's Stakeholders Relations is structured and resourced to manage community-company relations for sustainability and stability of the business operations.

The Stakeholder Relations Department is a central point of contact for stakeholders, particularly social stakeholders and is highly valued by internal people in the Forestry division. Comments from various respondents confirmed that this department is the face of Mondi to the external world particularly with local communities and government departments. Comments such as *"Stakeholder Relations is vitally important for business. They are the face of Mondi"* were frequently heard from respondents.

The Stakeholder Relations team is the first point of call for other departments when Mondi is faced with any stakeholder issues. The teams are known to have successfully managed several social risks to the benefit of Mondi. The department is well structured and has a standardised schedule of meetings and reports that it follows across all areas of operation.

For stakeholder engagement, all respondents from all the different operational areas indicated that they have a schedule of meetings/forums that are held with external stakeholders. The external stakeholder groups include government departments, traditional authorities, local farmers, smallholder foresters, contractors, land claimants, NGOs, communities, fire associations and local authorities. It was also noted during both the quantitative and qualitative inquiry that the respondents mentioned other forest companies as external stakeholders. In general, external stakeholder engagements, though varied, are structured in a similar fashion across all areas. It would appear that each Operational Area determines its own priority forums and meetings and how often these were held.

The most common ones across Operations were quarterly meetings with the Communities including community Trusts and Traditional Authorities, Government, other companies, Civil Society formations. Other than that, it appears engagement was more sporadic, ad hoc, and reactive in response to a specific issue at any point in time.

Although the variance in the engagement process across Operational Areas can be interpreted as a response to different geographic and socio-economic contexts, it may also point to a need for a more analytical and in-depth external stakeholder profiling. As mentioned earlier, the absence of a broader strategic Stakeholder Management framework makes the practice somewhat fragmented.

There is an opportunity for Mondi in each area to make an in-depth mapping exercise and develop stakeholder engagement plans that not only focus on reactive responses but are more proactive and strategic. Even where relations are very good with external stakeholders, this should not be taken for granted and Stakeholder Relations teams need to continue to interact regularly with all key stakeholders.

6.4 Summary of the findings: Qualitative study

6.4.1 Stakeholder management integration into the forestry business strategy.

The results of the study revealed some correlation between different business units and a broader management strategy to optimise and maintain risk free operations for the forestry division. Briefly, it appears that Mondi Forestry's stakeholder management is strategically coordinated and centralised into the department of Stakeholder Relations. However, further review of the practice revealed that the Stakeholder Relations has a primary mandate of managing 'social stakeholders' which Mondi refers to as 'communities.

Several respondents during the interviews defaulted to 'communities' when asked about stakeholders. Depending on what level of management the respondent is, the term 'stakeholders' usually refers to anyone who is external. This assertion is by no means an alternative definition of 'stakeholders' in practice, but purely based on the terminology of the primary stakeholder groups that this department has been entrusted with.

A senior manager in Corporate Affairs would refer to everybody including shareholders, employees, customers, competitors, and the media as stakeholders. Whereas, to a senior manager in Forestry Operations, communities, municipalities, traditional authorities, government departments, civil society formations are stakeholders. What can be deduced from this study is that stakeholder management practice does not necessarily uniformly apply to management across all the elements of the stakeholder value chain. In practice, the management of each element requires specialised resources, both human and capital, and cannot be centrally managed but possibly centrally coordinated. Stakeholder management, as a delegated function across different departments, implies that every unit has some interface with stakeholders relevant to the core function of that unit. This is illustrated in the table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Delegated stakeholder management function.

Stakeholder element	**Management function**
Shareholders	Investment Affairs /Company Secretary
Customers	Finance Department/Customer Relations
Employees	Human Resources
Media	Corporate /Public Affairs/ Communications
Communities/Social	Stakeholder/Community Relations

In some companies, an addition to this table would be 'government relations' which would deal with licencing and regulatory issues and managed by either the legal or compliance department. Mondi's stakeholder management set-up is clearly aligned to these elements as presented in table 6.1. This research's primary focus, however, is on social stakeholders and their influence in the forestry business. While all these business units could operate independently, a Group Stakeholder Management framework is advisable to coordinate all these engagement elements against a company strategy and desired outcomes. From the stakeholder management point of view, the rules of engagement with these different stakeholder elements are different. For an example, there are clear and diverse rules for engagement with suppliers and customers, employees and shareholders. These relationships are transactional in nature and are governed by different sets of legislations and policies.

Employees are engaged as per required labour and bargaining council procedures. Customers are engaged under consumer policies and guidelines. Competitors are also engaged through the provisions of the Competition Act to forestall uncompetitive behaviour. There exist guidelines to engage shareholders in the Companies Act and also as part of the listing requirements in the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, and many other listing institutions, national or international. However, there are no clear rules of engagement for the non-market stakeholders like communities. such an unregulated state of affairs leaves the process to the discretion of the company and its mangers. It is therefore fortuitous that this research has established that Mondi uses stakeholder theory mainly to understand and manage the non-market sector and navigate around issues affecting the business.

The resources assigned to Stakeholder Relations are mainly meant to be used to implement the company's social agenda to minimise social risks and reputational damage. Indeed, the stakeholder engagement is extended to other players like municipalities, NGOs and other corporates all aimed at contributing to the social development agenda. This imbalance in the allocation of resources leaves other elements of stakeholder management with other departments and creates a fragmented stakeholder management approach. Mondi's strategic agenda should depend on priority stakeholders perceiving the group as employer of choice, preferred business partner and leading corporate citizen and a good neighbour to communities. To support this strategic agenda, the Stakeholder Management Strategy is required to provide an integrated strategic framework that should:

- converge brand, reputation, and relationships – strategic management of these three intangible assets – into a single set of priorities to be achieved through stakeholder management.
- focus scarce resources on the achievement of strategic goals to drive business value through stakeholder management.
- combined, the strategic priorities and goals provide the key performance areas, indicators, targets, and measures for a scorecard against which to report.

Stakeholder Management Strategy informs stakeholder engagement programmes on subsequent levels, whether per business unit, departments, or both.

6.4.2 The influence of stakeholder management practice in Mondi's forestry business decisions.

The major issue that arises from the study of stakeholder theory from the standpoint of strategic management is, "Which groups are stakeholders that deserve or require management's attention, and which are not?" (Mitchell et al., 1997 & Buchholz, 2004). This question is about the characteristics of those involved in the stakeholder process. Researchers have come up with a variety of different lists, rules, identification frameworks, and classification methods in order to identify different types of stakeholders (Harrison and Wicks, 2021). The primary objective of the various frameworks is to provide assistance to managers in determining who the stakeholders are that have the potential to influence the decision-making processes of their organisations, what types of claims those stakeholders have, and how likely it is that those stakeholders will be able to advance their claim. In essence, managers are able to establish strategic actions for managing stakeholders on the basis of their knowledge about relevant stakeholders, as well as the capabilities and goals of those stakeholders.

The findings of both the qualitative and quantitative studies suggest that 'communities' are a main stakeholder for Mondi's Forestry division. The study identified the following as stakeholder communities:

Host communities: these are the communities on whose land the company produces timber. Mondi leases the land through a land reform process facilitated by the Department of Land Affairs.

Impacted communities: these are the communities located around the forestry plantations where the company has its operations.

Transit communities: these are communities through which the company's harvested timber passes.

Mondi's complex network of stakeholders can also be organised into 10 stakeholder categories: Figure 6.4 depicts various categories of the stakeholders that plays critical roles within the complex environment of Mondi.

Figure 6.4 Stakeholder categories

Source: Authors own illustration.

These stakeholders are key to the achievement of Mondi's strategic goals and long-term sustained growth. Apart from shareholders, the most important stakeholder are the *employees* whose discretionary efforts as part of a high-performance culture drives corporate performance, gives the organisation techno-leverage, attracts new talent and is a major competitive advantage.

From the literature review studies from Clarkson (1995), Donaldson and Preston (1995), and Scott and Lane (2000), the assertion was made that the stakeholder management concept was merely developed for organisations to recognise and analyse the characteristics of individuals or groups influencing or rather being influenced by the organisational behaviour.

This process involves:

- Identification of stakeholders
- Process of identification and interpreting their needs
- Construction of relationships within the process guided by the organisation's objectives.

The practise of establishing positive connections with the individuals who have the most influence on one's job is referred to as stakeholder management (Attanasio et al., 2022). Effective communication with each individual in the proper way is crucial for keeping people "on board" in any engagement.

Using Olander's (2007), impact probability matrix (table 7.5), where the project stakeholders are categorized depending on their level of impact and probability of impact on the organization, Mondi's stakeholder categorisation seem to be based on 'probability to impact'. Mondi's stakeholder categorisation process goes further to define and include areas within a 5 km radius from the operations as the major criteria to engage.

Figure 6.5 The stakeholder impact/probability-matrix

Source: Adapted from Olander, (2007)

The stakeholder impact/probability matrix is a tool used in project management and stakeholder analysis to assess the potential impact and likelihood of engagement for each stakeholder involved in a project (Olander, (2007). It helps project managers and teams identify and prioritize stakeholders based on their level of influence and interest in the project.

Looking at the emerging themes from this study, it appears that Mondi's stakeholder engagement practice is centred around stakeholders who should be 'kept satisfied' and those who should be 'kept informed'. Using the matrix above, as a visual representation of stakeholders' significance, could aid Mondi in making informed decisions regarding stakeholder engagement and management strategies.

Furthermore, the code entries from the data reveal that these stakeholders are primarily 'host' or neighbouring communities who perceive themselves to be 'affected' by Mondi's forestry operations in different spheres. Drawing from the perspective of the stakeholder theory, communities become legitimate stakeholders by virtue of being affected by the activities, policies, and actions of a firm (Carroll and Buchholtz, 2006; Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984). However, the findings from this study suggest that Mondi's stakeholder inclusion does not necessarily consider the impact of operations on a community, but many other variables are considered, for example:

- Location and radius, regardless of perceived impact
- Tribal and Municipality authority
- Land ownership: claimant communities

Above all these variables, the ability of communities to affect the forestry operations is perceived to be the main driver for stakeholder selection, prioritization, and engagement. In addition, as legitimacy resides at both the stakeholder and organizational level.

The stakeholder salience model that Mitchell et al. (1997) developed is perhaps the most well-known study on the characteristics and the classification of stakeholders. This model illustrates the process of management decision making. The salience framework categorises stakeholders based on power, legitimacy, and the urgency of their situation. The aforementioned three traits, according to Wood et al (2021), affect the degree to which managers prioritize competing stakeholder interests during the decision-making process. This means that power, legitimacy and urgency, would determine how much and what kind of attention stakeholders receive from management. As a consequence of this, salience qualities are linked to the many opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the decision-making processes carried out by management.

The model that Mitchell et al. (1997), developed has also been given an empirical examination by Agle et al. (1999). The researchers determined that stakeholder attributes of power, legitimacy, and urgency are fundamentally interrelated with the stakeholder's salience as perceived by organisational managers.

The term "stakeholder" was defined by Freeman and Reed (1983) as having two different perspectives: wide and limited. From a more general standpoint, stakeholders are defined as any party that can have an influence on the organisation or who the organisation can have an effect on (Kujala et al., 2019). The scope of the stakeholder group may be greatly expanded by the use of definitions that are more inclusive. Organisations have a tendency to embrace a more expansive emphasis owing to a variety of variables. To begin, in the course of their delivery of services, organisations have traditionally collaborated with a diverse variety of customers, including those with very little influence as well as interest and lobby groups. It has become essential to have an inclusive approach in order to accomplish democratic and socially equitable results (Beck and Stopoli, 2021).

6.4.3 The practice of stakeholder management and shareholder/stakeholder value creation.

During the course of the last three decades, stakeholder management has evolved into an increasingly significant component of both management practice and management strategy. Since the time of Freeman and the publication of "Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach" in 1984, the field of stakeholder has not been studied comprehensively in the context of the public management environment (Loureiro et al., 2020).

The exercise of determining whether the stakeholder management practice delivers any shareholder value creation is rather a complex one. While the findings suggest that Mondi’s stakeholders and communities benefited through socio-economic development projects that are delivered through Corporate Social Investment, the returns for Mondi were not properly articulated to arrive at a monetary value which could then translate into shareholder returns.

However, through the findings, this research attempts to analyse this phenomenon without using company sensitive financial information in order to gain an insight into the rationale behind stakeholder practices at Mondi Forestry. Ataniso et al (2022), and Velter et al (2020), are just a few of the recent works that have focused on the concept of stakeholder value creation, which is a term with a broad definition that encompasses multiple dimensions. This concept has been the focus of many recent studies and discussions in an effort to develop a deeper comprehension of stakeholder concerns and cooperation. Researching the literature on stakeholders reveals that there is little agreement about the specifics of value creation or the means by which it might be accomplished (Barney and Harrison, 2020). A number of studies in the stakeholder literature utilise the word "value" to represent a distinct phenomenon. It is helpful to explore this issue with the assistance of several examples in order to have a better understanding of its variations. As a result, the primary emphasis of this thesis is placed on more conventional stakeholder studies, which are based on the interactions that exist between companies and the many stakeholders in those companies (Watson et al., 2018).

The utility function, which is susceptible to the individual preferences of each stakeholder (Harrison & Wicks, 2013), is one potential method for determining the value that is created for stakeholders. This indicates that the utility function is derived from an individual's viewpoint in terms of the nature of a connection or transaction that takes place between a stakeholder and the company. The greatest amount of utility that a stakeholder may obtain from a particular firm will influence whether or not the stakeholder will continue to interact with that particular company, and how the stakeholder will behave.

The individual capacities of the stakeholders are yet another criterion that may be used to investigate the generation of value at the individual stakeholder level (Papagianakis et al., 2019). The primary contention advanced by the author is that in spite of the advantages afforded by the idea of the utility function (Harrison and Wicks, 2021), there are two primary problems to be addressed.

Firstly, the idea of utility does not adequately reflect wellbeing due to the restricted knowledge base it offers. Secondly, the author makes a number of points of criticism about the idea of utility and its ability to be measured. These arguments include the difficulty of a full ordering, the impossibility of seeing the utility scale, and the problem of preferences that have been observed (Garriga, 2014).

Garriga (2014) conducted an in-depth case study that combined qualitative and quantitative data to examine the capabilities of various stakeholders in relation to the value creation process. It is not the organisation itself that is responsible for the development of a total value for the company; rather, this is accomplished with the assistance of a network of stakeholder connections (Merrilees et al., 2021).

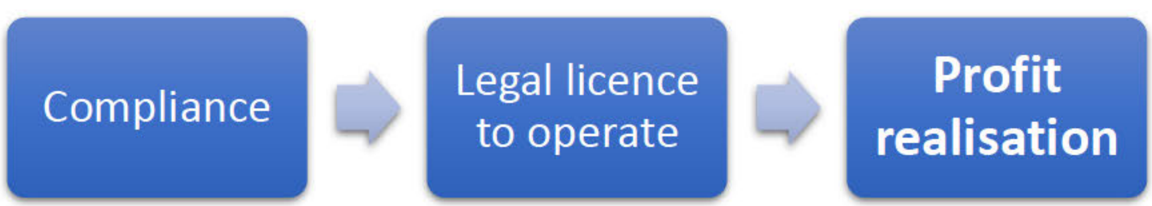
For an organisation to be able to receive the resources and capabilities that stakeholders are contributing to the creation of value, the organisation needs to build stakeholder relationships and interconnections. These relationships and interconnections are ultimately what determine how successful or vital an organisation is (Freeman et al., 2010). As a result, the creation of value at the individual level has an effect on the overall quantity of value that is generated by an organisation. This is due to the fact that the value creation of one stakeholder may impact the value production of another stakeholder (Haksever et al., 2004; Harrison & Wicks, 2013). This research and much other research have come to the same conclusion, which is that innovation plays an increasingly important role in value generation at the organisational level (Hart & Sharma, 2004; Lepak et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2014; Yang et al., 2017). This indicates that firms are able to generate greater value as a result of the stakeholder of new methods for doing business by pooling and sharing information based on the interactions they have with their stakeholders.

However, different stakeholders may have contrasting interests and understanding of what constitutes value. For instance, stockholders who are looking for any actions that will lead to short-term profits are in opposition to environmentalists, who are in favour of activities that would safeguard the environment over the long term. Again, it is vital to recognise that the definition of value is personally anchored.

Stakeholders, for example, are constantly looking for the maximum return on investment possible in respect to the value that they provide (Loureiro et al., 2020). Chesborough et al. (2018) argued that a stakeholder strategy needs to be predicated on an expansive and long-term vision of value creation, as well as the ability to recognise and reconcile disagreements amongst stakeholder groups. Companies that are unable to innovate will have their market share eroded by rivals that are able to deliver innovations that are beneficial to their customer base (Giacomara et al., 2019). This argument emphasises once more, the significance of a sufficient stakeholder identification for possible innovation and creativity placed at the periphery of a company. This identification is required for competitive imagination which ultimately leads to additional value creation at the organisational level (Kujala et al., 2019).

In the absence of Mondi's Stakeholder Management framework, it was not possible to study and evaluate how value is produced through strategic management linking all elements of the value creation variables. However, from the qualitative findings, it was determined that value is created through stakeholder management by proactive mitigation of company social risks that might impede successful business operations. The findings also suggest that the stakeholder management practice is centred around the mitigation of the identified risks that might interfere with Mondi's profit-making agenda. To locate how value is created, the findings suggest the following important elements: compliance and communities as value drivers that need constant management attention. The figure 6.6 below illustrates how 'compliance' as a strategic objective, leads to licence to operate, allowing operations to produce and transact in the market for profit realisation.

Figure 6.6 Compliance as a value driver



Source: Self Illustration.

The legal licence to operate is a necessary condition for corporations to make profit, but is it a sufficient condition? Do all legal corporations make profit? The second arrow is therefore misleading.

The compliance environment for Mondi Forestry is mainly premised of the following:

- Applicable tax laws and statutory requirements
- Labour and employment laws
- Operational safety regulations
- Environmental regulations
- Social and empowerment regulations
- Industry requirements and standards.

These elements, combined, provide Mondi with ‘licence to operate’. Listing ‘communities’ as the most important and powerful stakeholder simply means Mondi recognises the inherent power of communities to affect/exert positive and negative impacts on the business. The figure 6.7 below illustrates the importance of social licence to operate, awarded by communities, allowing Mondi to produce timber, participate in the market and achieve profit margins.

Figure 6.7 Communities as value driver

Source: Self Illustration.

A Social Licence to Operate (SLO) as a theoretical construct representing the implied consent by affected stakeholders for businesses to operate has gained attention in recent years (Taylor & Mahlangu, 2017). Although the SLO concept has been applied mainly in the mining industry as a means of determining or measuring relationships with affected communities, its use has extended to other sectors across the globe. It is defined as acceptance or approval of an operation or business by local community stakeholders who are affected by it ... and those stakeholders who can affect its profitability (Moffat et al., 2016).

While these definitions imply that the SLO is informal and does not represent a legally binding ‘license’ or relationship, its withdrawal could have serious consequences for any business. It is a non-legal concept that describes the implicit understanding between a company and its stakeholders, including communities, governments, NGOs, and customers, that the company is operating in a responsible, ethical, and sustainable manner. Stakeholders, in different spheres of any business, are part of granting or withdrawing this license to operate and thereby elevating the importance of stakeholder management as an integral part of any business operation.

The concept of SLO recognizes that a company's ability to operate effectively and sustainably is dependent on its relationship with the community in which it operates. Companies that prioritize social responsibility and engage with stakeholders to address their concerns are more likely to gain and maintain a social license to operate. Mondi has realised that failure to address community concerns or engage in controversial activities may face opposition from stakeholders that can harm the reputation, operations, and social legitimacy.

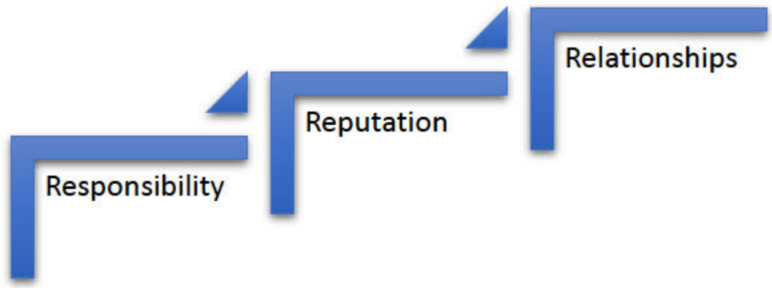
The process of creating value at an organisational or individual level is not the same as the process of creating value at a societal level. Sources who provide value to society often create value for themselves at the same time, whether they do so consciously or unwittingly. These sources may behave either knowingly or unknowingly (Merrilees et al., 2021). The value that an organisation brings to a society and to itself can be measured in terms of the number of jobs that it generates, the amount of money that it contributes to the government in the form of taxes, and extent to which it raises the overall standard of living for its constituents by providing valuable goods and services.

Harrison and Wicks (2013) contended that society and the communities it embeds provide an organisation with the personnel, as well as the locations, infrastructure, and sites for operations that are essential for the business to function. In return, societies might obtain value in the form of employment opportunities for their citizens (which would result in a lower unemployment rate), monetary benefits in the form of taxes, support for economic growth through activities such as, for instance, purchases made from local suppliers, and donations that are supporting local communities (Velter et al., 2020).

Mondi’s strategic bias towards relationships and reputation is not misplaced. There are accrued benefits associated with positive stakeholder engagement. Some of these benefits could be measured in monetary terms and some are fluid. For example, through positive relationships or reputation with communities, Mondi could benefit by attracting good employees. If employees are happy with the reputation of their employer, they become motivated and loyal. This benefit extends to other sectors of the stakeholder value chain, for example customers and investors. Motivated and loyal employees create satisfied and loyal customers.

A bigger benefit of stakeholder management for Mondi is tied up in intangible assets like partnerships, relationships, and brand equity. For dealing with a stakeholder issue and conflict, reputation and relationships become the currency for trade. However, the concept of value cannot always mean or be measured in economic terms as value would mean different things to different stakeholders. This is to say, value cannot be determined only in economic terms. Different stakeholders have different meanings attached to stakeholder value (Bosee, Phillips & Harrison, 2009). While Mondi’s derived value from stakeholder management practice could be measured in economic terms, a stakeholder-based performance measure would provide a broader examination of value creation from the perspective of stakeholders who are involved in creating it. There exist opportunities for further research in this area, in determining value creation from the perspective of the beneficiaries of the stakeholder management practice.

Figure 6.8 Mondi's intangible assets – The Triple R



Source: Self Illustration

The Triple R illustration above (Figure 6.8) represent the desired outcomes of stakeholder management and engagement. Responsibility refers to business practices that are fair, competitive, and legal. This includes environmental practices that have less negative impact on communities and society, including safety of operations. Reputation becomes a consequence of responsible practices and allows positive associations with employees, communities, customers, environmental bodies and government. Relationships are formed and maintained based on the responsible practices, and the positive reputation created.

The results of this study showed a great emphasis in relationships to secure business success and stability, a confirmation of the claim made by Giles, Smythe, and Spencer (2012), that relationships are indeed at the heart of organizational processes. Eskerod, Heumann, & Savage (2015) also noted that the business-relationships literature is growing and becoming a trend. Furthermore, there is now a growing acknowledgement of stakeholders as legitimate actors in organisational problem solving and decision making.

Examining the value that a company is creating excessively from the perspectives of stakeholders who affect but are also affected by the way the company conducts business provides managers with the ability to engage better in stakeholder relationships and to create more value for the whole system that the organisation operates in (Tantalo and Preim, 2016). On the other hand, in oppositional settings, there may be incentives that do not improve stakeholder happiness but instead reduce it. Significant instances of stakeholder value destruction include a lack of complete information, ambiguity over a product, and negative externalities like environmental contamination (Harrison and Wicks, 2021).

6.4.4 What critical factors ~~that~~ guide stakeholder management practice for successful implementation.

Based on the research data from this studies, Mondi's stakeholder management practice is also guided by different forms of responsibilities, which when compounded, aid shareholder value creation.

- Economic and profit-making responsibility
- Compliance and legal responsibility
- Ethical responsibility
- Social responsibility

The management of these responsibilities creates a stakeholder management environment that delivers on expectations and financial results. This also results in two stakeholder orientated management practice which is a form of management that pays attention to balancing and managing differences in stakeholder interests.

As a corporate citizen Mondi has to comply with:

- detailed health, safety and environmental regulations.
- increasingly complex employment legislation.
- provisions to respect human rights and ensure non-discrimination.
- a welter of new product and consumer protection regulations.
- a proliferation of corporate governance guidelines and disclosure legislations.

All these factors produce multiple complexities, demand different levels of accountability which complicate stakeholder management practice and can only be managed through a comprehensive management plan.

6.4.4.1 Governance

Good governance is not synonymous with good management as the two could be confused. Good governance is a strategic approach through setting the scene by adopting and subscribing to governance processes that are fair, efficient, responsible and protect the interests of all business stakeholders.

Good management, on the other hand, is a management process that adheres to good governance practices in all operational matters and protecting the interests of business and stakeholders. Good governance is needed to ensure a healthy environment for the management to run “good management” processes successfully (Berman, 2017). Dealing with multiple stakeholders with diverse demands and interests, necessitates the need to have solid governance and management policies and approaches.

As evidence from this study shows, organizations are often surrounded by complex groups of stakeholders, thus, the stakeholder management strategy can be used as a major contributor towards corporate organizational governance, while handling various higher-level issues and conflicts. Dynamic interactions such as behaviors, roles, and responsibilities can be seen across and within the organization, which can only be managed through good governance. As conflicts can be resolved through/using the stakeholder management plan, a complete conflict management plan is also required to ensure that all the conflicts will be resolved effectively and efficiently.

The tight regulatory environment results from civil societies’ pressure on governments due to:

- Declining trust in government and business institutions.
- Pressure by the environmentally conscious about human impact on the environment.
- Local communities’ demand for greater direct benefits from business activities that happen on their doorstep.
- Intense scrutiny by a more intrusive, simplifying and sensationalist media.
- Increasing scepticism over the role of science in policy making.

At an international level, governments and multi-lateral organisations actively shape the evolving policy agenda and develop codes or standards and best practice. Of growing importance is the ability of global companies like Mondi to proactively influence public policy and pre-regulation, in the interests of business sustainability.

6.4.4.2 Industry standards

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has developed 10 principles that serve as the basis for responsible forest management (FSC, 2015). These principles are:

1. **Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles:** Forest managers must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and treaties, as well as FSC's 10 principles for responsible forest management.
2. **Tenure and Use Rights and Responsibilities**: Forest managers must have secure and long-term tenure rights to the forestland and respect the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples.
3. **Indigenous Peoples' Rights:** Forest managers must respect the rights of indigenous peoples and their cultural heritage, including their right to participate in forest management decisions.
4. **Community Relations and Workers' Rights:** Forest managers must maintain positive and constructive relationships with local communities, provide fair wages and benefits to workers, and respect workers' rights.
5. **Benefits from the Forest:** Forest managers must ensure that local communities receive a fair share of the benefits derived from forest resources, and that forest management practices do not undermine these benefits.
6. **Environmental Impact:** Forest managers must minimize negative environmental impacts and maintain the ecological functions and integrity of the forest ecosystem.
7. **Management Planning:** Forest managers must develop and implement management plans that are based on reliable data, incorporate stakeholder input, and prioritize the protection of high conservation values.
8. **Monitoring and Assessment**: Forest managers must establish monitoring and assessment systems to evaluate the effectiveness of forest management practices and ensure compliance with FSC standards.
9. **Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests:** Forest managers must identify and protect high conservation value forests, including rare and endangered

ecosystems and species, cultural and spiritual sites, and areas of social and economic importance to local communities.

10. **Plantations:** Forest managers must avoid the conversion of natural forests to plantations and ensure that any plantations established meet FSC's standards for responsible forest management.

The FSC) Principle 4 (4.3) referred to by respondents in this study states that “The Organization shall provide reasonable opportunities for employment, training and other services to local communities*, contractors and suppliers proportionate to scale and intensity of its management activities” (FSC, 2015). In summary, FSC's 10 principles emphasize the importance of responsible forest management practices that prioritize environmental, social, and economic sustainability, as well as the protection of the rights and well-being of local communities and indigenous peoples.

The FSC Certification is crucial for Mondi to access global markets as the trading in forestry and timber products requires FSC compliance. Annual compliance audits are conducted to ensure that member companies are complying with the principles and standards as prescribed in the certification. Mondi’s senior officials are entrusted with the task of ensuring that FSC certification is maintained to remain competitive in the markets. Loosing this kind of accreditation could have devastating financial implications for Mondi.

At practice level, management should pay attention to the interests of all legitimate stakeholders, especially community stakeholders, in order to ensure that the operations comply with the set principles and standards of the FSC. This should apply to all politicians and groups influencing policies, not only corporate executives, but also shareholders, the government, and others. Policymakers should consequently consider all legitimate interests when developing and implementing company policy." (Donaldson & Preston, 1995).

Chapter Seven
Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This study sought to investigate the practice of stakeholder management within Mondi forestry division and establish how this practice is integrated into business management. It further sought to establish the business intent for stakeholder management practice and how this influences the success of the forestry operations for Mondi. This section provides the final chapter of the dissertation by consolidating the study results and providing recommendations. This is achieved by recapitulating the study results hereunder organised through the initial research questions to arrive at conclusions based on the research objectives.

7.2 Study Conclusions

This research conclusions are not solely based on objectively verifiable facts but also on the many subjective meanings that the research respondents attach to their relationships in Mondi's corporate environment. Stakeholder theories and management have been applied in the interpretation and analysis of this research in the previous chapter. In addition, critical theories of systems and organisational thinking have been used to analyse stakeholder management practice and its dynamics of power between corporates and communities, these theories which are consummately important in this subject.

The process of interpreting the study results to arrive at conclusions has been rooted against the abductive, inductive, and deductive reasoning. Based on the research problem and study objectives, the abductive process provided basis for the development of different hypothesis to answer the research questions and perform relevant tests. In line with the quantitative approach, this process sought to explain a relationship between measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling phenomena with the intention to confirm relationships and to develop generalization. Using this approach allowed the researcher to be detached from the participants, as the inquiry was self-administered, and the research only had to interact with the collected data during analysis.

The inductive process was applied using the collected data to draw probabilities and possible conclusions. The discrepancies in data from the quantitative and qualitative studies was noted, analysed, and validated. The inductive reasoning, according to Hesse-Biber et al. (2015), begins with accumulation of specific data and the analysis of that data to arrive to a more general understanding of the problem. Instead of moving from hypothesis to evidence or evidence to theory as in inference ~~and reasoning~~, the abductive method goes backwards and forwards to carry out deductive and inductive methods (Mantere & Ketokivi, 2013).

Considering both the qualitative and quantitative methods applied in this research, an abductive method combined inferences and induction of some justifications. Deduction established the claim's basis, while inference formed consensus on one or more stages of the reasoning. Deductive and inductive reasoning are intertwined; deductive is used to create assumptions and show that there is a causal link, while inductive is used to establish conclusions and show that there is a causal relationship. Induction and deduction are also used to make inferences on cause-and-effect relationships (Huber & Snider, 2006).

7.2.1 What is the current stakeholder management practice at Mondi forestry operations?

The findings revealed that there is indeed stakeholder management practice at Mondi's forestry division. The stakeholder management is managed through a Stakeholder Relations Department whose task is to facilitate engagements and management of stakeholder related issues. While stakeholder theory refers to different elements of the stakeholder realms as people or institutions who have a claim or are affected by the operations of the business, it would seem that Mondi Forestry stakeholder management only refers to 'community' stakeholders to a great extent, and government, municipality to a less extent.

The study established that the premise under which the practice is implemented is from the risk mitigation point of view. Almost all respondents confirmed that the absence of or lack of stakeholder management might have negative impact for the forestry operations as stakeholders feel entitled and have interest in Mondi's forestry business.

To validate the existence of the stakeholder management practice, the research also revealed that the interaction with stakeholders is scheduled either on a weekly, monthly, quarterly, or even annual basis where reports, presentations are shared with stakeholders. Among the issues that are discussed during these meetings, employment, land issues, business opportunities and social investment are among many standing issues on the agenda during engagements. About 96.2% of the respondents confirmed that 'meetings' were used as a method of engagement.

The stakeholder management also includes the administration of the issue register where complaints and grievances are recorded. The study revealed that about maximum of 5 incidents were recorded in the last 12 months, representing about 65% of respondent's opinion on the issue. Further analysis showed that Mondi believed that stakeholder management contribute to the management of the issues and grievances, as risks are the mitigated at engagement level before they could become business threats.

Linking the issue and grievance management as part of the stakeholder management practice, the findings suggests that there were less public or social protests against Mondi in the last 12 months suggesting the practice does in fact address the inherent social risks, which, if not addressed could impede business operations.

The respondents were asked about their opinion on whether spending resources and time engaging external stakeholder is a good business strategy. The findings suggest that many Mondi officials believe this to be crucial for business as 96% of the respondents agreed with the statement. Additional 'qualitative' approaches were employed to respond to inquiries regarding experience, meaning, and viewpoint, frequently from the perspective of the participant (Hammarberg et al., 2016). These findings also shared the light on how Mondi employees view the practice of stakeholder management including their interpretation and meaning attached to it.

With stakeholder engagement meetings, and socio-economic initiatives delivered to communities as stakeholders, the findings also suggest that the practice is intentional, and planned. However, with all these attributes, the research findings also revealed that there is no proper stakeholder management framework or plan at a strategic level. The absence of a broader strategic Stakeholder Management framework makes the practice somewhat fragmented. There is an opportunity for Mondi to make an in-depth mapping exercise and develop stakeholder engagement plans that not only focus on reactive responses but are more proactive and strategic. The implication of this is that Mondi Forestry division might be managing stakeholders on issues and from a risk management point of view without proper strategic alignment and integration, with Mondi South African and global operations.

7.2.2 How is stakeholder management integrated into the forestry business strategy?

Mondi's Forestry Operations are divided into 3 major business units (BUs) namely Business Unit Central (BUC); Business Unit Midlands (BUM) and Business Unit Zululand (BUZ). Business Unit Zululand also comprises a separate Siya Qhubeka Forestry (SQF) which is a joint venture between Mondi and 3 claimant communities who now have ownership of the land. Structurally, each BU Stakeholder Relations is headed by a BU Land Manager with support from Community Development Facilitators (CDFs). The CDFs are assigned to geographic areas as demarcated by operational unit. Each BU is managed by a BU Manager who is supported by various operational and functional departments such as Stakeholder Relations. Functional departments do not have direct reporting lines to the BU Manager but report to functional managers.

To establish whether the stakeholder management function is integrated into the forestry business, the research referenced the literature on administrative, organisation and systems theories. Using Hose-Ryn (2017) and Bacud (2020) contributions on administrative theory of organisation, the findings revealed that the stakeholder management function of the forestry division in indeed departmentalized and forms part of the senior management structure of the division.

Among other departments like Finance, Research, Operations and Environment, the stakeholder relations division is a stand-alone department, yet integrated with forestry management at strategic level. The theory affirms that structurally, the organisation is divided into smaller units based on features like departmental differences. These units are hierarchically arranged into sub-systems that, when brought together, forms the organisation (Makadok & Coff, 2009:302). The senior manager responsible for Stakeholder Relations reports directly to the Forestry Operations Director who in turn reports to the Mondi SA CEO.

At operational level, the stakeholder relations officials referred to as Land Managers, and Community Development Facilitators are strategically placed within regional operations and manage stakeholder engagements and dynamics at local level but forming part of the Forestry Operations team.

7.2.3 To what extent is stakeholder management practice having an influence in Mondi's forestry business decisions.

The findings revealed that Mondi's stakeholder management practice has a core mandate of social risks identification and mitigation. Different Operational Areas have deployed different stakeholder management strategies in their attempt to manage relationships with community stakeholders. This is because the dynamics within communities and areas are not necessary the same and require tailored responses. Even though there seem to be this variability, two distinct strategies have been observed as employed by Mondi to manage relationships with stakeholders, and communities in particular: philanthropic (in the form of Corporate Social Investment) and collaborative (in the form of land reform programmes and partnerships).

Furthermore, in triangulating the findings, the practice, and the literature, it was observed that Mondi's stakeholder management is structured as risk management strategy to minimise negative impact on operation by stakeholders. The impact probability was applied in the analysis of Mondi's stakeholder identification process, and it was established that stakeholders are categorised depending on their level of impact and probability on the organisation (Olander, 2007).

7.2.4 How does the practice of stakeholder management translate into shareholder and stakeholder value creation?

The results hereby confirm that Mondi Forestry’s stakeholder management practice is strategically managed to maintain industrial peace to ensure that operations are not affected. In addition, the stakeholder management practice is necessary to maintain compliance, which also influence the smooth running of the operations within law and industry standards.

From the literature presented in this study, stakeholder theory challenges the neoclassical assumption that business organisations exist solely for the purpose of maximizing profits which are then filtered back to shareholders in the form of dividends and equity. The literature also tells us that companies cannot solely exist for the purpose of profits to investors, but they have a responsibility to address stakeholder concerns in strategically and practically germane way. We also learned from the interviews that community stakeholders have benefited in their interactions with Mondi. The shareholder-stakeholder debate has been central in the evolution of the stakeholder theory.

Milton Friedman (1970) in his controversial article has challenged the stakeholder theory and insisted that capitalism was good for business. Friedman wrote that business had and should only have one purpose: to maximise profits and should be indemnified from any social responsibility. A crucial distinction between Freeman and Friedman can be observed, with the latter espousing the notion that businesses' overarching objective and obligation solely revolve around maximizing profits. On the other hand, Freeman posits that stakeholder relationships are the fundamental enablers that facilitate the attainment of profit maximization. According to Smith (2003), both the shareholder and stakeholder theories have one similarity that considers relationships as important but expressed more in economic terms in the shareholder theory while the importance of relationships is more seen in terms of attaining competitive edge in the stakeholder approach.

Numerous academics espouse the notion that the primary goal of business encompasses the attainment of profit, with all other objectives being secondary to this overarching aim. Conversely, a plurality of practitioners, organizations, and scholars contend that entities bear an obligation to the environment and individuals impacted by their commercial activities. The aforementioned ideology is attributed to Edward Freeman in scholarly discourse (Saint & Tripathi, 2010). This argument created a shareholder-stakeholder debate in what is referred to in the literature as Friedman-Freeman debate.

While the theory on shared value is at its infancy, this study provides opportunities for further research on how shared value is created, managed, and measured within the stakeholder value chain. Mondi's alignment with FSC principles, ISO 26000, Kings IV, and other statutes indicate an acceptance that business has a responsibility beyond maximising profits through extension of benefits to stakeholders. The socio-political environment under which the forestry industry operates, demands nothing less than proper stakeholder management. The government's Land Reform programme was a precipitant that forced forestry companies to redefine their relationships with stakeholders other than their shareholders. Furthermore, those corporates like Mondi with large land holdings had to deal with the uncertainty of land claims implemented by the government after 1994, placing communities directly as affected, interested and influential stakeholders. Consequently, the findings suggests that critical stakeholder issues, particularly in relation to social stakeholders who are non-market in nature both in theory and practice are now at the forefront of Mondi's corporate relationships.

7.3 Limitations of the study

7.3.1 Stakeholders

The study was centred around Mondi's stakeholder management practices, its implementation and accrual benefits. The researcher was not able to include Mondi's external stakeholders in this study and was therefore unable to evaluate the reciprocity of the two. As the study focused on the point of view of Mondi, it excluded the actual stakeholders who are affected by Mondi's management practice. The inclusion of stakeholders would have offered more opportunities for data triangulation and provide the views of stakeholders.

7.3.2 Sampling

The study sample was selected by means of purposive non-probability sampling. The purposive sample was built up to enable the researcher to identify and only interview Mondi employees who were relevant to the study and the research questions being asked. This sampling technique allowed a researcher to select only those participants that have the requisite knowledge and are in position to answer the research questions. As a result, findings of this research will not be generalized to the broader population. The type of sampling was however deliberate as it fit the purpose of the study to analyse Mondi's stakeholder management practice. The planned outcome was in-dept information and not generalisability.

7.4 Recommendations

7.4.1 Recommendation 1: Value of stakeholder Management for Mondi

The perceived value of stakeholder management was clearly evident from the findings in this study. However, this research was unable to study and calculate the monetary value of such practice. While this was intentional, the financial measurement of stakeholder management is important to rationalise the value of this practice and its tangible benefits to the company. While this research also established different value drivers which are perceived by management to be main contributors in sustaining business operations, the financial nature of such drivers needs further exploration. The following variable could be used as a guide to develop a mathematical formula for calculation:

- Daily cost of producing timber
- Daily profits based on margins.
- Risks factors impeding daily margins.
- Loss of production in days
- Loss of profit calculated annually based on number of days lost in production and sales.

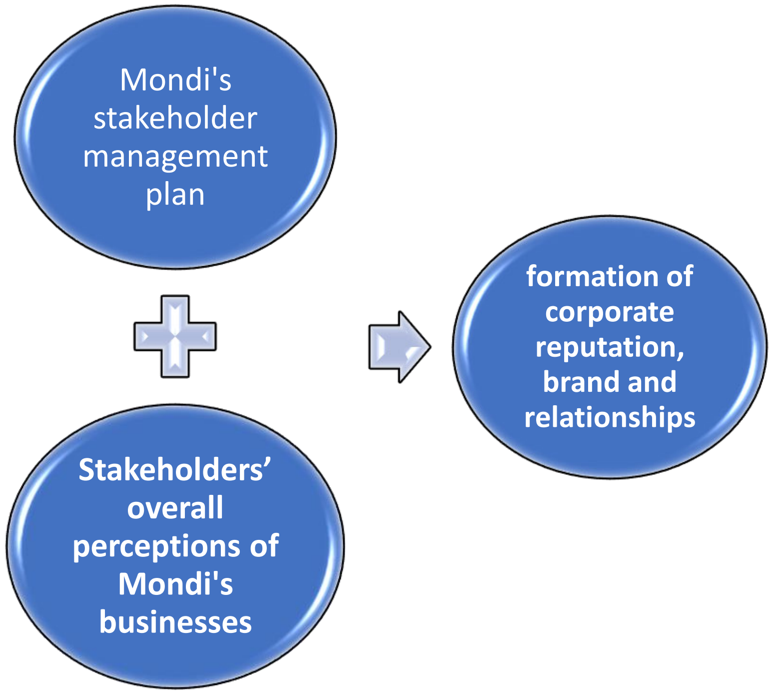
7.4.2 Recommendation 2: Stakeholder Perception Index

Mondi's communication processes, including stakeholder engagement, should be perceived as integral to building and sustaining key relationships with stakeholders, to sustaining the reputation of the company. The integrated stakeholder perception research is recommended represented by the sample of the following stakeholders:

- **Internal Stakeholders**
  - Forestry Management
  - Senior Management Staff
  - General employees
  - Contractors
- **External Stakeholders**
  - Department of Forestry and Fisheries
  - Local Municipalities
  - Forestry Council
  - Traditional Authorities
  - Civil Society Formations
  - Community Leaders
  - Youth formations
  - Ex-employees
  - Media

The research process could take an audit format and focus on all forms of communications, practices, and include perceptions and stakeholder reputational indices. As a leading corporate citizen, Mondi should also show vision and leadership in how they deliver on stakeholder expectations regarding environmental and social performance.

Figure 7.1 Proposed Stakeholder Perception Index



Reputation, brand and relationships are based on how well the group performs in the context of stakeholders' interests and expectations including:

- Business and financial performance: products and services, solutions for energy and timber security, safety, innovation, technology, quality of management, fair trade.
- Socio-economic performance: employee value proposition, skills development, energy and timber security and in-country investment.
- Environmental performance: emissions, water security, climate change.

7.4.3 Recommendation 3: Stakeholder Management Framework

This section provides a proposed framework for manging and improving stakeholder management within Mondi Forest. It was the finding of this research that Mondi Forest did not have a strategic stakeholder management framework with integrated elements. Given the challenges experienced by the business, the framework is recommended for Mondi Forest, as well as Mondi SA division to improve the stakeholder management process.

In addition, this framework provides a structural basis to assist Mondi with the institutionalisation of stakeholder relationship management in forestry operations and elsewhere. This framework should provide a frame of reference that ensures that stakeholder management is embedded in decision making and behaviour to enable Mondi to maximise the benefits of engagement, consistent with sound management processes and delivering stakeholder value.

Proposed methodical approach for stakeholder planning.

	Plan		
	Stakeholder mapping	**Stakeholder analysis**	**Engagement planning**
Overview	Understand stakeholder linkages by topic i.e. analyse all stakeholders per topic	Understand issue linkages by stakeholder, i.e., identify all topics per stakeholder.	Detailed engagement plans for each topic and stakeholder: meeting sequence and timing.
Actions	**Map stakeholders to topics:** Assess level of power and level of influence over other stakeholders **Update topic deck** • Add stakeholder map by topic. • Develop or update topic primer. • Develop or update topic position. • Develop or update topic primer and key messaging.	**Assess topic linkages per Stakeholder.** Populate stakeholder deck with relevant topics and objectives from topic deck. **Set stakeholder engagement objectives by topic.** **Update stakeholder deck** • Review key organisational and individual stakeholder profiles. • Gather material of stakeholder	**Develop engagement plan by topic.** • High level overview of planned engagements per topic • Determine engagement methods to be used. **Develop engagement plan by stakeholder.** • Consolidate topic engagement plans per stakeholder. • Assess which topics are to be discussed at which engagement.
Key parties involved.	• Mondi SA Corporate Affairs • Business Units • Subject matter experts. • Relationship owners	• Stakeholder Relations. • Business Units • Mondi interface/relationship owners	• Mondi SA Corporate Affairs • Business Units • Subject matter experts. • Relationship owners • External communications.

Mondi operates and competes in a *global environment,* with opportunities, issues and risks arising from a host of different sources and locations – not only South Africa. The interconnectedness of stakeholders across Mondi's footprint, has blurred the boundaries between local and global. A more complex network of stakeholders = *an increase in reputational risk.* Stakeholders' perception of risk (e.g., risk to safety or the environment) or sentiment against an issue (e.g. fires) tends to be emotional, powerful and if left unattended, becomes difficult to influence even with the facts. Early identification of stakeholders' expectations and concerns, a thorough understanding of stakeholder opinion, and ongoing dialogue is essential in managing reputational risk.

Table 7.1 Proposed Strategic Priorities and value propositions.

Stakeholder management focused on the following strategic priorities:	**Stakeholder value proposition**
Mondi BRAND ***Strategic priority***: Achieve **brand awareness** and **relevant differentiation** in select stakeholder groupings (to be specified) while achieving an **emotional connection** and **loyalty** towards the Mondi brand at local level (forestry communities) and in South Africa.	*"Our success is made possible by you"*
GROUP REPUTATION ***Strategic priority***: Identify and focus on **<u>strategic stakeholder expectations/ interests</u>** in Mondi's triple bottom line performance, as **the levers to drive the group's reputation** as preferred partner, leading corporate citizen and employer of choice. Demonstrate thought leadership on these levers.	*"Our performance depends on good partnership and working with you to achieve win-win solutions"*
STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS ***Strategic priority***: Effective, **value-based stakeholder engagement** that results in healthy relationships characterised by **mutual trust, satisfaction, and long-term commitment.** Manage **strategic reputation risk** through early identification of, robust debate on, and adequate response to, stakeholders' material concerns.	*"Our relationship with you is long term, with mutual benefits"*

Also critical is **customers/ business partners** – their regard for the Mondi brand translates directly into willingness to transact, and consequently = financial value. Following on employees and customers, **government and regulators** have the highest direct impact on Mondi's economic value as they, on behalf of their people:

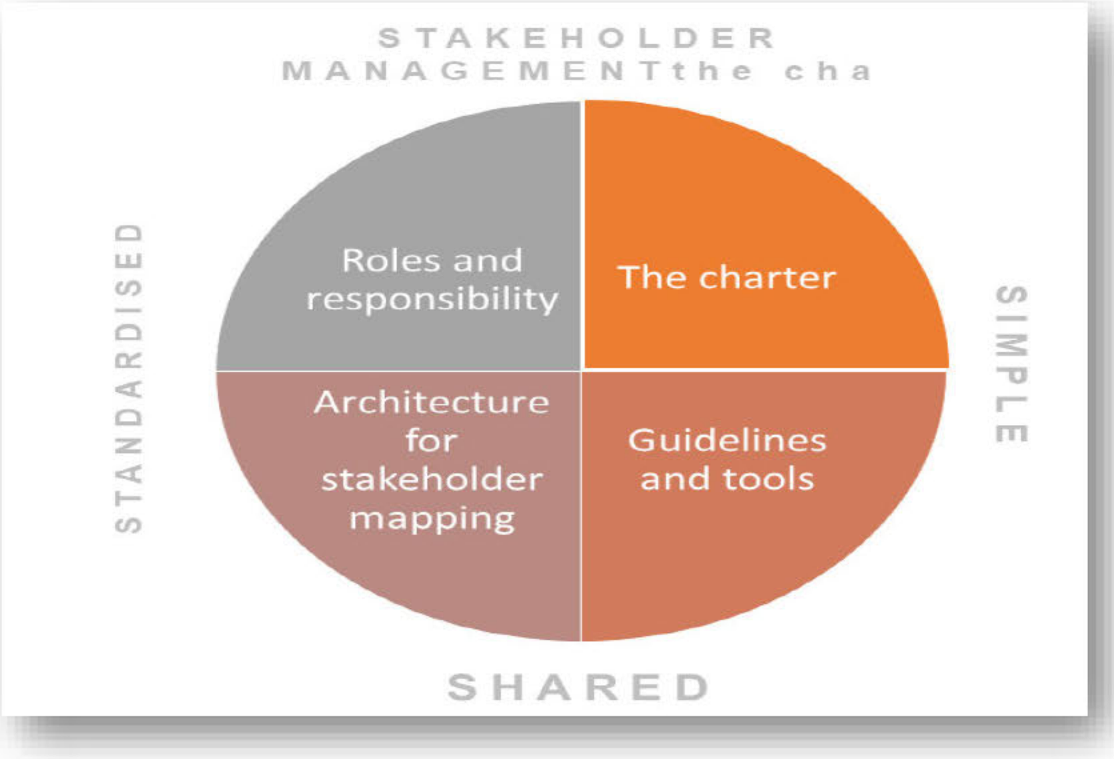
- *grant access to resources.*
- *regulate business practices and tax business.*

Internationally, governments are introducing detailed, costly controls via an unending stream of legislation and regulation. The industries of oil, gas and energy are heavily regulated. There is increasing tendency of regulatory over-reach with rising compliance thresholds and increasingly rigorous environmental targets.

In conclusion, Mondi SA group needs a shared, simple, and standardised solution to identify, map, engage with, and report on, stakeholders. This should include:

- Clear roles and responsibilities for stakeholder relationship owners versus interfaces (to enhance alignment, coordination and reporting while minimising risk).
- A common architecture for the identification and mapping of stakeholders (the basis for a shared IT platform, data management and safekeeping of institutional memory).
- A portfolio of guidelines and tools (supporting the business to better manage stakeholder relationships).
- The Mondi way to engage stakeholders (a Stakeholder Engagement Charter)

Figure 7.2 Proposed Stakeholder Engagement Charter process.



Mondi's vision and strategic agenda depend on priority stakeholders perceiving the Forestry Operations and the group as employer of choice, preferred business partner and leading corporate citizen. In order to support this vision and strategic agenda, the Stakeholder Management Strategy should:

- converge brand, reputation, and relationships – Mondi's three intangible assets – into a single set of priorities to be achieved through stakeholder management.
- focus scarce resources on the achievement of strategic goals to drive business value through stakeholder management.

Combined, these strategic priorities and goals should provide the key performance areas, indicators, targets and measures for a scorecard against which to report. The Stakeholder Management Strategy would then inform stakeholder engagement programmes on subsequent levels, whether per business unit, per region or both.

7.4.4 Recommendation 4: Strategic Goals to drive business value.

Figure 7.3 Proposed Strategic priorities.

Source: Authors own work

Figure 7.3 below provides detailed descriptions of the general strategic priorities, the expectations and both the local and government levels regarding the reputations of Mondi's overall performance about the triple bottom line approach. In addition to the three strategic goals, the management of all stakeholder relationships should be directed by the following goals table 7.2. on the following page.

Table 7.2: Proposed strategic goals for stakeholder management.

ALL Stakeholder categories	• Get to know and profile priority stakeholders. • Ensure Mondi has a direct relationship with priority stakeholders. This means having direct contact, access and in-person relationships. • Structure engagement as an ongoing process of dialogue, engage frequently. • Identify, acknowledge and address stakeholders' expectations, as well as the gaps existing between stakeholder expectations and Mondi's performance. • Improve identified relationships strategic to the business. • Deliver a stakeholder experience of Mondi as responsive, committed to long-term healthy relationships. • Meaningfully involve stakeholders, deepen the level of engagement from mere information sharing to consultation, collaboration, and joint problem solving. • Engage effectively in accordance with the Stakeholder Engagement Charter with emphasis on planning and evaluation of engagement, and rigour in the management of data and systems established to support stakeholder engagement. • Enable mutual understanding between Mondi and stakeholders. This means understanding each other's vision, goals, main drivers, challenges, and support needed. • Build the Mondi brand: Present and reinforce the positive image of Mondi for stakeholders in all areas where Mondi operates.

This research was able to study Mondi's stakeholder management practise, relationships and the nature of such relationships in how they influence and contribute to the success of Mondi Forestry business. The findings of this research, coupled with the extensive literature study on stakeholder management, enabled this research to provide strategic and management recommendations to assist Mondi to cope with its stakeholder management agenda. The recommendations are provided in the spirit of complementing the work Mondi is already doing in this field, and to affirm the study's hypothesis that indeed stakeholder management does contribute to the success of business.

7.5 Suggestions for future empirical study

Although there are studies connecting stakeholder theory and business performance, little research has been conducted on the intersection of stakeholder management and stakeholder value creation. Furthermore, in South Africa, industries like mining, forestry and energy are heavily legislated with community stakeholder engagement imposed as a compliance element particularly in the mining sector. Future studies are required to further explore the narrative of stakeholder engagement as a compliance phenomenon rather than a strategic process that drives business sustainability, accountability, and responsibility.

7.6 Conclusion

The challenge which confronts business is to ensure that economic programs not only prioritise the needs and concerns of those financially invested but that it also forms part of a coordinated strategy which will promote sustainable interventions and growth. The corporate sector must therefore be the key vehicle for social change in an attempt to remove structural inequalities that have contributed to poverty and disempowered communities in South Africa.

The stakeholder management approach is not primarily about providing resources, benefits to stakeholders or about complicated structural features of the relationships but about working facilitatively alongside people who represent different stakeholder interests so that they may enlarge themselves, while informing decision making about the future/continuity of the business. The stakeholder management approach is an intervention into a complex system, and results in a change to that system, and consequently a new set of circumstances. Using this approach, gives business an ability to respond to the situation as it presents itself afresh, rather than imposing preconceived solutions or answers.

The stakeholder management approach goes beyond learning, trial and error activities but also secures legitimacy on both ends of the relationships. Legitimacy also enforces business organisations to be accountable, and since the stakeholder approach involves learning and participation throughout, it presents a perfect opportunity for accountability. Stakeholder management approaches and stakeholder participation in the subsequent development, will play a decisive role in the evolution of stakeholder centred development in the foreseeable future. Desired sustainable development interventions could only be designed by the utilisation of a joint process of learning and development set up between all stakeholders. Call this ‘interactive planning’ or even ‘negotiation’, but fundamentally it is a learning process which develops all participants.

Bibliography

Aakhus, M., and Bzdak, M. (2015). Stakeholder engagement as communication design practice. Journal of Public Affairs, 15: 188–200.

Adams, M. and Park, T., (2018). Qualitative research in correctional settings: Researcher bias, western ideological influences, and social justice. Journal of forensic nursing, 14(2): 72-79.

Agle B. R., Mitchell R. K., Sonnenfeld J. A. 1999 Who Matters to CEOs? An Investigation of Stakeholder Attributes and Salience, Corporate Performance, and CEO Values. Academy of Management Journal 42: 507–525.

Aguinis, H., Ramani, R. S., and Alabduljader, N. (2018). What you see is what you get? Enhancing methodological transparency in management research. Academy of Management Annals, 12: 83–110.

Almanasreh, E., Moles, R. and Chen, T.F., (2019). Evaluation of methods used for estimating content validity. Research in social and administrative pharmacy, 15(2): 214-221.

Andrade C. The Inconvenient Truth About Convenience and Purposive Samples. Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine. 2021;43(1):86-88. doi:10.1177/0253717620977000.

Antolin-Lopez, R., Martinez-del-Rio, J., and Cespedes-Lorente, J. J. (2019). Environmental entrepreneurship as a multi-component and dynamic construct: Duality of goals, environmental agency, and environmental value creation. Business Ethics: A European Review, 28: 407–422.

Argandona, A. (2011). Stakeholder theory and value creation. IESE Business School.

Arter, Z. A. (2017). A Study of the Effects of the Stakeholders Relationship Management on Company Performance by the Interviewing Variables of Evaluation of the Company by the Employees And Social Aspects. Turkish Studies, 15(3): 20-33.

Attanasio, G., Preghenella, N., De Toni, A.F. and Battistella, C. (2022). Stakeholder engagement in business models for sustainability: The stakeholder value flow model for sustainable development. Business Strategy and the Environment, 31(3): 860-874.

Bacud, S.A.D. (2020) Henri Fayol’s Principles of Management and Its Effect to Organizational Leadership and Governance. Journal of Critical Reviews, 7: 162-167.

Bakla, A. (2018). Learner-generated materials in a flipped pronunciation class: A sequential explanatory mixed-methods study. Computers & Education, 125: 14-38.

Banerjee, S. B. (2007). Corporate Social Responsibility. The Good, the Bad and the Ugly. Edward Elgar: Cheltenham.

Barney, J. B, and Hansen, M.H. (1994). “Trustworthiness as a Source of Competitive Advantage,” Strategic Management Journal, Vol. 15, No. S1, 1994

Barney, J.B. and Harrison, J.S. (2020). Stakeholder theory at the crossroads. Business and Society, 59(2): 203-212.

Baumfield, V. S. (2016). Stakeholder theory from a management perspective: Bridging the shareholder/stakeholder divide. Australian Journal of Corporate Law, 31(1): 187-207.

Beck, D. and Storopoli, J. (2021). Cities through the lens of Stakeholder Theory: A literature review. Cities, 118: 103377.

Becker, S., Bryman, A. and Ferguson, H. eds. (2012). Understanding research for social policy and social work 2E: themes, methods and approaches. Policy press.

Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2018). Business research methods. Oxford university press.

Berman, S.L., Johnson-Cramer, M.E. (2017). Stakeholder Theory: Seeing the Field Through the Forest. Sage, 3(8):1-4.

Biesta, G. (2010) Pragmatism and the Philosophical Foundations of Mixed Methods Research. IN TASHAKKORI, A. & TEDDLIE, C. (Eds.) Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research. Thousand Oaks: CA, Sage Publications.

Bloomfield, J. and Fisher, M.J. (2019). Quantitative research design. Journal of the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association, 22(2): 27-30.

Boatright, J. R. (1994). Fiduciary Duties and the Shareholder-Management Relation: Or, What's so Special about Shareholders? Business Ethics Quarterly, 4(4): 393–407.

Bogers, M., Chesbrough, H., Heaton, S., and Teece, D. J. (2019). Strategic Management of Open Innovation: A Dynamic Capabilities Perspective. California Management Review, 62(1): 77–94.

Bonnafous-Boucher, M. and Rendtorff, J.D. (2016). Stakeholder Theory as a Theory of Organisations. In Stakeholder Theory: 41-51. Springer, Cham.

Bosse, Douglas; Phillips, Robert and Harrison, Jeffrey. (2009). Stakeholders, Reciprocity, and Firm Performance. Strategic Management Journal. 30:447-456.

Brainbok. (2018). Stakeholder classification modes. Brainbok.

Branco, M. C., and Rodrigues, L. L. (2007). Positioning stakeholder theory within the debate on corporate social responsibility. Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies, 12(1): 4-15.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative research in psychology, 3(2): 77-101.

Bridoux, F., and Stoelhorst, J. W. (2014). Microfoundations for stakeholder theory: Managing stakeholders with heterogeneous motives. Strategic Management Journal, 35:107–125.

Brin, P., and Nehme, M. N. (2019). Corporate social responsibility: Analysis of theories and models. EUREKA: Social and Humanities, 5(1): 22-30.

Bryman, M. (2004). Social Research Methods, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Burden, R. (2018). Systems theory and its relevance to schools. In Problem behaviour in the secondary school: 28-36. Routledge.

Burton, R.M and Obel, B. (2011). Computational modeling for what-is, what-might-be, and what-should-be studies—and triangulation. Organ Sci 22(5):1195–1202.

Business Roundtable. (2019). Business Roundtable redefines the purpose of a corporation to promote "an economy that serves all Americans." Business Roundtable. https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-redefinesthe-purpose-of-a-corporation-to-promote-an-economy-that-serves-all-americans

Byrne, M.M. (2001). Evaluating the findings of qualitative research. AORN journal, 73(3): 703-703.

Cabral, S., Mahoney, J.T., McGahan, A.M. and Potoski, M. (2019). Value creation and value appropriation in public and nonprofit organizations. Strategic Management Journal, 40(4): 465-475.

Capper, C.A. (2018). Organizational theory for equity and diversity: Leading integrated, socially just education. Routledge.

Capra, F. (1997). The Web of Life: A New Scientific Understanding of Living Systems (2nd ed.). São Paulo: Cultrix.

Carroll, A. B., and Buchholtz, A. K. (2012). Business and society: ethics, sustainability, and stakeholder management. Eighth Ed. Australia; Mason, OH, South-Western, Cengage Learning.

Carroll, A. B., and Buchholtz, A. K. (2006). Business and society: Ethics and stakeholder management (6th ed.). Mason, OH: Thomson South-Western.

Ceric, A. (2015). Bringing together evaluation and management of ICT value: A systems theory approach. Electronic Journal of Information Systems Evaluation, 18(1): 19.

Chesbrough, H., Lettl, C. and Ritter, T. (2018). Value creation and value capture in open innovation. Journal of Product Innovation Management, 35(6): 930-938.

Chia, R. (1995). From Modern to Postmodern Organizational Analysis. Organization Studies, 16(4): 579–604.

Chikere, C.C. and Nwoka, J. (2015). The systems theory of management in modern day organisations-a study of Aldgate congress resort limited Port Harcourt. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 5(9): 1-7.

Clarkson, M. (1995), A stakeholder framework for analysing and evaluating corporate social performance. Academy of Management Review, Vol. 20 No. 1: 92-117.

Cole, D. A. (2017). Structural equation modeling. In D. A. Cole (Ed.), Handbook of research methods in clinical psychology (3rd ed: 307-330). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Collins, K., and Norman, G. (2018). Using parametric statistics with ordinal scale data. International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 21(6): 739-752. doi: 10.1080/13645579.2018.1437341

Corbin, J., and Strauss, A. (2008). Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452230153

Creswell, J. W. (2009) Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches, California, Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. 2008. Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach. 3rd ed. New Jersey: Sage Publications, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. and Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). Designing and conducting mixed methods research. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., Shope, R., Plano Clark, V. L., and Green, D. O. (2006). How interpretive qualitative research extends mixed methods research. Research in the Schools, 13(1): 1-11.

Cummings, J. L., and Doh, J. P. (2000). Identifying Who Matters: Mapping Key Players in Multiple Environments. California Management Review, 42(2), 83–104.

Dafna M. DiSegni, Moshe Huly and Sagi Akron, (2015) "Corporate social responsibility, environmental leadership and financial performance", Social Responsibility Journal, Vol. 11 Issue: 1: 131-148, https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-02-2013-0024

De Vos, A., Strydom, H., Fouche, C. and Delport, C. (2011) Research at Grass Roots: For Social Sciences and Human Services Professions. Van Schaik Publishers, Pretoria.

Dekkar, A and Qing, Y. (2014). Stakeholders Management Issues and Leadership in Project Management: The way forward. International Journal of Education and Research, Vol. 2 No. 2 February 2014: 1-4

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. eds. (2011). The Sage handbook of qualitative research. Sage.

Donaldson, T. (1995). The stakeholder theory of the corporation: Concepts, evidence, and implications. Academy of Management Review, 20(1): 65-91.

Donaldson, T. and Preston, L. E. (1995). The Stakeholder Theory of the Corporation: Concepts, Evidence, and Implications. Academy of Management Review, 20: 65-91.

Dubois, A. and Gadde, L.E. (2002). Systematic combining: an abductive approach to case research. Journal of business research, 55(7): 553-560.

Dunham L., R. E. Freeman J. Liedtka (2006), Enhancing Stakeholder Practice: A Particularized Exploration of Community. Business Ethics Quarterly 16(1):23–42.

Edmans, A. (2020). Grow the Pie: How Great Companies Deliver Both Purpose and Profit. Cambridge University Press.

Eisenhardt, K.M. and Graebner, M.E. (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. Academy of management journal, 50(1): 25-32.

Elias, A. A., Cavana, R. Y., and Jackson, L. S. (2002). Stakeholder analysis for R and D project management. RD Management, 32(4): 301–310. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9310.00262.

Elkjaer, B. and Simpson, B. (2011). Pragmatism: A lived and living philosophy. What can it offer to contemporary organization theory? In Philosophy and organization theory. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Eskerod, P., Huemann, M. and Savage, G. (2015). Project Stakeholder Management—Past and Present. Project Management Journal, 46: 6-14. Ethics Quarterly 1 (1):53-73.

Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. American journal of theoretical and applied statistics, 5(1): 1-4.

Evan, W. M. and R. E. Freeman: (1993). A Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation: Kantian Capitalism, in T. Beauchamp and N Bowie (ed.), Ethical Theory and Business, 4th. ed. (Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs).

Faherty, L. J., Schwartz, H. L., Ahmed, F., Zheteyeva, Y., Uzicanin, A., and Uscher-Pines, L. (2019). School and preparedness officials' perspectives on social distancing practices to reduce influenza transmission during a pandemic: Considerations to guide future work. Preventive medicine reports, 14, 100871.

Falqueto, J. M. Z., Hoffmann, V. E., Gomes, R. C., and Onoyama Mori, S. S. (2020). Strategic planning in higher education institutions: What are the stakeholders' roles in the process? Higher Education, 79(6): 1039–1056. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00455-8

Fassin, Y. (2009). The Stakeholder Model Refined. Journal of Business Ethics, 84: 113-135.

Field, A. (2013). Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Flyvberg, B. (2011). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. Qualitative Inquiry. In Gerring, J. Goldkuhl, G., (2012). Pragmatism vs interpretivism in qualitative information systems research. European journal of information systems, 21(2): 135-146.

Forest Stewardship Council, (2015). Principles and criteria for Forest Stewardship, United Kingdom.

Frederick, W., Post, J. and St Davis, K. (1992), Business and Society: Corporate Strategy, Public Policy, Ethics, 7th ed., McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.

Frederick, W.C., (2006). Corporation, Be Good! The Story of Corporate Social Responsibility. Business and Society, 46(4): 479–485.

Freeman, R. and McVea, J. (2001), "A stakeholder approach to strategic management", in Hitt, M., Freeman, R. and Harrison, J. (Eds), The Blackwell Handbook of Strategic Management, Blackwell Business, Oxford: 189-207

Freeman, R. E. (1984). Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach. Boston: Pitman Publishing.

Freeman, R. E. (2015). Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139192675.

Freeman, R. E., and Reed, D. L. (1983). Stockholders and Stakeholders: A New Perspective on Corporate Governance. California Management Review, 25: 88-106.

Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S., and Wicks, A. C. (2007). Managing for stakeholders: Survival, reputation, and success. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Freeman, R.E. (2010). Strategic management: A stakeholder approach. Cambridge university press.

Freeman, R.E. (2015). Stakeholder theory. Wiley encyclopaedia of management: 16.

Freeman, R.E. (2017). The new story of business: Towards a more responsible capitalism. Business and Society Review, 122(3), pp.449-465.

Freeman, R.E., Harrison, J.S., Wicks, A.C., Parmar, B., de Colle, S. (2010). Stakeholder Theory: The state of the art. Cambridge: Oxford University Press.

Freeman,R.E. (2008) . Ethical Issues In Business: A Philosophical Approach. In: T. D. a. P. Werhane, ed. Managing for Stakeholders. 8th ed. EngleWood Cliffs: Prentice Hall: 39-53.

Friedman, A. and Miles, S. (2006). Stakeholders: Theory and Practice, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Friedman, M. (1970). The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profit. New York Times.

Frooman J., Murrell A. J. (2005). Stakeholder influence strategies: The roles of structural and demographic determinants. Business and Society, 44: 3-31

Frooman, J. (1999). Stakeholders influence strategies, Academy of Management Review, Vol. 24 No. 2: 191-205.

Garidzirai, R. (2020). Time series analysis of carbon dioxide emission, population, carbon tax, and energy use in South Africa. 670216917.

Garriga, E., (2014). Beyond stakeholder utility function: Stakeholder capability in the value creation process. Journal of Business Ethics, 120(4): pp.489-507.

George, T. (2022). Mixed Methods Research | Definition, Guide and Examples. Scribbr. https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/mixed-methods-research. Accessed 22 January 2023.

Gephart, R.P., (2018). Qualitative research as interpretive social science. The SAGE handbook of qualitative business and management research methods: 33-53.

Giacomarra, M., Crescimanno, M., Sakka, G. and Galati, A. (2019). Stakeholder engagement toward value co-creation in the F and B packaging industry. EuroMed Journal of Business. Vol. 15 No. 3: 315-331

Giles, D., Smythe, E., and Spence, D. (2012). Exploring relationships in education: A phenomenological inquiry. Australian Journal of Adult Learning, 52(2): 214-236.

Gilmartin, M. J., and Freeman, R. E. (2002). Business ethics and health care: a stakeholder perspective. Health care management review, 27(2): 52–65.

Goldkuhl, G., (2012). Pragmatism vs interpretivism in qualitative information systems research. European journal of information systems, 21(2): 135-146.

Goodpaster, K. E. (1991). Business Ethics and Stakeholder Analysis: Business

Goyal, L. (2020). Stakeholder theory: Revisiting the origins. Journal of Public Affairs: 2559.

Gray, D., E. (2009). Doing Research in the Real World, London, Sage.

Green, J. C., Caracell, V. J. and Graham, W. F. (1989). Towards a conceptual framework for Mixed-methods evaluation designs. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 11: 255-74.

Guass, A. (2016). Socially Responsible Companies to Applaud. Retrieved November 05, 2022, from https://www.classy.org/blog/6-socially-responsible-companies-applaud/

Gultekin, Y. S. (2018). Stakeholder Analysis and Stakeholder Management: A Conceptual Framework for Turkish Forestry. International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies. 5(3):1-8.

Haksever, Cengiz, Chaganti, Radha and Cook, Ronald. (2004). A Model of Value Creation: Strategic View. Journal of Business Ethics. 49. 295-307. 10.1023/B:BUSI.0000017968.21563.05.

Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M. and de Lacey, S. (2016). Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. Human Reproduction, Vol.31, No.3: 498–501.

Hammersley, M. (2013). What is Qualitative Research? London and New York: Bloomsburry.

Hammond, D. (2019). The legacy of Ludwig von Bertalanffy and its relevance for our time. Systems research and behavioral science, 36(3): 301-307.

Harrison, J. and Wicks, A. (2013). Stakeholder Theory, Values, and Firm Performance. Business Ethics Quarterly 23,1: 97-124

Harrison, J. S., Freeman, R. E., and Abreu, M. C. (2015). Stakeholder theory as an ethical approach to effective management: Applying the theory to multiple contexts. Review of Business Management, 17(55): 858-869.

Harrison, J., Bosse, D. and Phillips, R. (2010). Managing for stakeholders, stakeholder utility functions, and competitive advantage. Strategic Management Journal, 31: 58-74.

Harrison, J.S. and Wicks, A.C. (2021). Harmful stakeholder strategies. Journal of Business Ethics, 169(3): 405-419.

Harrison, J.S., Bosse, D.A. and Phillips, R.A. (2010). Managing for stakeholders, stakeholder utility functions, and competitive advantage. Strategic management journal, 31(1): 58-74.

Harrison, R.L., Reilly, T.M. and Creswell, J.W. (2020). Methodological rigor in mixed methods: An application in management studies. Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 14(4): 473-495.

Hart, Stuart L. and Sharma, Sanjay (2004) 'Engaging Fringe Stakeholders for Competitive Imagination', Academy of Management Executive 18(1): 7-18.

Hatch, M.J. (2019). Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives. South Asian Journal of Management, 26(4): 215-218.

Haveman, H. A., and Wetts, R. (2019). Contemporary organizational theory: The demographic, relational, and cultural perspectives. Sociology Compass, 13(3), e12664-n/a. https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12664

Hawkins, M., Cheng, C., Elsworth, G.R. and Osborne, R.H. (2020). The translation method is validity evidence for construct equivalence: analysis of secondary data routinely collected during translations of the Health Literacy Questionnaire (HLQ). BMC medical research methodology, 20(1): 1-13.

Heeks, R., and Wall, C. (2018). Data analysis using descriptive statistics. In R. Heeks and C. Wall (Eds.), Research methods in information systems: An introduction (2nd ed.: 98-115). New York: Routledge

Hendren, K., Luo, Q.E. and Pandey, S.K. (2018). The state of mixed methods research in public administration and public policy. Public Administration Review, 78(6): 904-916.

Hendren, K., Newcomer, K., Pandey, S.K., Smith, M., and Sumner, N., (2022). Qualitative research methods can be leveraged to strengthen mixed methods research in public policy and public administration. Public Administration Review.

Hendry, J., (2005). Beyond self-interest: Agency theory and the board in a satisficing world. British Journal of Management, 16: S55-S63.

Hesse-Biber S. N., Rodriguez D., Frost N. A. (2015). A qualitatively driven approach to multimethod and mixed methods research. In The Oxford handbook of multimethod and mixed methods research inquiry. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Hodge B. J. Anthony W. P. and Gales L. M. (2003). Organization theory: a strategic approach (6th ed.). Prentice Hall. Retrieved June 1, 2022, from http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/48588450.html.

Horodecki, M. and Oppenheim, J. (2013). Fundamental limitations for quantum and nanoscale thermodynamics. Nature communications, 4(1):1-6.

Hose-Ryan J.A. (2017). Scientific Management Theory of Organizations. In: Farazmand A. (eds) Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_79-1

Huber, R.B. and Snider, A. (2006). Influencing through argument. IDEA.

Hussey, J. and Hussey, R. (1997). Business Research: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students, New York: Palgrave.

Imenda, S. (2014). Is there a conceptual difference between theoretical and conceptual frameworks? Journal of social sciences, 38(2): 185-195.

Ingenhoff, D. and Sommer, K. (2010). Trust in Companies and in CEOs:

International Organization for Standardization, (2011). Guidance on project management ISO/DIS 21500.

Jackson, M.C., (2003). Systems Thinking: Creative Holism for Managers. John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, Chichester, UK, 2003: 352.

Jawahar, I.M., and Mclaughlin, G.L. (2001). Toward a Descriptive Stakeholder Theory: An Organizational Life Cycle Approach. Academy of Management Review, 26: 397-414.

Jeffery, N. (2009). Stakeholder engagement: A road map to meaningful engagement.

Jensen, M.C. (2000). Value Maximization and the corporate objective function. In Breaking the code of change, ed. M. Beer and N. Nohria: 37–58. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Joffe, H. (2012). Thematic analysis. Qualitative research methods in mental health and psychotherapy, 1.

Johnson, R. B., and Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come. Educational Researcher, 33(7): 14–26. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3700093

Johnson, R.B., Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Turner, L.A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. Journal of mixed methods research, 1(2): 112-133.

Jones, T. M. (1995). Instrumental Stakeholders Theory: A Synthesis of Ethics and Economics. Academy of Management Review.

Jones, T. M., and Wicks, A. C. (1999). Convergent Stakeholder Theory. The Academy of Management Review, 24(2): 206–221. https://doi.org/10.2307/259075

Jones, T. M., Harrison, J. S., and Felps, W. (2018). How applying instrumental stakeholder theory can provide sustainable competitive advantage. Academy of Management Review, 43(3): 349–370.

Jones, T.; Wicks, A. and Freeman, R. E. (2002). Stakeholder theory: The state of the art. In Norman E. Bowie (ed.), The Blackwell Guide to Business Ethics. Blackwell: 19--37

Jones, T.M., Harrison, J.S. and Felps, W. (2018). How applying instrumental stakeholder theory can provide sustainable competitive advantage. Academy of Management Review, 43(3): 371-391.

Jones, Thomas and Wicks, Andrew and Freeman, R. (2017). Stakeholder Theory: The State of the Art. 10.1002/9781405164771.ch1.

Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (2022)

Kaehler, Boris and Grundei, Jens. (2019). The Concept of Management: In Search of a New Definition. 10.1007/978-3-319-94526-2_2.

Kanter, R.M. (2019). The future of bureaucracy and hierarchy in organizational theory: a report from the field. In Social theory for a changing society: 63-93, Routledge.

Kast, F.E. and Rosenzweig, J.E. (1972). General Systems Theory: Applications for Organization and Management. Academy of Management Journal, 1972: 447-466.

Keevy, Z. (2019). Developing a leadership architecture in retail within the stratified systems theory framework. University of Johannesburg (South Africa).

Kelemen, M.L. and Rumens, N. (2008). An introduction to critical management research. Sage.

Khan, Shahid. (2014). Qualitative Research Method - Phenomenology. Asian Social Science. 10. 298-310. 10.5539/ass.v10n21p298.

King IV Report on Corporate Governance: Institute of Directors South Africa. 2016.

King, B.G. and Carberry, E.J. (2020). Movements, societal crisis, and organizational theory. Journal of Management Studies, 57(8): 1741-1745.

Knekta, E., Runyon, C. and Eddy, S. (2019). One size doesn't fit all: Using factor analysis to gather validity evidence when using surveys in your research. CBE—Life Sciences Education, 18(1), p.rm1.

Kramer, R.M. (1999), "Trust and distrust in organizations: emerging perspectives, enduring questions", Annual Review of Psychology, Vol. 50: 569-98

Kujala, J., and Sachs, S. (2019). The practice of stakeholder engagement. In J. Harrison, J. Barney and R. E. Freeman (Eds.), The Cambridge handbook of stakeholder theory: 121–140). Cambridge University Press.

Kujala, J., Lehtimäki, H. and Freeman, E.R. (2019). A stakeholder approach to value creation and leadership. Leading change in a complex world: Transdisciplinary perspectives.

Kujala, J., Sachs, S., Leinonen, H., Heikkinen, A., and Laude, D. (2022). Stakeholder Engagement: Past, Present, and Future. Business and Society, 61(5): 1136–1196. https://doi.org/10.1177/00076503211066595

Kumar, R., (2019). Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners. Sage Publications Limited

Laczniak, G. R. and Murphy, P. E. (2012). Stakeholder theory and marketing: Moving from a firm-centric to a societal perspective. Journal of Public Policy and Marketing, 31(2): 284-292.

Lamberg, J., Pajunen, K., Kalle, P. and Savage, G. (2008), Stakeholder management and path dependence in organizational transitions, Management Decision, Vol. 46 No. 6: 846-63.

Lederman, Norman and Lederman, Judith. (2015). What Is A Theoretical Framework? A Practical Answer. Journal of Science Teacher Education. 26. 10.1007/s10972-015-9443-2.

Lehtinen, J., Aaltonen, K. and Rajala, R. (2019). Stakeholder management in complex product systems: Practices and rationales for engagement and disengagement. Industrial marketing management, 79: 58-70.

Lepak, D.P., Smith, K.G., and Taylor, M.S. (2007). Value Creation and Value Capture: A Multilevel Perspective. Academy of Management Review, 32: 180-194.

Lewis, S. (2015). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. Health promotion practice, 16(4): 473-475.

Lewis-Beck, M. S., Bryman, A. and Liao, T. F. 2013. The Sage encyclopaedia of social science research methods. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.

Loureiro, S.M.C., Romero, J. and Bilro, R.G. (2020). Stakeholder engagement in co-creation processes for innovation: a systematic literature review and case study. Journal of Business Research, 119: 388-409.

Ma, Z., Liang, D., Yu, K.H. and Lee, Y. (2012). Most cited business ethics publications: Mapping the intellectual structure of business ethics studies in 2001–2008. Business Ethics: A European Review, 21(3): 286-297.

Mainardes, W.E, Alves, H. and Raposo, M. (2011). Stakeholder theory: issues to resolve. Management Decision Vol. 49 No. 2, 2011: 226-252.

Mainardes, W.E, Alves, H. and Raposo, M. (2012), A model for stakeholder classification and stakeholder relationships. Management Decision, Vol. 50 Iss: 10: 1861 – 1879.

Makadok, R. and Coff, R. (2009). Both market and hierarchy: An incentive-system theory of hybrid governance forms. Academy of Management Review, 34(2): 297-319.

Malgieri, G. and González F. G. (2021). The Vulnerable Data Subject: A Gendered Data Subject? (August 27, 2021). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3913249 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3913249

Mantere, S. and Ketokivi, M. (2013). Reasoning in organization science. Academy of management review, 38(1): 70-89.

Mastilo, Z., Vladimir, Z. and Goran, P. (2017). Value Creation Concept In Stakeholder And Shareholder Economies. Applied Economics and Finance. 4(2): 155-159.

Matchaya, G.C. (2020). Public spending on agriculture in Southern Africa: Sectoral and intra-sectoral impact and policy implications. Journal of Policy Modeling, 42(6): 1228-1247.

Matulevičienė, M. and Stravinskienė, J. (2016). How to develop key stakeholders trust in terms of corporate reputation. Inžinerinė ekonomika, 27(4): 472-478.

McCruaig, D., and Di Prospero, L. (2016). Using parametric tests to analyse ordinal data. Journal of Nursing Education and Practice, 6(6): 57-62. doi: 10.5430/jnep.v6n6p57

Medvedeva, Y.Y., Luchaninov, R.S., Poluyanova, N.V., Semenova, S.V. and Alekseeva, E.A., (2022). The Stakeholders' Role in the Corporate Strategy Creation for the Sustainable Development of Russian Industrial Enterprises. Economies, 10(5): 116.

Merkhofer, L. (2019). Shareholder versus Stakeholder Value. [Online] Available at: https://www.prioritysystem.com/reasons3c.html [Accessed 10 10 2020].

Merrilees, B., Miller, D. and Yakimova, R., (2021). Building brands through internal stakeholder engagement and co-creation. Journal of Product and Brand Management.

Migdal, A.B. and Leggett, A.J. (2018). Qualitative methods in quantum theory. CRC Press.

Miles, M.B, Hubermann, A.M. and Saldana, J. (2013). Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook. (3rd edition), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miller, R.M., Chan, C.D. and Farmer, L.B. (2018). Interpretative phenomenological analysis: A contemporary qualitative approach. Counselor Education and Supervision, 57(4): 240-254.

Minoja, M. (2012). Stakeholder management theory, firm strategy, and ambidexterity. Journal of Business Ethics, 109(1): 67-82.

Mishra, A. and Mathuria, M. (2017). A Review on QR Code. International Journal of Computer Applications. 164: 17-19. 10.5120/ijca2017913739.

Mishra, A. and Mishra, D. (2013). Applications of stakeholder theory in information systems and technology. Engineering Economics, 24(3): 254-266.

Mitchell R.K, Agle B.R, and Wood D.J. (1997). Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: defining the principle of who and what really counts. Academic Management Review. 22(4):853–86.

Mitchell, R.K. and Lee, J.H., (2019). Stakeholder identification and its importance in the value creating system of stakeholder work. The Cambridge handbook of stakeholder theory: 53-73.

Moffat, K, Lacey, J. Zhang, A., Leipold, S. (2016). The social licence to operate: a critical review. Forestry, 89(5): 477-488.

Moniruzzaman Sarker, AL-Muaalemi, M.A. (2022). Sampling Techniques for Quantitative Research. In: Islam, M.R., Khan, N.A., Baikady, R. (eds) Principles of Social Research Methodology. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-5441-2_15

Moreno-Marimbaldo, F. and Manso-Callejo, M. (2020). Methodological approach to incorporate the involve of stakeholders in the geodesign workflow of transmission line project. International Journal of Geo-Information, 9(178): 1-26.

Morgan, D.L. (2014). Pragmatism as a paradigm for mixed methods research. Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods, 55: 25-44.

Morgan, R.M. and Hunt, S.D. (1994). The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing. Journal of Marketing, 58: 20-38.

Morison, T., Gibson, A.F., Wigginton, B., and Crabb, S., (2015). Online research methods in psychology: Methodological opportunities for critical qualitative research. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 12(3): 223-232.

Morse, J. M. (2003). Principles of mixed methods and multi-method research design. In C. Teddlie, and A. Tashakkori (Eds.), Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research: 189-208. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

Neville, B. A., Menguc, B. (2006). Stakeholder multiplicity: Toward an understanding of the interactions between stakeholders. Journal of Business Ethics, 66: 377-391.

Ngouhouo, I. and Nchofoung, T.N. (2022). Economic resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa: Evidence from composite indicators. Journal of the Knowledge Economy, 13(1): 70-91.

Noland, J., and Phillips, R. (2010). Stakeholder engagement, discourse ethics and strategic management. International Journal of Management Reviews, 12: 39–49.

Olander S. (2007). Stakeholder impact analysis in construction project management. Construction Management and Economics, 25: 277-287.

Oliver, C. (1991). Strategic Responses to Institutional Processes. The Academy of Management Review, 16(1), 145–179. https://doi.org/10.2307/258610

Orij, R. (2010). Corporate social disclosures in the context of national cultures and stakeholder theory. Accounting, Auditing & Accountability, 23(7), 868-889.

Pandey, P. and Pandey, M.M., (2021). Research methodology tools and techniques. Bridge Center.

Pandya, K. and Galiyawala, H. (2014). A Survey on QR Codes: in context of Research and Application. International Journal of Emerging Technology and Advanced Engineering, 4(3): 258-262.

Papagiannakis, G., Voudouris, I., Lioukas, S. and Kassinis, G. (2019). Environmental management systems and environmental product innovation: The role of stakeholder engagement. Business strategy and the environment, 28(6): 939-950.

Paramboor, Jafar and Musah, Mohammed Borhandden and Al-Hudawi, Shafeeq. (2016). Scientific Management Theory: A Critical Review from Islamic

Theories of Administration. Internationl Journal of Economics, Business, nd Applications, 1. 1-9.

Parmar, B.L., Freeman, R.E., Harrison, J.S., Wicks, A.C., Purnell, L. and De Colle, S. (2010). Stakeholder theory: The state of the art. Academy of Management Annals, 4(1): 403-445.

Parveen, Huma and Showkat, Nayeem. (2017). Research Ethics. e-PG Pathshala

Patton, M.Q. (2005). Qualitative research. In Everitti, B.S. and Howell, D.C. Encyclopaedia of statistics in behavioural science. P514. John Willy and Sons, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/0470013192.bsa514

Pfeffer, J. and Salancik, G.R. (1978) The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective. Harper and Row, New York.

Phillips, R. (2003). Stakeholder theory and organisational ethics. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Phillips, R. A., Berman, S. L., Elms, H., and Johnson-Cramer, M. E. (2010). Strategy, stakeholders and managerial discretion. Strategic Organization, 8, 176-183.

Pólvora, A., Nascimento, S., Lourenço, J.S. and Scapolo, F. (2020). Blockchain for industrial transformations: A forward-looking approach with multi-stakeholder engagement for policy advice. Technological forecasting and social change, 157: 120091.

Ramachandran, R. (2017). Financial Performance and Stakeholder Management. SSRN Electronic Journal, 2(2): 2-11.

Ramrakhiani, S. (2017). Factor analysis. In S. Ramrakhiani (Ed.), Research methods in psychology: Investigating human behavior (2nd ed: 137-158). New York: Routledge.

Reijers, W., Wright, D., Brey, P., Weber, K., Rodrigues, R., O'Sullivan, D., and Gordijn, B. (2018). Methods for Practising Ethics in Research and Innovation: A Literature Review, Critical Analysis and Recommendations. Science and engineering ethics, 24(5): 1437-1481. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-017-9961-8

Reynolds, S.J., Schultz, F.C. and Hekman, D.R. (2006). Stakeholder theory and managerial decision-making: Constraints and implications of balancing stakeholder interests. Journal of business ethics, 64(3): 285-301.

Richardson, A.J. (2012). Paradigms, theory and management accounting practice: A comment on Parker (forthcoming) “Qualitative management accounting research: Assessing deliverables and relevance”. Critical Perspectives on Accounting, 23(1): 83-88.

Robinson, C. (2002). Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner-Researchers (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Rowley, T. (1997). Moving beyond dyadic ties: a network theory of stakeholder influences. Academy of Management Review, Vol. 22 No. 4: 887-910.

Rowley, T. J., and Moldoveanu, M. (2003). When Will Stakeholders Groups Act? An Interest and Identity Based Model of Stakeholder Group Mobilization. Academy of Management Review, 28: 204-219.

Sachs, S., and Kujala, J. (2021a). Stakeholder engagement in humanizing business. In M. Dion, R. E. Freeman abd S. Dmytriyev (Eds.), Humanizing business: What humanities can say to business: 375–384). Springer.

Saint, D. K. and Tripathi, A. N. (2006) ‘The Shareholder and Stakeholder Theories of Corporate Purpose’ [Online]. Available at: http://www.knowledgeworkz.com/samatvam/newsletter/The%20Shareholder%20and%20Stakeholder%20Theories%20of%20Corporate%20Purpose.pdf (Date Accessed: 12.4.2015)

Sarmah, B. , Islam, J. , and Rahman, Z. (2015). Sustainability, Social Responsibility and Value Co-creation: A Case Study Based Approach. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 189. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.03.227

Sarstedt, M., Bengart, P., Shaltoni, A.M. and Lehmann, S. (2018). The use of sampling methods in advertising research: A gap between theory and practice. International Journal of Advertising, 37(4): 650-663.

Saunders, M.N. and Tosey, P. eds. (2015). Handbook of research methods on human resource development. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Saunders, Mark and Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009). Understanding research philosophies and approaches. Research Methods for Business Students. 4: 106-135.

Saunders, Mark N. K.; Lewis, Philip; Thornhill, Adrian and Bristow, Alexandra (2015). Understanding research philosophy and approaches to theory development. In: Saunders, Mark N. K.; Lewis, Philip and Thornhill, Adrian eds. Research Methods for Business Students. Harlow: Pearson Education: 122–161.

Saunders, Mark., Lewis, Philip., Thornhill, Adrian. and Bristow, Alex. (2019). "Research Methods for Business Students" Chapter 4: Understanding research philosophy and approaches to theory development.

Sauro, J. and Lewis, J. (2016). Quantifying the User Experience: Practical Statistics for User Research. Elsevier.

Savage, G.T., Nix, T.W., Whitehead, C.J., and Blair, J.D. (1991). Strategies for assessing and managing organizational stakeholders. Academy of Management Perspectives, 5: 61-75.

Scott, S. and Lane, V. (2000), A stakeholder approach to organizational identity, Academy of Management Review, Vol. 25 No. 1: 43-62.

Sekaran, U, (2003). Research methods for business: A skill building approach. John Wiley and Sons

Sekaran, U. and Bougie, R., (2016). Research methods for business: A skill building approach. John Wiley and Sons.

Sekhon, M., Cartwright, M. and Francis, J.J. (2017). Acceptability of healthcare interventions: an overview of reviews and development of a theoretical framework. BMC health services research, 17(1): 1-13.

Sibanda, L., and Iwu, C. G. (2021). The academic journey of entrepreneurship students in higher education institutions. The Systems Theory Approach. Education: Modern Discourses, (4), 135–145Discourses, (4): 135-145.

Siedlecki, S.L. (2020). Understanding descriptive research designs and methods. Clinical Nurse Specialist, 34(1): 8-12.

Singh, A. S. (2014). Conducting Case Study Research in Non-Profit Organisations. Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal, 17: 77–84.

Smith, H.J. (2003). The Shareholders vs. Stakeholders Debate. MIT Sloan Management Review, 44: 85-91.

Sosa, N.A. and Pate, S.K. (2017). Environmental Scanning and a Proposed Stakeholder Mapping Process. Midwestern Business and Economic Review, 52: 1-22.

Sternberg, E. (1996), “The defects of stakeholder theory”, Corporate Governance, Vol. 1 No. 1: 3-10.

Sternberg, E. (2000). Just Business: Business Ethics in Action (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Story, D. A., and Tait, A. R. (2019). Survey Research. Anaesthesiology, 130(2), 192–202. https://doi.org/10.1097/ALN.0000000000002436

Suddaby, R., Bitektine, A., and Haack, P. (2017). Legitimacy. Academy of Management Annals, 11: 451–478.

Tantalo, C. and Priem, R.L. (2016). Value creation through stakeholder synergy. Strategic management journal, 37(2): 314-329.

Tapaninaho, R. and Kujala, J. (2019). Reviewing the stakeholder value creation literature: Towards a sustainability approach. In Social responsibility and sustainability (pp. 3-36). Springer, Cham.

Tashakkori, A. and Creswell, J.W. (2007). The new era of mixed methods. Journal of Mixed Methods Research 1(1):3-7.

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (2010). Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications.

Tavakol, M. and Dennick, R. (2011). Making Sense of Cronbach’s Alpha. International journal of Medical Education, 2:L 53-55

Taylor, B., Henshall, C., Kenyon, S., Litchfield, I. and Greenfield, S. (2018). Can rapid approaches to qualitative analysis deliver timely, valid findings to clinical leaders? A mixed-methods study comparing rapid and thematic analysis. BMJ Open, 8(10).

Taylor, D.F.P. and Mahlangu, S. (2017). Earning the Social Licence to Operate – A case study about culture, 5th International Conference on Management, Leadership and Governance, 16-17 March 2017, Wits Business School, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Taylor, F.W. (1903). “Shop Management”. Transactions, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, 24:1356-1364.

Tongco, M.D.C. (2007). Purposive sampling as a tool for informant selection. Ethnobotany Research and applications, 5: 147-158.

Tshidzumba, Ratsodo Phillip and Chirwa, Paxie. (2022). Forest-based land reform partnerships in rural development and the sustenance of timber markets. Learning from two South African cases. Forest Policy and Economics. 140. 102755. 10.1016/j.forpol.2022.102755.

Uribe, D. F., Ortiz-Marcos, I. and Uruburu, A. (2018). What is going on with stakeholder theory in project management literature? A symbiotic relationship for sustainability. Sustainability, 10(1300): 1-23.

Vaismoradi, M., Jones, J., Turunen, H., Snelgrove, S. (2016). Theme development in qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. Journal of Nursing Education and Practice 2016, Vol. 6, No. 5.

Valentinov, V. and Hajdu, A. (2019). Integrating instrumental and normative stakeholder theories: a systems theory approach. Journal of Organizational Change Management

Valeri, M. (2021). Organizational Studies: Implications for the Strategic Management. Springer Nature.

Van de Ven A. H. (1992). Suggestions for studying strategy process: A research note. Strategic Management Journal, 13(S1): 169–188.

Velter, M.G.E., Bitzer, V., Bocken, N.M.P. and Kemp, R. (2020). Sustainable business model innovation: The role of boundary work for multi-stakeholder alignment. Journal of Cleaner Production, 247: 119497.

Verdeyen V, Put J, van Buggenhout B. (2004). A social stakeholder model. International Journal of Social Welfare, 13: 325–331: Blackwell Publishing.

von Bertalanffy, L. (1972). The history and status of general systems theory. Academy of management journal, 15(4): 407-426.

von Bertalanffy, L. (2008). An outline of general system theory. Emergence: complexity and organization, 10(2): 103-124.

Wang, D., Waldman, D. A., and Zhang, Z. (2014). A meta-analysis of shared leadership and team effectiveness. Journal of Applied Psychology, 99: 181-198.

Ward, J.K., Comer, U. and Stone, S. (2018). On qualifying qualitative research: Emerging perspectives and the “Deer” (descriptive, exploratory, evolutionary, repeat) paradigm. Interchange, 49(1): 133-146.

Wartick, S.L. and Cochran, P.L. (1985). The evolution of the corporate social performance model. Academy of management review, 10(4): 758-769.

Watson, R., Wilson, H.N., Smart, P. and Macdonald, E.K., (2018). Harnessing difference: a capability-based framework for stakeholder engagement in environmental innovation. Journal of Product Innovation Management, 35(2): 254-279.

Wegner, T. (2016). Applied Business Statistics: Methods and Excel-based Applications. 4th ed. Cape Town: Juta and Co.

Weick, K.E., (1979), The Social Psychology of Organizing, Second Edition: McGraw-Hill, 189-193.

Weinberg, Gerald. (2001). An introduction to general systems thinking / Gerald M. Weinberg. SERBIULA (sistema Librum 2.0).

Wood, D.J., Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R. and Bryan, L.M., (2021). Stakeholder identification and salience after 20 years: Progress, problems, and prospects. Business and Society, 60(1): 196-245.

Woolley, C. M. (2009). Meeting the mixed methods challenge of integration in a sociological study of structure and agency. Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 3(1): 7-25

Yang, Miying and Vladimirova, Doroteya and Evans, Steve. (2017). Creating and Capturing Value Through Sustainability. Research Technology Management. 60: 30-39. 10.1080/08956308.2017.1301001.

Yeswa, L.S. and Ombui, K. (2019). Influence of talent management strategies on employee retention in the hotel industry in Kenya. International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration, 3(7): 83-103.

Yin, R.K. (2006). Mixed methods research: Are the methods genuinely integrated or merely parallel. Research in the Schools, 13(1): 41-47.

Yin, R.K. (2018). Case study research and applications. Sage

Zakhem,A. and Palmer, D.E. (2017), "Normative Stakeholder Theory", Stakeholder Management (Business and Society 360, Vol. 1), Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley: 49-73. https://doi.org/10.1108/S2514-175920170000003

APPENDIX 1: DATA COLLECTION PLAN

Research Data Collection Plan

Sampling
Area 1: Pietermaritzburg/Durban HQ
Area 2: Midlands Operations
Area 3: Zululand Operations
Area 4: Piet Retief Operations

Phase 1: Quantitative (Online through Survey link)

No	Area	Designation	*Place*	*Research Type*	*Contact email*
1		Head of Stakeholder Relations	Pietermaritzburg	Online Survey	
2		Head of Forestry Operations	Pietermaritzburg	Online Survey	
3		Corporate Affairs Manager	Pietermaritzburg	Online Survey	
4		Environment Manager	Pietermaritzburg HQ	Online Survey	
5		Health and Safety	Pietermaritzburg	Online Survey	
6		Land Claims	Pietermaritzburg HQ	Online Survey	
7		Social Programs	Durban HQ	Online Survey	
8		Land Manager: Midlands	Pietermaritzburg	Online Survey	
9		Land manager: Central	Piet Retief	Online Survey	
10		Land Manager: Zululand	Richardsbay	Online Survey	
11		Community Development Facilitator 1	Zululand	Online Survey	
12		Community Development Facilitator 2	Zululand	Online Survey	
13		Community Development Facilitator 3	Midlands	Online Survey	
14		Community Development Facilitator 4	Midlands	Online Survey	
15		Community Development Facilitator 5	Piet Retief	Online Survey	
16		Community Development Facilitator 6	Piet Retief	Online Survey	
17		Operations Manager	Midlands	Online Survey	
18		Operations Manager	Zululand	Online Survey	
19		Operations Manager	Piet Retief	Online Survey	
20		Area Manager Midlands 1	Mkhomazi	Online Survey	
21		Area Manager Midlands 2	Greytown	Online Survey	
22		Area Manager Zululand 1	Mfolozi	Online Survey	
23		Area Manager Zululand 2	Mthunzini	Online Survey	
24		Area Manager Zululand 3	Mthonjaneni	Online Survey	
25		Area Manager Piet Retief 1	Iswepe	Online Survey	
26		Area Manager Piet Retief 2	Piet Retief	Online Survey	
27		Area Manager Piet Retief 3	Dumbe	Online Survey	
28		Environment Manager	Pietermaritzburg	Online Survey	
29		Environment Manager	Richardsbay	Online Survey	
30		Environment Manager	Piet Retief	Online Survey	

Phase 2: Qualitative (Online through Teams)

No	Area	Designation	*Place*	***Research Type***	
1		Social Programs	Durban HQ	Interviews: Teams	
2		Land Manager: Midlands	Pietermaritzburg	Interviews: Teams	
3		Land manager: Central	Piet Retief	Interviews: Teams	
4		Land Manager: Zululand	Zululand	Interviews: Teams	
5		Manager: Siyaqhubeka Forests	Zululand	Interviews: Teams	
6		Community Development Facilitator 1	Zululand	Interviews: Teams	
7		Community Development Facilitator 2	Zululand	Interviews: Teams	
9		Community Development Facilitator 4	Midlands	Interviews: Teams	
10		Community Development Facilitator 5	Midlands	Interviews: Teams	
11		Community Development Facilitator 6	Piet Retief	Interviews: Teams	
12		Community Development Facilitator 7	Piet Retief	Interviews: Teams	
13		Operations Manager	Midlands	Interviews: Teams	
14		Operations Manager	Zululand	Interviews: Teams	
15		Operations Manager	Piet Retief	Interviews: Teams	

Phase 3: Qualitative (Online through Teams)

No	Area	Designation	*Place*	***Research Type***	
1		Corporate Affairs	Durban	Interviews: Teams	
2		Head of Stakeholder Relations	Pietermaritzburg	Interviews: Teams	
3		Head of Forestry Operations	Pietermaritzburg	Interviews: Teams	
4		Environment Manager	Pietermaritzburg HQ	Interviews: Teams	
5		Land Claims	Pietermaritzburg HQ	Interviews: Teams	

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONAIRES

DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINSTRATION

ESP MSOMI (**21856838)**

Research title: Stakeholder management practices at Mondi South Africa: a case of the forestry division.

Phase 1: Survey (approximately 5 minutes) and self-administered through online platform.
Phase 2: Only selected participants will be required for phase 2. Only 30 minutes of time is requested for interviews.
Phase 3: This phase will target only senior officials in strategic positions.

A. Quantitative questionnaire: Phase 1 (Survey)

Instructions: *Please use **X** next to the appropriate answer. The following QR code could be used to access the questionnaire online:*

Alternatively, the following link could be used to access the questionnaire:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1_B12OJdQwQXm9IZ7DR7nk3JXkcCX_6cOcEbhw266k/closedform#settings

1. **What is your current role at Mondi?**

A	Health and Safety	
B	Environment	
C	Forestry Operations	
D	Stakeholder Management/Relations	
E	Corporate Affairs	

2. **Where is your area of operation?**

A	Pietermaritzburg/Durban HQ	
B	Midlands Operations	
C	Zululand Operations	
D	Piet Retief Operations	

3. **In your current role, do you engage with external stakeholders?**

A	YES	
B	NO	
C	SOMETIMES	

4. **If yes, how frequently do you engage your stakeholders?**

A	Weekly	
B	Monthly	
C	Quarterly	
D	Annually	
E	Ad hoc	

5. **Where do you often engage with your stakeholders?**

A	Company Offices	
B	Stakeholder Offices	
C	Neutral Venue	

6. **What form of communication do you use to engage stakeholders?**

A	Meetings	
B	Roadshows/Information sessions	
C	One on One meetings	
D	Official Publications/Reports	

7. **What type of external stakeholders do you engage often?**

A	Government	
B	Other Companies	
C	Communities	
D	Regulatory authorities	

8. **What issues are most prevalent in your engagement with stakeholders?**

A	Employment opportunities	
B	Contracting and business opportunities	
C	Environmental issues and concerns	
D	Corporate Social Investment	
E	Land and forestry issues	

9. **In the last 12 months, how many external incidents have you recorded relating to social stakeholders?**

A	1-5	
B	5-10	
C	10-15	
D	15-20	

10. **In the last 12 months, how many external meetings have you attended requested by external stakeholders to address a particular issue?**

A	1-5	
B	5-10	
C	10-15	
D	15-20	

11. **In the last 12 months, how many social/public protests against Mondi have you recorded?**

A	0	
B	1	
C	Less than 5	
D	More than 5	

12. **In your own opinion, do you think spending resources, and time engaging external stakeholder is a good business strategy?**

A	Yes	
B	No	
C	Not sure	
D	No opinion	

13. **Based on your experience in your current role, what are the benefits of stakeholder engagement for Mondi?**

A	Financial	
B	Reputation	
C	Business stability	
D	Compliance	

14. **Based on your experience in your current role, what are the risks associated with lack of stakeholder engagement for Mondi?**

A	Loss of profitability	
B	Loss of reputation	
C	Business instability	
D	Non-Compliance	

15. Do you agree with the following statement?

"Corporations practicing stakeholder management will be relatively successful in performance, profit, stability and growth"

A	Yes	
B	No	
C	Not sure	
D	No opinion	

B. PHASE 2: QUALITATIVE QUESTIONARE (for Operational Teams)

1. What are your core duties currently at Mondi?
2. Explain how you engage with external stakeholders and what platforms do you utilise?
3. Can you explain the types of community stakeholders you interact with?
4. Detail the most prevalent issues you discuss during your stakeholder meetings.
5. Do you have a stakeholder management plan?
6. Can you describe how this stakeholder plan was developed?
7. To what extent were communities as stakeholder involved in the development of this plan?
8. How many times do you review this management plan and how?
9. Explain how you categorise your stakeholder according to your plan and reasons for this?
10. In your own opinion, do you think stakeholder management and engagement is necessary for the success of Mondi? If yes, please explain your reasons.

C. PHASE 3: QUALITATIVE QUESTIONARE 2 (For Strategic Managers)

1. What is the relationship between stakeholder management and business performance as it relates to Mondi?
2. What is the role of Social/community stakeholders in Mondi's forestry operations?
3. What kind of benefits are extended to stakeholders in their interaction with Mondi?
4. What kind of benefits are extended to Mondi because of stakeholder management practice?
5. What procedures and tasks that guide Mondi's successful stakeholder management practice?
6. What standards or indicators are currently used to measure performance of these processes and tasks?

APPENDIX 3: IREC PROVISIONAL APPROVAL

DUT
DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Institutional Research Ethics Committee
Research and Postgraduate Support Directorate
2nd Floor, Berwyn Court
Gate 1, Steve Biko Campus
Durban University of Technology

P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001

Tel: 031 373 2375
Email: lavishad@dut.ac.za
http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics

www.dut.ac.za

10 October 2022

Mr E S P Msomi
54 Buckely Road
Bisley
3200

Dear Mr Msomi

Stakeholder management practices at Mondi South Africa: a case of the forestry division

I am pleased to inform you that **PROVISIONAL APPROVAL** has been granted to your proposal subject to:

- Piloting of the data collection tool. *Please note that should there be any changes to the data collection tool, in a letter signed by the researcher and supervisor, list the changes to the documents and submit to DUT-IREC with the final data collection tool. Even when there are no changes to the data collection tool, DUT-IREC has to be notified.*
- Obtaining and submitting the necessary gatekeeper permission/s to DUT-Institutional Research Ethics Committee (DUT-IREC).

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS NOT A FINAL APPROVAL LETTER. KINDLY SUBMIT THE ABOVE MENTIONED DOCUMENTS WITHIN THREE MONTHS TO THE DUT-IREC OFFICE. DATA COLLECTION CAN ONLY COMMENCE WHEN DUT-IREC ISSUES FULL APPROVAL

The Proposal has been allocated the following Ethical Clearance number **IREC 263/21**. Please use this number in all communication with this office.

Approval has been granted for a period of **ONE YEAR**, before the expiry of which you are required to apply for safety monitoring and annual recertification. Please use the Safety Monitoring and Annual Recertification Report form which can be found in the Standard Operating Procedures [SOP's] of the DUT-IREC. This form must be submitted to the DUT-IREC at least 3 months before the ethics approval for the study expires.

Yours Sincerely

Prof J K Adam
Chairperson: DUT-IREC

ENVISION2030 transparency · honesty · integrity · respect · accountability
fairness · professionalism · commitment · compassion · excellence

APPENDIX 4: IREC FULL APPROVAL

DUT

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Institutional Research Ethics Committee
Research and Postgraduate Support Directorate
2nd Floor, Berwyn Court
Gate 1, Steve Biko Campus
Durban University of Technology

P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001

Tel: 031 373 2375
Email: lavishad@dut.ac.za
http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics

www.dut.ac.za

15 November 2022

Mr E S P Msomi
54 Buckely Road
Bisley
3200

Dear Mr Msomi

Stakeholder management practices at Mondi South Africa: a case of the forestry division
Ethical Clearance number IREC 263/21

The DUT-Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your final data collection tool for review.

We are pleased to inform you that the data collection tool has been approved. Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

In addition, the DUT-IREC acknowledges receipt of your gatekeeper permission letter.

Please note that FULL APPROVAL is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the DUT-IREC according to the DUT-IREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's).

Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the DUT-IREC as outlined in the DUT-IREC SOP's.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof J K Adam
Chairperson: IREC

ENVISION2030 transparency · honesty · integrity · respect · accountability
fairness · professionalism · commitment · compassion · excellence

APPENDIX 5: FINAL LETTER OF PERMMISION

Faculty of Management Sciences
Department of Public Management & Economics
Date 01 November 2022

Dear Participant

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AS PART OF THE DPHIL QUALIFICATION

Name: ESP MSOMI Student No: 21856838

Dissertation Topic: " Stakeholder management practices at Mondi South Africa: a case of the forestry operations"

We confirm that the above student is registered at the Durban University of Technology for the DPhil Degree Programme. It is a requirement of the programme that the student undertakes a practical research project during his studies.

Typically this project will be an "assessment" exercise, and necessitates data gathering through questionnaires or personal interviews.

Your assistance in permitting access to your organization for purposes of conducting the research is most appreciated. Please be assured that all information gained from the research will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Furthermore, should you wish any result/s or findings from the research "to be restricted" for an agreed period of time, this can be arranged. The confidentiality of information and anonymity of personnel will be strictly adhered to by the student.

If permission is granted, kindly confirm this by signing off on the following:

"I am aware of the nature and extent of the document and I am satisfied with all the obligations imposed therein." Please note that additional information or conditions can be supplied by you.

Name in Full: Thobekile Mkhize

Designation: Head of Stakeholder Engagement

Company Name & Stamp: Mondi South Africa - Forests

Thank you for your assistance in this regard.

Yours sincerely

Dr Dr A Agbenyegah
Supervisor

Supervisor / Promoter
Dr Dr A Agbenyegah
Faculty of Management Sciences
Durban University of Technology
Durban, South Africa
Tel: 031 3735374
Email: AlbertA@dut.ac.za

Student
Mr ESP Msomi
54 Buckey Road,
Pietermaritzburg
Mobile: 082 0417130

APPENDIX 6: LETTER OF INFORMATION

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: Stakeholder management practices at Mondi South Africa: a case of the forestry division

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: ESP MSOMI BA Social Work (UWC), MA International Dev (Manchester)

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr A. Agbenyegah PhD, MBA, PDG Tax (Unisa), PGD (Management Sciences)

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study: The main purpose of the study is to establish whether stakeholder management, and the subsequent relationships contribute in any form to business stability using Mondi Forestry (South Africa) as the case study.

Dear Colleagues,

My name is **Sbusiso Msomi** and I am a postgraduate student at DUT doing research for my PhD in Management Sciences.

I would like to invite you to participate in the research I am conducting as part of my studies, and as outlined above. I am confident that this study will benefit both myself and your organization.

What is Research (Research is a systematic search or enquiry for generalized new knowledge)
Your participation in this research means that you will avail yourself to respond to some prepared questions about the work you are doing for the company. Research, in this context refers to a process of inquiry or investigation to understand the stakeholder practices at Mondi.

Outline of the Procedures:
You have been identified and selected for this study based on your role as an employee of Mondi SA. However, your participation is still voluntary. Depending on your role, you will be requested to complete a self-administered questionnaire and also face to face interviews (online) which would be scheduled at your own convenience. You might be required to submit some supporting documents and respond to some additional questions over the phone or on email.

There are three (3) Phases in this research; Quantitative survey and two (2) qualitative interviews. Based on your job profile, you might be requested to participate in more than one phase.

Phase 1: Survey (approximately 5 minutes) and self-administered through online platform.
Phase 2: Only selected participants will be required for phase 2. Only 30 minutes of your time is requested for a Teams interview.
Phase 3: This phase will target only senior officials in strategic positions.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant:
There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to anyone participating in this study. Clearance shall be obtained in advance from your management, of what documents could be submitted for this research.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:
You are permitted to withdraw at any time during the research process without any consequences. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may also withdraw your consent during the interview if for any reason you feel you are unable to continue with the interview. You might also be excluded or asked to withdraw from participation if it is established that your current role at Mondi does not interface with any stakeholders. The final list of all eligible participants shall be agreed upon with Mondi including any withdrawal and exclusions.

Benefits:
Your participation would enable a much-needed contribution in the study of relationship between business and society in the context under which your company operate.

The discussion on the stakeholder management activities of Mondi Forest will facilitate a general understanding of how communities influence the strategic direction of the company and how this influence is geared towards addressing key challenges faced by both communities and Mondi. This study could reach insights into challenges and benefits of stakeholder management. Such insights will have significant implications for the understanding of business value of such practice and its contribution in stabilizing business operations at Mondi South Africa.

Remuneration: Please note that no remuneration of any kind would be offered to you for participation in this study.

Costs of the Study: Costs for this research are covered solely by the researcher and none to you.

Confidentiality:
Anonymity and confidentiality of participants would be central to ethical research practice in this research. The quantitative data questionnaires would be completed anonymously. The analysis of data would not be linked to any individual, but assumptions and conclusions would be drawn on behalf of the business rather than individuals.

Results:
You will be invited to a feedback session where the preliminary study results would be presented to you and other participants. You will also be notified of any published material derived from this study.

Research-related Injury:
The research will take place within your work environment and safety assurance and practice remains your responsibility. The online platforms to be used for this research will also limit travel and risk exposure to you and the researcher.

Storage of all electronic and hard copies including tape recordings
The records of your interview in a transcript format would be stored electronically by the researcher. The chain of custody of this material shall be limited to the researcher, supervisor, and data consultants (who will assist with data analysis). The data collection process will not involve access to confidential personal data. Participants will be assured of anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. The interview recordings, which do not contain the name of the participant, will be stored for a period of five years, and will, thereafter, be disposed accordingly.

Persons to contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:
Please contact the researcher (tel no.0820417130), my supervisor (0723139423.) or the Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support Prof K Motaung. on 031 373 2577 or researchdirector@dut.ac.za

APPENDIX 7: EDITING CERTIFICATE

Kofrich
kofrich.com

+27 84 762 9622
+27 82 202 3925
kofrichcommunications@gmail.com
Reivilo, NW, South Africa

04 May 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that the Doctorate thesis entitled: Stakeholder Management Practices at Mondi South Africa: a case study of the forestry division, submitted by Mr Erasmus Sbusiso Msomi to the Durban University of Technology, has been thoroughly proofread and edited for grammar, language and construction by us. We are pleased to announce that the style and presentation are of a standard worthy of the qualification the thesis is being presented for.

Thanks and best wishes,

C.E.O | Kofi Tuglo

DISSERTATION PROOFREADING AND EDITING SERVICES