

25 Years of Stakeholder Theory in Project Management Literature (1984–2009)

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ABSTRACT ■

After 25 years from its inception by Freeman in 1984, the stakeholder approach enjoys support from a growing community of researchers and practitioners. In this article, we try to outline this development by carrying out a meta-analysis within the leading project management journals. We found that stakeholder theory is predominantly fed by articles from Anglo-American countries and applied in the construction and IT sectors. The understanding of the stakeholder notion is moved towards a more complex view. Articles from different project management areas indicate the key role of stakeholders in projects.

KEYWORDS: stakeholder theory; project management; literature review

INTRODUCTION ■

Looking at project management (PM) literature, one can find a considerable number of articles dealing with project success, strategic frameworks, project environment, and the social aspects of project management. Within these areas of project management research, project stakeholders are often mentioned as essential players in projects (Cleland, 1986; Miller & Olleros, 2001; Office of Government Commerce, 2003; Olander & Landin, 2005). Cleland (1986) introduced stakeholders and stakeholder management processes to the project management canon by highlighting the importance of stakeholder identification, classification, analysis, and management approach formulation. During the last few years, many authors stated clearly the extraordinary importance of stakeholders in projects (Burgoyne, 1999; Dervitsiotis, 2003; Freeman, 2002; Jergeas, Williamson, Skulmoski, & Thomas, 2000). Stakeholder management has become an important soft skill in projects (Crawford, 2005; Morris, Jamieson, & Shepherd, 2006; Winter, Smith, Morris, & Cicmil, 2006). Stakeholder theory has its origins in the year 1984. At that time, Freeman defined stakeholders as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives” (Freeman, 1984, p. 46). Freeman’s definition is often cited as the classic stakeholder definition (Achterkamp & Vos, 2008; Boonstra, 2006). Although this term had been used before, Freeman’s use of it was the starting point of stakeholder theory (Achterkamp & Vos, 2008).

As more than 25 years have passed since the “year of birth” of stakeholder theory, we want to provide a picture of the research history of stakeholder theory in project management literature. This article presents the meta-analysis of stakeholder theory and helps to explain its patterns and main drivers. There has been only one publication in a related direction (Achterkamp & Vos, 2008). It was dedicated to an analysis of 42 articles from the *International Journal of Project Management (IJPM)* and *Project Management Journal (PMJ)* in the period between 1995 and 2006, but with a different interest. In our meta-analysis, we researched 116 articles, from 1984 to 2009, in the four most important journals of project management literature: *IJPM*, *PMJ*, the *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business (IJMPB)*, and the *International Journal of Project Organisation and Management (IJPOM)*. Certainly, we also studied some other stakeholder articles that have not been published in these four journals, but we excluded these from our present research in order to concentrate on project management literature. Furthermore, they would not change our results fundamentally.

In our results concerning the divulgence of the stakeholder theory approach, we found that it is well spread over the most important project

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management journals, over many industry sectors, and also over many countries. By analyzing the cited definitions and their qualitative developments over time, we concluded that the understanding of the term *stakeholder* is moving toward a more comprehensive and multilateral view. Stakeholders are considered as more important in the context of project management. And finally we found that the drivers of stakeholder theory development are from articles related to the context of project evaluation and project strategy.

Research Questions

In order to picture the history of stakeholder research, we designed three research questions. The first one gives general information about the sources as to where the stakeholder articles were found; about the information sources of these articles; about the origin of the articles, by country; and about the industrial sectors to which stakeholder theory was applied in the articles. This question enables us to find out how and where stakeholder theory is applied. Our second research question regards the understanding of stakeholder theory over the observed 25 years, by stating all existing definitions of stakeholders and evaluating them in a more detailed way. In this way, we can conclude what understanding of this concept is common. In our third research question, we analyze the drivers of stakeholder theory development by looking more closely at the context of the articles and their qualitative level of contribution to stakeholder theory. This question provides us with information about the drivers of stakeholder theory. In the following, the three research questions are presented:

- (1) **Research Question 1: Divulgence**—What information can we gain from the stakeholder articles concerning their (a) frequency in project management journals, (b) sources, (c) origin, and (d) industry sectors?
- (2) **Research Question 2: Understanding**—How is the understanding of

stakeholder theory developing, shown by (a) existing definitions and (b) evolution of definitions?

- (3) **Research Question 3: Drivers**—Which areas of project management literature are drivers of stakeholder theory, shown by (a) the context of the articles with stakeholder theory application and (b) qualitative levels of contribution to stakeholder theory?

Our methodology of research will be explained in the next section, before the results are presented according to the research questions. Then we will discuss our results and close with some conclusions.

Method

This study looks at the research on stakeholder theory within the leading project management academic journals. The first steps involved the selection of peer-reviewed project management academic journals (Figure 1). While project management-relevant articles are published in many academic journals and practitioner periodicals, such as the *Academy of Management Review*, *Business Society*, *Engineering Management Journal*, and the like, the intent of this study was to focus on the premier academic journals specifically

focused on project management. The results of this search included the *International Journal of Project Management*, *Project Management Journal*, *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, and *International Journal of Project Organisation and Management*.

The *IJPM* was established in 1983 by the Association of Project Managers in the United Kingdom on behalf of the International Project Management Association (IPMA). *PMJ* was established in 1970 by the Project Management Institute (PMI). The two other journals, *IJMPB* and *IJPOM*, are very new, and both were established in 2008. With the selection of the project management journals, all article titles from 1984 to 2009 (including all the issues of 2009) were reviewed. During this review process, all book reviews, editorials, and showcase projects were excluded from consideration. While these articles provide some valuable information, the present research is bounded within the context of peer-reviewed articles specifically targeting the project management profession.

Within the next step, each remaining article title, abstract, and keywords were read in their entirety for the terms *stakeholder*, *stake holder*, and *stake-holder*.

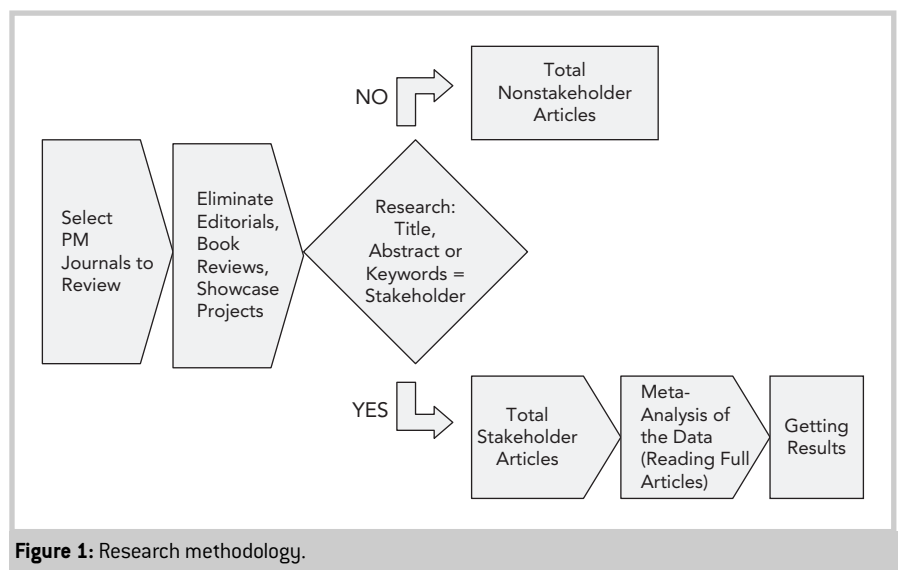


Figure 1: Research methodology.

During this step, we found in some articles some synonyms for *stakeholder*, such as *project environment* (Pinto & Slevin, 1988), *major participants* (Hill, Russell, & Smith, 1988), or *key players* (Braz, 1989), but we restricted our research only to the terms *stakeholder*, *stake holder*, and *stake-holder*. In *PMJ*, the abstract and keywords were first introduced in 1997, so in *PMJ*, from 1984 to 1996, we studied the introduction to find the previously mentioned keywords. In *IJPM* (Science Direct database) we found three articles (De Bakker, Boonstra, & Wortmann, 2009; Liu, Chen, Jiang, & Klein, 2009; Toor & Ogunlana, 2009) that are available online but not yet published in any of the issues. We excluded these three articles from our research. As shown in Figure 1, this step produced results of nonapplicable or applicable stakeholder articles. At the end of this step, four databases were available for analysis with the applicable articles. One database each was built for *IJPM*, *PMJ*, *IJMPB*, and *IJPOM*. Once the databases were available, we read the full text of the applicable articles and

sorted the data according to our research questions. Then we conducted the meta-analysis on the data in order to gain the answers to our research questions. The results and analysis will be discussed in the next section.

Results

Divulgence

Percentage of Stakeholder Articles in Journals

The survey results indicate that the level of stakeholder-related literature is growing as compared to the earlier research. This section provides the details of the survey and meta-analysis of the data gathered. Performing the survey consisted of reviewing all identified *IJPM* and *PMJ* articles from 1984 to 2009 and *IJMPB* and *IJPOM* articles from 2008 to 2009. In the following subsections, results will be discussed as per Research Question 1(a).

The *IJPM* data source consisted of 1,284 articles. Each article's title, abstract, and keywords were read to find the word *stakeholder*. The result of

this analysis produced 67 articles that had stakeholder in either, or all of, the title, abstract, or keywords. We conducted a similar analysis with *PMJ*, *IJMPB*, and *IJPOM*. From 649 *PMJ* articles, we found 29 stakeholder articles; among 69 articles of *IJMPB*, 16 were stakeholder articles; and we found 4 stakeholder articles from 24 articles of *IJPOM*. So, all in all, we found 116 stakeholder articles from 2,026 articles of all four journals together. That means 5.7% of the articles mentioned *stakeholder* in either the title, abstract, or keywords.

To overcome the issues surrounding differences in the number of articles per year and differences in the number of journal volumes per year, data was converted to a percentage of stakeholder articles per year. Comparing these annual percentages of total stakeholder articles then provides a means to look for trends. Percentages of stakeholder articles are growing relatively over the years and reached the peak percentages of 15%, 15%, and 17% in the years 2006, 2008, and 2009, respectively (Figure 2). There are five years during

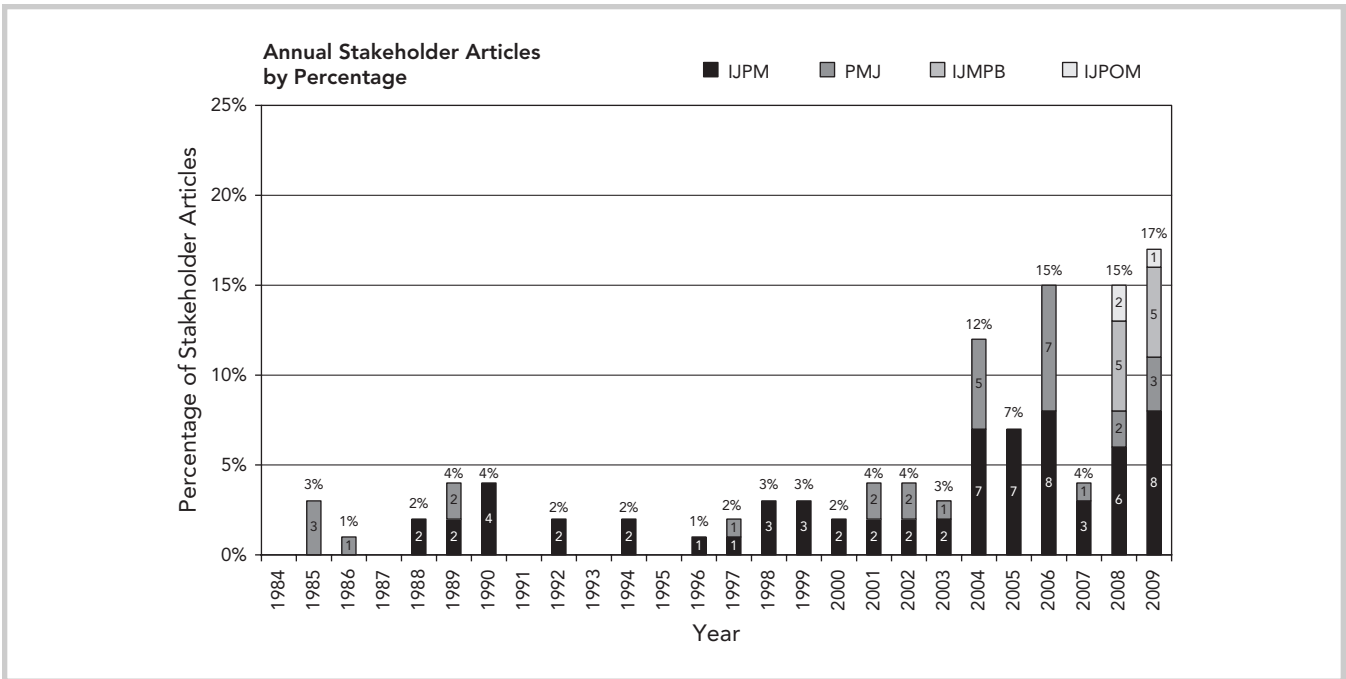


Figure 2: Annual stakeholder articles by percentage.

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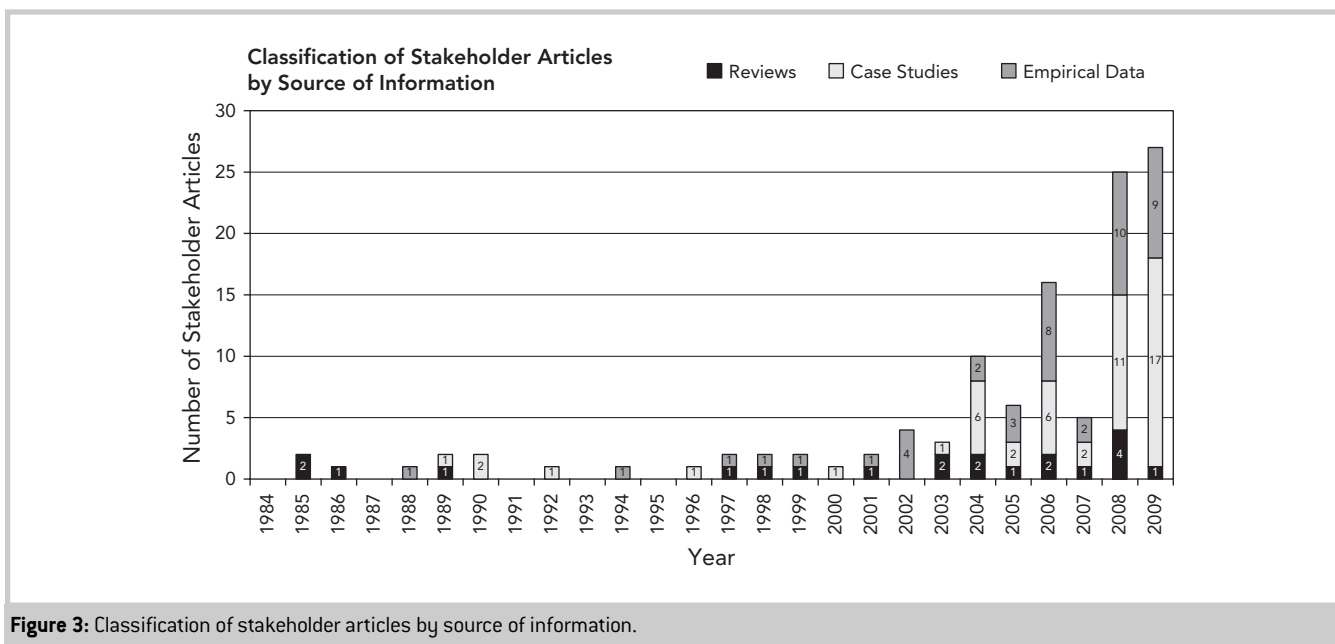


Figure 3: Classification of stakeholder articles by source of information.

which *stakeholder* did not occur in titles, abstracts, or keywords in any journal articles. Even though *IJMPB* is very new, it contributed a major portion of 5% in both 2008 and 2009.

Source of Information

To find more about sources, as per Research Question 1(b), the classification of the information sources over time is explained here (Figure 3), whereas the definitions of sources of information are given in the Appendix ("Classification Method: Source of Information"); the source of these definitions is based on the same method as in the literature review article from Betts and Lansley (1995).

The sources of information on which articles are based changed over the years. They started with reviews in the initial years, and reviews stay almost stable over the years. However, case studies and empirical data are showing an increasing tendency over the years. In 2009, case studies occupied a major part, with 17 articles—that is, 63% of the total 2009 stakeholder articles are from case studies. Empirical data articles are in the second position, with nine, and there is only one review article. The main

conclusion we can glean from the sources of information is that most of the published articles on stakeholders are of practical orientation, with case studies and empirical data, which together comprise 82% of the total stakeholder articles.

Origin of the Articles

According to Research Question 1(c), the origin of articles can be shown in a number of ways (e.g., the type of institution, the name of institution, etc.), but here we wish to present our results on a country basis, as this information will indicate which countries are considering the stakeholder approach as an important issue. There were some articles that were contributed by multiple countries. In this case, we provided weighting for each country. Weighting for an article is a fraction that is dependent upon the number of countries. In all four journals together, 30 countries published their articles on stakeholder ideas. As it is difficult to gain an overview with the results of 30 countries in one graph, we are presenting the results of the top 10 countries, and we put the remaining 20 countries into the category "rest of the countries,"

as the share of the top 10 countries is 82% and the remaining 20 countries altogether contributed 18% (Figure 4).

The United Kingdom is in the number-one position with 26 articles, which means that 22% of total stakeholder articles are from the United Kingdom. Australia and the United States are in the second and third positions with 16 and 15 articles, respectively. These three countries, the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States, together are contributing 49% of the total stakeholder articles. Canada is in the fourth position, with 11 articles. Norway and Finland are in the fifth position, with 6 articles each. China and Hong Kong are occupying the next positions with 5 and 4 articles, respectively. India and Singapore follow with the equal contribution of 3 articles each. We also carried out the journal-wise analysis (Figure 4) and found that the United Kingdom is contributing a major part to *IJPM*, the United States is contributing a major part to *PMJ*, and *IJMPB* gains major input from Australia. This means that each journal receives their major contribution from their home countries. Coming to the remaining countries, *IJPM* represents

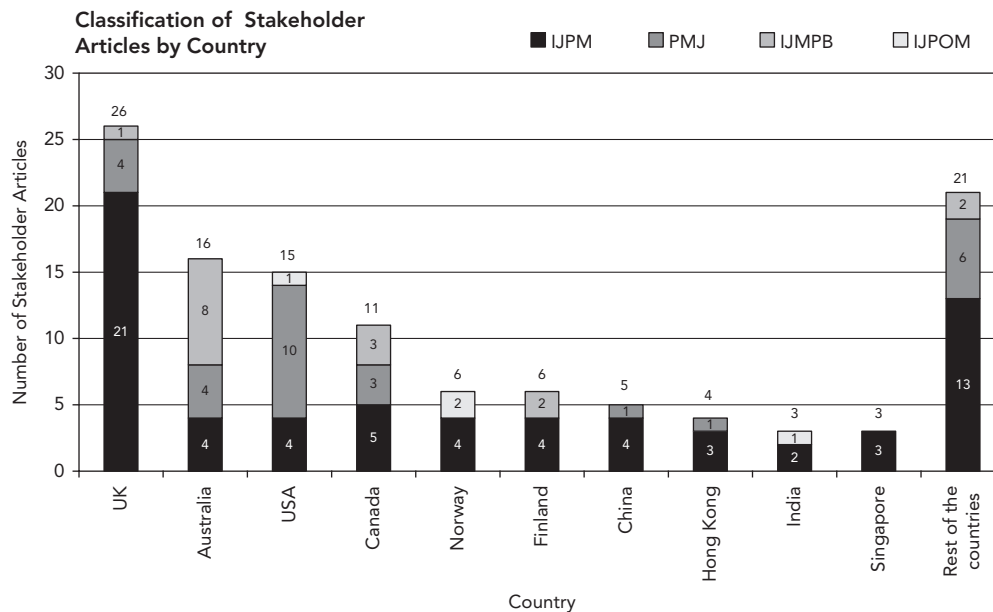


Figure 4: Number of stakeholder articles by country.

more countries compared to the other three journals.

Industry Sector

One of the important results that we wished to see is which industrial sectors are addressed by these articles, which sectors are playing major roles, and whether stakeholder theory is limited to one or two industrial sectors or has spread to other industrial sectors over the years, as per Research Question 1(d).

The definitions of industrial sectors are given in Appendix ("Classification Method: Industry Sectors"); the source of these definitions is the literature review article from Betts and Lansley (1995). It was not possible to classify many of the articles, as they dealt with project management in a more generic way. We have considered these articles under the general sector. In total, we have categorized the articles into seven sectors. In the earlier years, stakeholder theory started with the more generic articles and slowly spread to other industrial sectors (Figure 5).

In 2008 and 2009, stakeholder articles are represented in almost all industry sectors. The first article in the construction industry appeared in 1994, and the development has picked up drastically over the years, until, in 2009, it became the most dominant sector. Information and services representation started in 1990 and, over the years, also became one of the dominant sectors. On the other hand, the representation of manufacturing, agriculture/development, and process industry sectors started in the 1990s but did not pick up much over the years, with the exception that, in 2009, the manufacturing sector contributed a good number. Stakeholder theory spreads to the facilities and utilities sector very recently in 2006, and, since then, it has appeared frequently. This shows that stakeholder theory plays a significant role in many of the sectors.

Understanding

According to Research Question 2(a), to find out whether and how the stakeholders are defined in our selected articles,

we searched for definitions in all 116 articles. Among 116 articles, 28 articles mentioned a definition for *stakeholder* in their articles, which represents 24% of the total stakeholder articles. Among 28 definitions, 22 were unique definitions, either defined by the author himself or by some other author. For this research section, we considered all of the unique definitions that appeared in these 116 articles, irrespective of the fact that some of them were cited from literature other than the four reviewed journals. This is due to the fact that our main aim for this research question is to see which definitions appeared in these 116 articles, who sourced these definitions to stakeholder theory and when, and whether there is any evolution in the total spectrum of these definitions from 1984 to 2009. Please refer to the Appendix ("List of Definitions by Authors") for the list of all 22 definitions. In these 22 varieties of definitions, there were only two main different types of definitions; one is stated by Freeman (1984, p. 46): "... a stakeholder in an organisation is any group or

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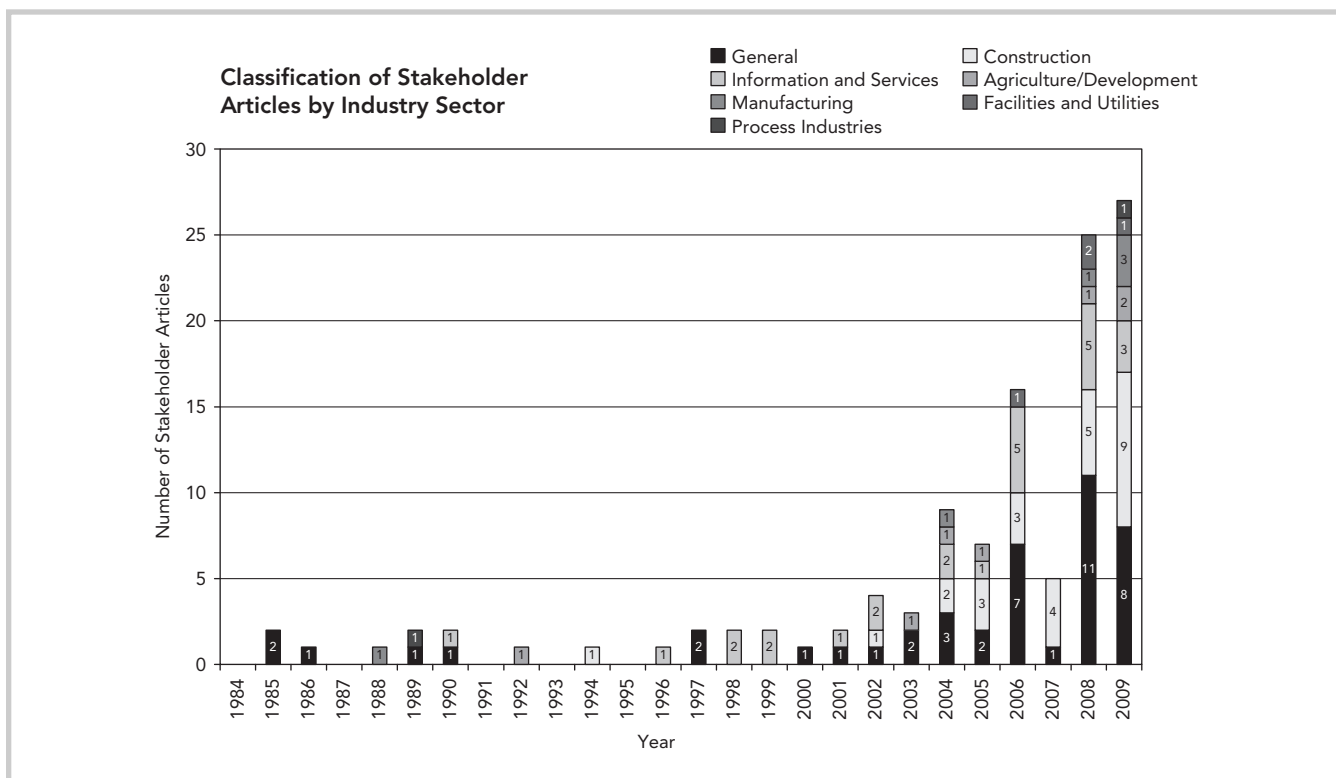


Figure 5: Classification of stakeholder articles by industry sector.

individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives..."; another is by Cleland (1985): "...who have a vested interest in the outcome of the project." The remaining 20 definitions are either minor modifications of these two definitions or a combination of the two. For example, the definition by Dinsmore (1990), "who has a stake in project outcome," is almost similar to Cleland's vested interest definition. Consider another example definition by Andersen (2005): "... a person or a group of persons, who are influenced by or able to influence the project." This definition is similar to Freeman's "can affect and affected by" definition. From this observation, we defined two groups of definitions: one is the "interest-in" or "stake-in" definition group, and another one is the "can affect or affected by" definition group, with the synonyms for "can affect and affected

by" being "able to influence or are influenced by," "impacted by," and so on. And we found a third group of definitions that are a combination of these two definitions. For example, Boddy and Paton (2004) stated, "Stakeholders are individuals, groups or institutions with an interest in the project, and who can affect the outcome." In this definition, we can find both the key terms *interest-in* and *can affect*, so this definition falls into the third category of definitions. We named the *interest-in* group as the Type I definition group, because it is the simplest definition of all three types; the *can affect* and *affected by* group as the Type II definition group; and the third category of definition group as Type III. After this clear classification of definitions, we sorted all 22 definitions into these three types. Among these, 10 definitions were of Type I, which represents 45% of the total definitions, and Type II and Type

III groups had 6 definitions each. Then, according to Research Question 2(b), we looked at how these definitions evolved over the time and whether there were any trends visible.

The evolution of the stakeholder definition started in 1984 with Freeman's (1984, p. 46) well-known "can affect and affected by" (Type II) definition (Figure 6). Immediately thereafter in 1985, Cleland (1985) gave his well-known "interest-in" (Type I) definition. Considering the evolution of stakeholder definition, we found that since Cleland's "interest-in" definition, the Type I definition gained momentum and appeared frequently from 1986 to 2007; on the other hand, from 1985 to 2001 there was no Type II definition. In 2002, Freeman modified his definition, and since that time, Type II definitions have appeared in the years 2005, 2006, and 2009. Even though the Type III definition appeared first in 1996 in the *PMBOK® Guide*, there were

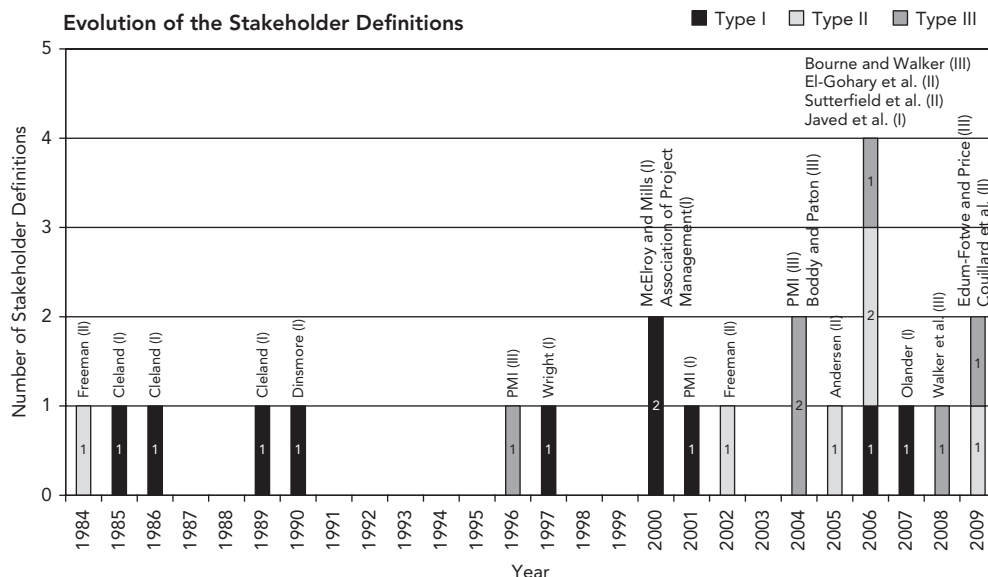


Figure 6: Evolution of the stakeholder definitions.

no Type III definitions from 1997 to 2003. The Type III definition appeared again in 2004 and, since then, it has appeared in 2006, 2008, and 2009. The important conclusion we can draw here is that we can divide the 25 years of stakeholder approach into two eras, before 2002 and after 2002 (Figure 6). The era before 2002 is dominated by the Type I definition, and the era after 2002 is dominated by the Type II and Type III definitions. Nevertheless, the Type I definition has its significance over the complete range of 25 years.

Drivers

Context of Stakeholder Theory

The context of articles concerning the stakeholder notion, according to Research Question 3(a), was derived from the main focus of these articles and their keywords. As too many specific topics were discussed in the analyzed articles, we created groups of contexts as explained in the following: Many articles were dedicated to the field of project success—for instance, researching success criteria—as well as to the fields

of project risk and project performance. We put these together in the category of the project evaluation context, as they are evaluating projects by success, risk, and performance. The second group of articles was dedicated to the project strategy context, containing articles about project management concepts, different strategic frameworks, and also business processes in projects. As a third group, we identified the project social context, which includes articles focused on topics such as trust, communication, and leadership in projects. The fourth group we found was the project environment context, discussing the roles of clients, sponsors, users, and the like, as well as concentrating on other external factors in projects. And the fifth and last group was for all other articles that did not fit into the groups already explained. We have termed this the miscellaneous category.

More than two-thirds of the stakeholder articles are in the context of project evaluation or project strategy (Figure 7)—that is to say that the body of stakeholder literature in PM is fed predominantly by these research

fields—without saying anything about the quality of contributions. In contrast, we can conclude that stakeholders are considered as an important factor in the project evaluation and project strategy contexts. Articles with project social and project environment contexts contribute almost one-third of the stakeholder literature in the analyzed framework (Figure 7), meaning that stakeholder importance is also considered in these two fields.

Qualitative Levels of Contribution to Stakeholder Theory

To identify the qualitative level of contribution to stakeholder theory, we introduced a three-level model differentiating the levels as follows: When an article simply mentioned the word *stakeholder* without any explanation or deeper meaning to stakeholder theory, we termed it a Level III article. When stakeholder theory was explained and applied to any topic of project management, we defined it to be a Level II article; and when stakeholder theory is discussed and developed further or enriched by new models or concepts, we classified it

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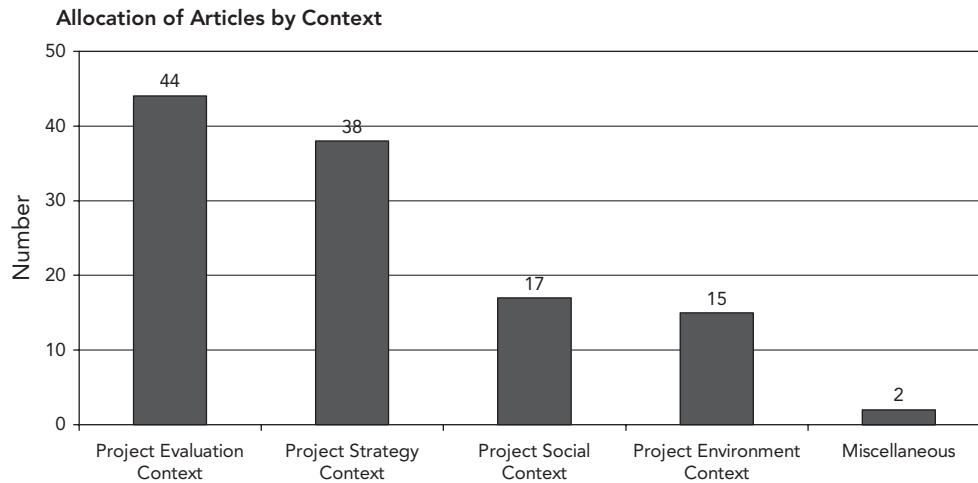


Figure 7: Allocation of articles by context.

as a Level I article. Thus, the meaning to stakeholder theory could be described as *high* for Level I, *moderate* for Level II, and *low* for Level III. In this relation, Level III could also be described as *Terminology Application*, Level II as *Theory Application*, and Level I as *Theory Development*.

We found some notable information to answer Research Question 3(b) (Table 1). Thus, the articles from the project evaluation context do not contribute significant content to stakeholder theory development, apart from one exception. They simply apply the terminology or theory. Most of the Level I articles can be found in the project environment context. This field of project management literature is dedicated mainly to investigating everything in the environment around the project

itself. As stakeholders are the essential part of a project's environment, it is obvious why this context contributes most of the highly qualitative articles in relation to stakeholder theory: It mainly covers the area where stakeholders interface projects. It is the only group that is predominantly developing stakeholder theory in project management literature. In the project strategy context, as well as in the project social context, we found a more or less balanced allocation of articles to the three levels. In both, we saw a small portion at Level I and a significant part in Levels II and III. That is to say that, from time to time, there was an article published with a high qualitative level of contribution to stakeholder theory, but in general both groups mainly apply terminology and

theory. Summarizing, roughly every sixth stakeholder article in the project management literature is of a high qualitative contribution to stakeholder theory. Articles applying the stakeholder terminology or stakeholder theory are quite well balanced over the rest of the project management literature.

Adding the year of publication to the articles, described by their qualitative level of contribution to stakeholder theory, we found that most of the Level I articles were published within the last 4 years, 2006 to 2009 (Figure 8), although the beginning of stakeholder theory was in 1984 (see the Introduction section) and many articles with Levels II and III were published before 2006. Obviously, the application of terminology and theory in those earlier

	Project Evaluation Context	Project Strategy Context	Project Social Context	Project Environment Context	Miscellaneous	Total [Σ]	Percentage Of All Articles
Level I	1	5	3	11	0	20	~17%
Level II	21	17	6	1	1	46	~40%
Level III	22	16	8	3	1	50	~43%

Table 1: Articles by qualitative level of contribution to stakeholder theory and article context.

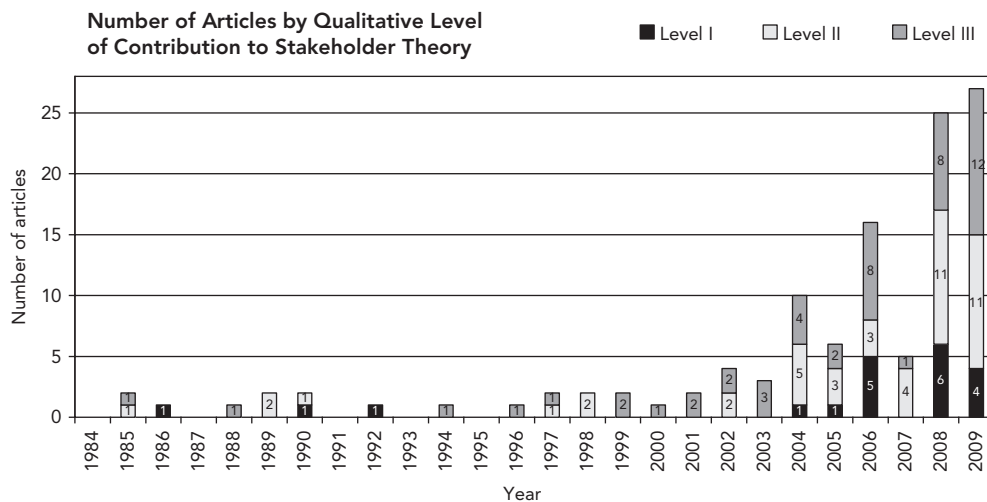


Figure 8: Number of articles by qualitative level of contribution to stakeholder theory.

years required a further development of stakeholder theory, which took place as a consequence after 2006.

Discussion and Conclusions

Our analysis of the stakeholder articles, first on a statistical level and then on a conceptual level, led us to recognize some relationships between the results. On both levels we found support for some trends in stakeholder theory development. Before we come to these trends, one should not forget that our analysis is based on articles using the term *stakeholder*. As we already have mentioned in the Method section, there are also other expressions used for stakeholders. So, when we talk about trends, we cannot exclude the fact that the concept that we define as stakeholder theory was also applied in other ways than those proven by our results. Therefore, our conclusions are based on that which is explicitly termed *stakeholder theory*.

First, visualized by the data of our information sources, we could find evidence for the recognition of the stakeholder approach, both in all of the project management journals we analyzed and in a wide range of different countries and industries. Considering the

time dimension, we saw this trend increasing. In other words, one can conclude from these results that the consideration of stakeholder theory is spreading within the project management research and practice world.

Second, stakeholder theory is applied mainly in the project strategy context and the project evaluation context, which includes project success, project risk, and project performance topics. As these topics represent the core of project management research, because of their focus on the management process of projects itself, we can conclude that stakeholder theory is becoming an important approach in project management.

Third, the significance of stakeholder theory is increasing and expanding simultaneously. As we have demonstrated, the clearly increasing share of stakeholder articles in project management journals and the majority of highly qualitative articles concerning stakeholder theory have appeared within the last few years, and the recent drive and interest in the stakeholder approach is obvious. Also, the evolution of stakeholder definitions is evolving in the more complex direction, which is the combination of the

two definition Types I and II. That is to say that stakeholder theory is driven to develop further.

To generalize our conclusions, stakeholder theory should be considered as an important trend in project management research that has been prospering for some years. Its multilateral basis and application supports our further research intention, which is to analyze stakeholder theory in more detail. Considering important milestones, stakeholder classification models, and stakeholder management approaches, our aim is to provide a comprehensive state of the art of stakeholder theory in future work. ■

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25 Years of Stakeholder Theory in Project Management Literature (1984–2009)

APPENDIX

Classification Method: Source of Information

To differentiate among miscellaneous sources of information that were used in the analyzed literature, we ended up with the following determination—it is based on the same method as in the literature review article from Betts and Lansley (1995).

- *S1 (reviews)*: Reviews or proposals based on knowledge, data, and insights drawn from academic or practitioner experience; often the integration of well-known facts and the provision of new insights rather than tightly argued analyses.
- *S2 (case studies)*: Individual or a limited number of linked case studies based on observation or detailed quantitative data, sometimes described within a well-defined framework in order to test or illustrate specific concepts or to develop new concepts (particularly the application of statistical concepts, which lead to cases that take the form of worked examples), sometimes highly descriptive.
- *S3 (empirical data)*: Presentation and analysis of empirical data, or empirical analysis of secondary data, usually according to some theoretical framework or analytical model.

Classification Method: Industry Sectors

Summarizing the different industries that were researched in our analyzed literature, we found seven industry clusters as given in Table A1. The source of these definitions is according to the literature review article from Betts and Lansley (1995).

I1: Agriculture/ Development	I2: Construction	I3: Facilities/ Utilities	I4: Process Industries	I5: Manufacturing	I6: Information/ Services	I7: General
–Rural development –World Bank– sponsored projects –Aid projects	–Building –Civil engineering –Housing –Urban design and planning –Maintenance	–Telecommunications –Energy and power generation –Gas –Transport –Education –Defence –Health and medical –Electricity distribution	–Nuclear –Offshore and underwater –Oil plant –Petrochemical	–Cars –Product development –Pharmaceuticals –Shipbuilding –Aerospace	–IT system –Data processing –Research and development –Government –ERP systems	–When industry sector is not specified –When industry sector is not clear –When categoriz- ing the industry sector is difficult

Table A1: Classification of industry sectors.

List of Definitions by Authors

A total list of all definitions of “stakeholders” that appeared in the analyzed 116 articles is given in Table A2.

Author	Definition
Freeman (1984, p. 46)	“... a stakeholder in an organisation is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives. . .”
Cleland (1985)	“... who have a vested interest in the outcome of the project.”
Cleland (1986)	“... individuals and institutions who share a stake or an interest in the project.”
Cleland (1989)	“Stakeholders are those persons or organisations that have, or claim to have an interest or share in the project undertaking.”
Dinsmore (1990)	“Who has a stake in project outcome.”
PMI (1996)	“Stakeholders are individuals and/or organizations that are involved in or may be affected by the project activities.”
Wright (1997)	“Stakeholders are any individuals who have an interest in the outcome of the project.”
McElroy & Mills (2000)	“A project stakeholder is a person or group of people who have a vested interest in the success of a project and the environment within which the project operates.”
Association of Project Management (2000)	“... people or organisations who have a vested interest in the environment, performance and/or outcome of the project.”
PMI (2001)	“... individuals and organizations that are directly involved with the project and who have a vested interest in the resulting deliverables of the project.”
Freeman (2002)	“... groups or individuals who can affect or are affected by the accomplishment of an organisation's mission.”
PMI (2004)	“... individuals and organizations that are actively involved in the project or whose interest may be affected as a result of project execution or project completion.”
Boddy & Paton (2004)	“Stakeholders are individuals, groups or institutions with an interest in the project, and who can affect the outcome.”
Andersen (2005, p. 84)	“... a person or a group of persons, who are influenced by or able to influence the project.”
Bourne & Walker (2006)	“Stakeholders are individuals or groups who have an interest or some aspect of rights or ownership in the project, and can contribute to, or be impacted by, the outcomes of the project.”
El-Gohary, Osman, & El-Diraby (2006)	“... stakeholders are individuals or organisations that are either affected by or affect the development of the project.”
Sutterfield, Friday-Stroud, & Shivers-Blackwell (2006)	“... any individual or group of individuals that are directly or indirectly impacted by an entity or a task.”
Javed, Maqsood, & Durrani (2006)	“Stakeholders are the people who have some kind of interest in the project.”
Olander (2007, p. 278)	“A person or group of people who has a vested interest in the success of a project and the environment within which the project operates.”
Walker, Bourne, & Rowlinson (2008, p. 73)	“Stakeholders are individuals or groups who have an interest or some aspect of rights or ownership in the project, and can contribute to, or be impacted by, either the work or the outcomes of the project.”
Edum-Fotwe & Price (2009)	“... individuals or groups who are directly and/or indirectly involved in the selected scales and beyond and whose lives, environment or business are affected by the three spatial scales and beyond the adopted constructs.”
Couillard, Garon, & Riznic (2009)	“... Entities or persons who are or will be influenced by or exert an influence directly or indirectly on the project.”

Table A2: List of all definitions.