

# AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF PROJECT FAILURE IN GOVERNMENT PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: GHANA AS A CASE STUDY

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Liverpool John  
Moores University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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October, 2015

# DECLARATION

I, Isaac Sakyi Damoah, do hereby certify for this thesis that:

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ISAAC SAKYI DAMOAH

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## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this work to God Almighty for His protection, guidance and the knowledge he gave me when carrying out this assignment

## ABSTRACT

In recent years, project management has become an important part of any organisation and/or government as a result of the changing nature of managing organisations due to technological advancement, and a complex, competitive global marketplace. Projects require huge capital outlay from organisations and/or governments; however, literature indicates that huge sums of money are being lost through project failure and Ghana's government is no exception to this trend. Therefore, this study investigated the perception of the extent of project failure, causes of project failure and the effects of project failure on key stakeholders of Ghana's government projects. The purpose of this research is to bridge literature gap(s) in project management and also to provide statistical data that can be used by project management practitioners and policy makers in Ghana and other developing countries.

An initial literature review was conducted to development theoretical framework that was used to determine the extent of projects failure, causes and effects of projects failure in Ghanaian government projects. Ten (10) semi-structured interviews (general public (2), contractors (2) and project management practitioners (PMP) (6)) were carried out to evaluate the perception that the participants about the extent of failure, causes and effects of Ghana government projects failure. The data were analysed using content and thematic data analysis techniques. The literature reviewed and the exploratory data identified six (6) project failure criteria that were used to assess the extent of project failure in Ghanaian government projects. Thirty-two (32) and twenty-six (26) possible causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure were identified respectively. Further data were collected through questionnaire surveys of 265 (contractors=78, PMP=81 and general public=106) participants. The questionnaire data were analysed using statistical techniques which included Descriptive Statistics, Means, Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficients, and Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference in ranks.

The findings showed that all the three categories of the study's participants (contractors, PMP and general public) agreed that Ghanaian government projects fail on all six criteria; however, the extent of failure differs from criterion to criterion. They agreed that the worst performing criterion is meeting the projected time, followed by cost, deliverables, stakeholders' satisfaction, contribution to national development and contribution to the sector where the project is implemented respectively.

Secondly, the 32 causes of Ghanaian government projects failure included: monitoring, corruption, political interference, change in government, bureaucracy, fluctuation of prices, lack of continuity, planning, delays in payment, release of funds, change in project leadership, management practices, procurement processes, project funding, commitment to project, selection of project managers, project team formation, project management techniques, feasibility studies, communication, supervision, scope change, capacity, task definition, definition of specification, requirement, regulations, culture and belief systems, user involvement, labour, pressure groups (media, NGOs, political activities etc.), and natural disaster. Further, most of these causes of Ghanaian government projects failure were linked to leadership; however, this was not practitioners but political leadership.

The effects identified included: it slows down economic growth, loss of revenue by state, unemployment, bad image for government, collapse of local businesses, cost escalation, government sector underdevelopment, loss of foreign aid/grants, discourages investment, stricter donor regulations, loss of election, financial institutions lose confidence in the state, loss of revenue by the citizens, lack of capacity, sub-standard infrastructure, it slow down citizens' human empowerment, loss of worker hours, pollution, armed robbery and theft, relocation of services, denial of citizens' basic rights, loss of properties, emotional stress on citizens, accidents and deaths, imprisonment, and abandonment of homes. The study revealed that some of these effects are direct whilst others are indirect. Thus, the findings show that the effects are interrelated and sequential – one effect could lead to another effect and in that order.

Moreover, the causes and effects were not of equal importance; however, there was a high degree of agreement between the three categories of the study's participants on the most important causes and effects of failure in Ghanaian government projects.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
BoK	Body of Knowledge
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CPM	Critical Path Method
GSS	Ghana Statistical Services
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IS	Information Systems
IPMA	International Project Management Association
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs, Ghana
IT	Information Technology
KPMG	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
PERT	Program Evaluation and Review Technique
PM	Project Management
PMP	Project Management Practitioner
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
RBV	Resource-Based View Theory
RDT	Resource Dependency Theory
R & D	Research and Development
SGI	Standish Group International

- SHS Senior High School
- TI Transparency International
- WB World Bank

## **LIST OF ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDED VARIOUS FORMS OF SUPPORT**

1. Knatto Complex Ltd. Santasi Anyinam, Kumasi, Ghana
2. DAL Consultancy Co. Ltd. Accra

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## **INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Project Management Institute (PMI) – Member

Higher Education Academy (HEA) – Associate Member

Institute of Administrative Management (IAM) – UK – Fellow

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the need for this research by highlighting how project failure has become a rule rather than an exception. It paints a clear picture about project failure in the world and developing countries in particular, and how companies and governments are losing huge sums of money through project failure. It also provides an overview of project failure in the local context of this study.

This chapter further discusses the aims and objectives of this research and, by its name, it introduces the rest of the chapters and how they are organised. The ultimate purpose of this chapter is to be a building block for the study.

The rest of the chapter is presented as follows: section 1.1 discusses the background and the need for the study; 1.2 provides the research aims and objectives. Section 1.3 discusses the relevance of the study, whilst 1.4 analyses the local context for the study. Section 1.5 presents how the entire research is organised. The final part, which is 1.6, summarises the chapter by highlighting the main points discussed in the chapter; and introduces the next chapter.

### **1.1 BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE STUDY**

In recent years, project management has become an important part of any organisation (Maylor et al., 2006). This is as a result of the changing nature of managing organisations due to technological advancement, and a complex, competitive global marketplace (Maylor et al., 2006; Panayides et al., 2015; Ramazani & Jergeas, 2015; Klein et al., 2015; Nguyen et al., 2015). Projects require huge capital outlay from

organisations and/or governments (Panayides et al., 2015) and, as such, it is crucial to have good project management practices to deliver value for money projects and programmes. The importance of good project management practices cannot therefore be ignored by corporate managers, as failure destroys shareholders' value and, in the government or public sector; it can have a significant effect on various stakeholders associated with the project. However, studies indicate that companies and governments all over the world are losing huge sums of money through projects as a result of project failure (Espiner, 2007; McManus & Wood-Harper, 2008; Asay, 2008; Fabian & Amir, 2011). Research into 214 projects showed that only one in eight information technology projects can be considered truly successful (McManus & Wood-Harper, 2008). Asay (2008) reports in the Guardian that the UK has wasted over US\$4 billion on failed IT projects between 2000 and 2008. Health and Information Systems in South Africa, IS projects in China, and all World Bank-funded projects in Africa are all examples of either total failure or partial failure (Heeks, 2002, 2005, 2006). An example is the World Bank's Chad-Cameroon Pipeline project. The project, which cost US\$4.2 billion, was abandoned in 2007, citing misuse of revenue by the Chad's president (Fabian & Amir, 2011).

Project failure in developing countries is as high as that in developed countries, if not higher (see Saad et al., 2002; Liu et al., 2011; Aziz, 2013). In their quest for development, developing countries engage in projects such as building of roads, dams, plants, pipes, industries, theatres, e-government services, telecommunication, ICT, and others. These projects, which are normally financed by the International Monetary Fund(IMF), World Bank or tax-payers, face several setbacks such as abandonment (Kumar & Best, 2006), cost deviation (Kaliba et al., 2009; Aziz, 2013), schedule deviation (Sweis et al., 2008; Fallahnejad, 2013; Marzouk & El-Rasas, 2013), scope deviation (Liu et al., 2011), and stakeholders' dissatisfaction (Ahonen & Savolainen, 2010).

In Ghana, project failure rate is high and the cost associated with such failures is very excessive (Daily Graphic, 2006; Amponsah, 2013). Many cases of project failure are reported in the media, World Bank reports and IMF (World Bank Report, 2004,

2007; Central Press, 2011; Daily Guide, 2012; GNA, 2012, 2014), especially International Development (ID) projects which seek to enhance the lives of the general populace (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010).

Amponsah (2013, p.3) estimates “that at least one out of every three infrastructural development projects in Ghana either fails or is challenged to achieve one of the objectives of Scope, Cost or Time. In [a] few cases they do not achieve the intended purpose for which they were undertaken”. Sometimes, donor agencies are reluctant to provide aid for infrastructure projects due to the disappointing results of project outcomes (Daily Graphic, 2007; Amponsah, 2013). This has resulted in donor apathy towards projects in Ghana (World Bank report, 2007).

Ghanaian government projects have a high failure rate; there are numerous reported cases of abandoned projects and projects not finishing on time, not being within budget, and not meeting requirements and/or stakeholders’ needs (Central Press, 2011; Daily Guide, 2012; GNA, 2012). Over the years, significant amounts of money have been solicited from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and other donor agencies by the Ghanaian government to embark on projects that seek to improve socio-economic development. Notable among them in recent years is the US\$547 million under the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) solicited in 2006 (Republic of Ghana’s Ministry of Finance Report, 2007). In the 2012 Ghanaian budget, the country borrowed US\$3.0 billion from the China Development Bank (CDB) to embark on infrastructure deficit projects. Specific projects identified to be funded by this loan were: Accra Plains Irrigation Project, Coastal Fishing Harbours and Landing Sites Project, Tema-Akosombo-Buipe Multi-modal Transportation Project, Western Corridor Gas Infrastructure Project, Helicopter Surveillance Fleet for Western Corridor “Oil Enclave”, Development of ICT Enhanced Surveillance Platform for Western Corridor “Oil Enclave”, Western Corridor “Oil Enclave” Road Re-development Project, Western Railway Line Modernization, Takoradi Port Rehabilitation/Retrofit, and Sekondi Industrial Estate (Republic of Ghana Budget, 2012).

However, most of these projects have not achieved their anticipated objectives (AfDB, 2006; Amponsah, 2010; World Bank, 2012; Amponsah, 2013). This failure has cost the

country significant amounts of money (AfDB, 2006; Daily Graphic, 2006, 2011; Amponsah, 2013). This has prompted stakeholders to express concerns about the phenomenon. For instance, in a conference for project managers organised by the African Development Bank in 2006 in Accra, the Deputy Minister for Finance and Economic Planning, Professor Gyan-Baffour, noted that project implementation performance in the country had declined in all sectors of the economy.

From the literature, it can be deduced that project failure has become part and parcel of organisations and governments undertaking projects; however, these reported failures might not necessarily be so, depending on who is defining what constitutes project failure (Lyytinen & Hirschheim, 1988; Agarwal & Rathod, 2006; Procaccino & Verner, 2006; Ika, 2009) or who is doing the evaluating (Carvalho, 2014), and the timing of the definition or evaluation of the performance of the project in question (Heeks, 2002, 2006) or the criteria used in measuring project success/failure (Amir & Pinnington, 2014). Therefore, using different success/failure criteria, this study aims to find out the extent of project failure within Ghanaian government projects.

Causes of project failure is one of the most discussed topics in recent years by academics, practising managers, governments, and many social commentators all over the world. An extant literature is therefore devoted to the discussion, and various reasons have been identified for the causes of project failure. For instance, Frimpong et al. (2003) and Long et al. (2004) identified 26 and 64 causes of project failure respectively. For example, when looking at schedule delays in road construction projects in Zambia, the following were identified as the reasons behind such delays: financial processes and difficulties on the part of contractors and clients, contract modification, economic problems, materials' procurement, changes in drawings, staffing problems, equipment unavailability, poor supervision, construction mistakes, poor coordination on site, and changes in specifications (Kaliba et al., 2009).

This project failure trend in developing countries has attracted the attention of researchers; and project failure research can be categorised into three groups. The first group takes a generic view of project failure (Frimpong et al., 2003; Kaliba et al., 2009; Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Liu et al., 2011; Amid et al., 2012; Aziz, 2013). The second

group focuses on private sector projects (Mangione, 2003). The last group, which looks into public or government sector projects, has focused exclusively on single case projects (Kumar & Best, 2006; Maubeta et al., 2008; Fabian & Amir, 2011; Patanakul, 2014) – this makes the research industry-specific by default, and therefore affects generalisability. This study will therefore contribute to project failure literature by studying government projects in general, which will make the research cross industries. This study focuses on an investigation of the causes of project failure in developing countries by using Ghana as a case study.

It also goes further to explore the effects that government project failure brings to key stakeholders of such projects. The effects of these project failures are many; however, research on the effects of project failure is rare. In addition, previous research on these effects has been centred on ‘effects in relation to the projects’ completion’ – thus, it has been devoted to the effects in the project under investigation (Aibinu & Jagboro, 2002; Manavazhia & Adhikarib, 2002; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007; Pourrostam & Ismail, 2011). This research therefore bridges this gap by investigating the effects on key stakeholders associated with such projects. Moreover, earlier studies have been concentrated on specific projects and/or specific industries’ projects (Aibinu & Jagboro, 2002; Manavazhia & Adhikarib, 2002; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007; Pourrostam & Ismail, 2011; Zhang, 2013) – which makes the research industry-specific by default, hence affecting generalisability. This research bridges this gap by looking at government projects in general in one specific country. Therefore, the third objective of this research is to identify the effects of the Ghanaian government’s project failures on key stakeholders of such projects. It will further identify the most affected stakeholders of Ghana government projects.

## **1.2 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.2.1 Aims**

The aim of the research is to find out the extent of project failure, causes of project failure and the effects of project failure on key stakeholders of the Ghanaian

government's projects.

### 1.2.1 Objectives

Specifically, the study intends to achieve the following objectives:

- To evaluate the extent of failure in Ghanaian government projects by using different failure criteria. These failure criteria will be compared in order to determine the failure criteria where Ghanaian government projects fail most.
- To identify and evaluate possible factors that cause Ghanaian government projects to fail, and their relative importance (influence).
- To identify and evaluate the effects (negatives) of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders associated with such projects and their relative importance (severity). This will further evaluate the stakeholders most affected by Ghanaian government project failure.

In order to achieve the aims and objectives, the following steps will be followed:

- Literature review – The study will comprehensively review relevant literature on project failure in order to develop a theoretical framework for the study which will be used to identify failure criteria, and the causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure.
- Data collection – An exploratory work will be carried out using semi-structured interviews to collect data, which will be analysed using content and thematic data analysis techniques in order to validate the information from the literature. Further data will be collected through questionnaire surveys in order to validate the data collected from the semi-structured interviews.
- Analysis – Statistical analysis using SPSS will be used to make sense of the survey data collected. The methods of analysis such as Descriptive Statistics, Mean Average, Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficients, and Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference in ranks will be adopted to evaluate the most significant failure areas, and causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure.
- Discussions – The findings from the results will then be juxtaposed with existing literature to enable the researcher to tease out the academic and practical

contributions that this study offers.

- Finally, the researcher hopes to propose a critical direction for future research and practical guidance for management of projects in Ghana and developing countries in general.

### **1.3 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this research is to bridge literature gap(s) in project management and also to provide statistical data that can be used by project management practitioners and policy makers in Ghana and other developing countries. Moreover, like many developing countries, Ghana is at a very crucial part of its development as a result of the prospect of the oil revenues from its oil reserves (Ahadzie, 2009). It is estimated as the world leader in economic growth, with a rate of 20% (Economy Watch, 2011), and as such projects have become a focal point in this development.

The question as to whether these projects will be successful in sustaining this growth has become an issue for many Ghanaians and some commentators, because past governments have been enthused about similar projects before but these projects ended in failure (Central Press, 2011; Daily Guide, 2012; GNA, 2012). Therefore, using Ghana as a case study will benefit the Ghanaian government by throwing more light on extent of projects failure, why projects fail and how this failure negatively impacts on key stakeholders of such projects. This will help the government to be more proactive in awarding project contracts in the future.

This study will also contribute to theories of project failure, causes of project failure and the effects of project failure on stakeholders in developing countries. This will make a contribution to both the academic and the practical fields. Thus, by studying government projects failure in Ghana, the study will contribute to both the local and broader academic context in project management. As stated in section 1.1, previous literature on government projects have been specific cases and therefore by using general government, this gap would be bridged. Further, in the local context, the literature have been mainly media, company and commentary reports and therefore this

study will add academic lens to the literature.

## **1.4 THE LOCAL CONTEXT**

This section provides an overview of the local context for the study. The main objective of this research is to find out the extent of project failure, and causes and effects of government projects failure in developing countries, with the ultimate purpose of reducing project failure in developing countries. Data are collected from the Ghanaian public, contractors and project management practitioners. It is therefore imperative to provide a local context for the study. Specifically, this section has two main objectives. One, to provide a general overview of the country as a developing country, and two, to provide the state of project management practices in Ghana and government projects in particular by highlighting the role of politics, economics and socio-cultural factors in project management practices.

The rest of the section is arranged as follows: sections 1.4.1, 1.4.2 and 1.4.3 discuss the economic, political and socio-cultural position of Ghana respectively, by highlighting how these could influence the Ghanaian government's project performance and how they relate to this research. Section 1.4.4 discusses the Ghanaian government's project life cycle and why this can influence its project performance; section 1.4.5 gives a general overview of the procurement procedure that the Ghanaian government projects follow. The final section, 1.4.6, gives a general overview of the Ghanaian government projects and highlights the state of project failure in them.

### **1.4.1 The Ghanaian Economy**

Ghana is a developing country with a gross domestic product of (GDP) US\$39.20 billion as at 2012 (Trading Economics, 2012; Republic of Ghana Budget, 2012), with GDP growth of 14.3% as at the end of 2011 (World Bank, 2012), but this had declined to US\$38.58 billion in 2014 (World Bank, 2015). According to the World Bank (2012), Ghana is one of the leaders in economic growth with a rate of 13.7% and has an

inflation rate of 8.7%. The main export products are cocoa, gold, oil and gas, timber, bauxite and diamonds; these greatly contribute to the country's economic growth. For instance, in March 2011 when parliament approved the Petroleum Revenue Management Act to commence commercial exploitation of the newly discovered oil and gas reserves (Republic of Ghana Budget, 2012), this resulted in a very high economic growth rate at the time – the economic growth was ranked as the highest in the world, with a rate of 20.07% (Economy Watch, 2011).

As at 2012, the country's interest rate was 9.1% per cent and its Gross International Reserves were US\$4.98 billion (Republic of Ghana Budget, 2012). In 2012, the country attained Lower Middle Income status with per capital income of US\$1,410 (World Bank, 2012). Nonetheless, this had declined to 18% in 2015 (World Bank, 2015).

Moreover, in 2012, Ghana had a budget deficit of GH¢1,132.2 million (Revenue of GH¢12,825.0 million and expenditure of GH¢15,565.5 million), representing 2.0% of GDP (Republic of Ghana Budget, 2012). Further, the country's 2012 budget shows an external debt of 19.8% of GDP and the total public debt is estimated to be 41.5% of GDP. However, the World Bank rates the country's risk of external debt distress as moderate (World Bank, 2012). Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population), according to the World Bank, was 28.5% in 2006 (World Bank, 2012). However, over the last six years (2009 to 2015), Ghana's economy has grown each year by an average of 6%, hitting a record-breaking 15% in 2011, but there has been a sharp decline in growth in the following years. However, in 2015 economists expect the country to post strong growth of around 8% (CNN, 2015).

From the above data, it can be argued that the economy is not stable and therefore it can be said that this economic state in the country will have an influence on project implementation and performance. This therefore provides inside knowledge to this study on the government's economic ability to carry out projects.

### **1.4.2 Ghanaian Politics**

Ghana is a unitary state that practices constitutional democracy in her governance. The country has witnessed political stability since 1992 and has not witnessed any civil war in her history. The country practices multi-party democracy; however, there are only two main political parties who are capable of winning presidential elections and form a government. From 1992 to date, there have been six successive free, fair and transparent elections. Ghana is now seen as the 'eye' of Africa in terms of democracy by international organisations and unions such as the Africa Union (AU), ECOWAS, and the European Union (EU). In 2010, Ghana's population and housing census (released in 2012) showed that the country has 10 administrative regions with 197 municipal and district assemblies (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).

It can be argued that this political stability could have a positive influence on project management in Ghanaian government projects. However, this has not always been the case. Many projects in Ghana, and government projects in particular, have suffered several setbacks – as a result of companies and government officials' non-compliance with rules and regulations (see Institute Of Economic Affairs, Ghana (IEA) Presidential Debate, 2012). In Ghana, politics play a major role in project management; management are constantly faced with numerous bureaucratic and political barriers to get projects implemented. Politicians influence government projects in Ghana (IEA Presidential Debate, 2012). In some circumstances, projects encounter problems because politicians 'play politics' with them. Reported cases of abandoned projects due to changes in government are numerous. This has become a major talking point among the general public and prompted a major debate among presidential aspirants in the 2012 general elections (IEA Presidential Debate, 2012). Though there has not been empirical research to prove why politicians abandon projects, it has been said that one of the main reasons for government project abandonment is political motivation. Different governments fail to continue their predecessor's projects because the project does not 'belong' to them (IEA Presidential Debate, 2012).

Moreover, Ghanaian government projects suffer from continuous changes in government leadership. There is a change of leadership as soon as there is a change in

government; taking the NHIS project for instance, the head of the project was changed as soon as NDC took over government from NPP in 2009 (Government of Ghana, 2015). This implies that, if the management of a project want to be successful, they have to build political skills that can be directed towards building trustworthiness, mobilising support and blocking opposition on behalf of the entire project (Warne, 1997). However, instead of political leaders being spotless and leading by example, they play politics with projects by being partisan. There have been instances where all members of an opposition party have boycotted parliament over project bills and the incumbents going ahead with the project because they are the majority in parliament, and, in Ghana's parliament, voting is made on a simple majority (see GNA, 14, Sept. 2003 for NHIS bill). It can be argued that the political terrain in Ghana will have an influence on the country's public projects.

#### **1.4.3 Ghanaian Socio-cultural factors**

Ghana is a country with a rich culture which is well respected by her citizens. According to the World Factbook, Ghanaian society is hierarchical in nature – practising a master-servant relationship where the rich and those in authority, especially religious and political leaders, are reverend (World Factbook, 2012). People in higher and management positions are more respected and as such Ghanaians feel proud to be addressed by their academic and professional titles. Moreover, age, experience and wealth are accorded a high level of respect, with older people being viewed as “wise” and as such they are given preferential treatment in most cases when they are in a group. Like most African countries, there is a very strong family bond, which serves as the primary source of identity, loyalty and responsibility. Family responsibility is more important than anything in life - including work. The country practises an extended form of family and as such respect, connections and links are often attained through the extended family's standing in society.

Religious values are well adhered to by Ghanaians. Sometimes, when projects do not go as expected, pastors and other religious leaders are called upon to pray for the project. There have been instances where prayers had to be offered to some gods

before projects were allowed to commence (Ghana News Agency (GNA), 2012; Ghanaweb, 2012). In these cases, projects managers have to pay money to priests in the form of 'sacrificial items' for use to appease gods. A typical example is the Gh¢215m (£8,000 equivalent; market rate at the time) paid to the priestess of the Tohor deity; Mame Kpolakeh of Atuabo, in the Ellembelle District before the commencement of a Ghana National Gas Company (GNGC) project that was being undertaken by a Chinese contractor (Ghana News Agency (GNA), 2012; Ghanaweb, 2012; Peacefmonline.com, 2012; Ghana Headlines, 2012, Modern Ghana, 2012). It was reported that, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2012, a donor-sponsored project worth US\$2m was on the verge of coming to a premature end because "River-god Stops ... the project". The 'Tindana'; a "custodian of the Veve Dam in the Upper East region says the river-god is not happy with the project" (Daily Guide, 2012, p.2). The report further states that all the necessary stakeholders and parties concerned had been contacted, all the necessary rituals made, and money paid to the custodian, yet there had not been any progress, and as such the donor agent was on the verge of taking away its money.

It can therefore be argued that Ghana's unique culture will have an influence on the project management and project performance of Ghanaian government projects. This is because studies on cross-cultural management and project management prove that management practices do not have cross-cultural validity (Hofstede, 1983; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Maube et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012). This is re-visited in the next chapter under sub-section section 2.4.3.

Apart from the political, economic and socio-cultural conditions in the country, there are other factors that can influence Ghanaian government projects. These factors can be found in the World Bank and other donor agencies' guidance on how projects should be carried out by borrowing and/or receiving countries. Ghana is a typical example of a developing country that relies heavily on the World Bank, IMF and other donor countries and agencies, and therefore this guidance is necessary for project implementation and project performance. Even though there is no statistical evidence, it is estimated that the public sector makes up 80% of the economy. Therefore, government projects are crucial to the development of the country. Specifically, these can be found in

procurement guidance for borrowing countries and project life cycle that the World Bank prescribes for Ghana. The next section discusses this guidance.

#### **1.4.4 Ghanaian Government Project Cycle**

The World Bank prescribes a project cycle consisting of six parts for Ghanaian government projects (World Bank, 2015). Firstly, country strategy and project identification: here, the World Bank works with the borrowing country to determine how financial and other assistance can be designed to have the largest impact on the borrowing country. This involves the identification of project(s). At this stage, the two parties agree on the initial project concept and its beneficiaries. This is then recorded by the bank official in a Project Concept Note. The note contains proposed objectives, imminent risks, alternative scenarios, and the likely timetable for approval process. Two other documents generated at this stage are: one, the project Information Document – containing useful public resources for tailoring bidding documents to the proposed project. Two, the Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet – containing key issues related to the Bank's safeguarding policies for environmental and social issues.

Secondly, project preparation: this involves the conducting of feasibility studies and preparation of engineering and technical designs by the borrowing government. An Environmental Assessment Report is made by referring to the Bank's Safeguards documents made at the project identification phase. The main objective for this is to ensure that; if there will be a very hazardous environmental impact on the indigenous people, appropriate measures are put in place to reduce it. This is done by the agency or agencies nominated by the government. These agencies are often government sector ministry or government departments. During this period, the government or the departments contract consultants and other public sector companies for goods and services. At this phase, prospective beneficiaries and other stakeholders are then consulted for their support. This is the time when the project is subject to public debate. The media then become very vital in this debate. It is the sole responsibility of the borrowing country to perform this task; however, the World Bank plays an advisory role when necessary during this period.

Thirdly, project appraisal: this is the phase where stakeholders are given the opportunity to review in detail the project design and any outstanding questions are resolved. The government and the World Bank further review the proposed project based on the work conducted during the first two phases, and a confirmation of all aspects of the project is made. Under this review, all parties involve agree on the set goals, timetable, and an efficient way of executing the project. This must also meet the bank's operational standards. The project's Information Documents are then updated for approval for funding.

Fourthly, project approval: this is the phase where all documents are sent to the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors for approval. This is when all other legal documents are signed by all parties involved. Once the project is approved, it can commence.

Fifthly, project implementation: as the names implies, this is where the actual project begins. During the implementation phase, the World Bank still provides technical assistance to the government. This implementation involves procurement, financial management, etc. The implementation government must submit regular report to the bank's team, set up to monitor the project. If things are not working as agreed upon, mitigation procedures can take place to amend some parts of the project if necessary.

Lastly, evaluation: this is where the project's output is measured against the project's objective by the bank's Independent Evaluation Group. They also assess institutional impact and other stakeholders' impact. From time to time, they produce Impact Evaluation Reports. The pie chart below gives a clear picture of the project life cycle.

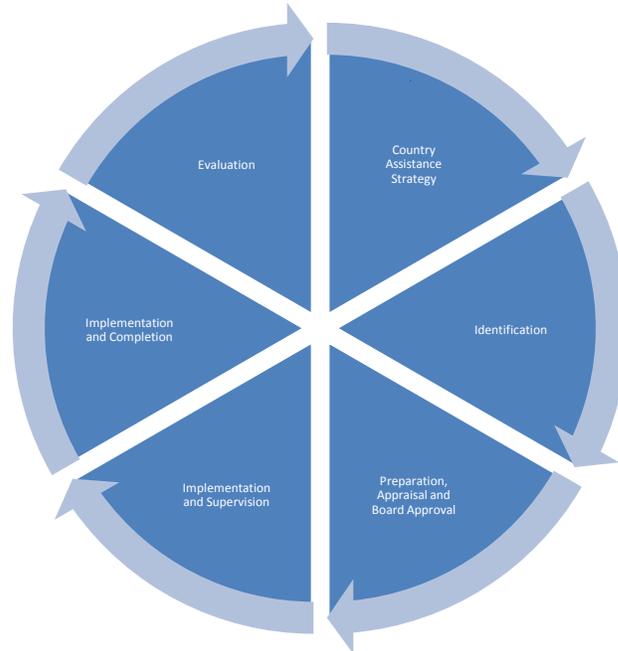


Figure 1 Ghana Project management life cycle

Source: World Bank (2012)

Even though the World Bank provides guidance on how procurement of projects should be conducted in Ghana, the country has her own procedure that government projects need to follow. This is presented in the next sub-section.

#### 1.4.5 Ghana's Procurement Procedure

As the main objective of this study is to find the extent of projects failure, causes and effects of project failure in government projects in developing countries, by using Ghana as case study, the procedure for awarding Ghanaian government projects is very important. This is because this procedure can influence project performance. This section therefore provides a brief description of this procedure.

The procedure for Ghanaian government project procurement is enshrined in the Ghana Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663). The Act was enacted "to provide for public procurement, establish the Public Procurement Board; make administrative and institutional arrangements for procurement; stipulate tendering procedures and provide

for purposes connected with these” (Ghana Procurement Authority, 2015). The authority consists of a board, whose main duty is to harmonise the processes of public procurement in the public service to secure a judicious, economic and efficient use of state resources. In other words, the board is supposed to ensure that public procurement is carried out in a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner which will help reduce corrupt practices in the public procurement processes.

The Act applies to four main areas: (a) the procurement of goods, works and services, financed in whole or in part from public funds except where the Minister decides that it is in the national interest to use a different procedure, (b) functions that pertain to procurement of goods, works and services including the description of requirements and invitation of sources, preparation, selection and award of contract and the phases of contract administration, (c) the disposal of public stores and equipment, and (d) procurement with funds or loans taken or guaranteed by the State and foreign aid funds except where the applicable loan agreement, guarantee contract or foreign agreement provides the procedure for the use of the funds. There is a Tender Committee, which meets at least once every quarter to deliberate over various biddings from performing organisations. The panel sees to it that, at every stage of the procurement activity, procedures prescribed in the Act have been followed by exercising sound judgement in making procurement decisions. They can refer to the appropriate Tender Review Board for approval if necessary. This evaluation is performed according to the predetermined criteria set out in the bidding documents prior to bidding. After approving any bid, they prepare a procurement plan to support it. This document contains contract packages, estimated cost for each package, the procurement method and processing steps and times. They submit it to the Tender Committee for final approval, which is also subject to budget approval from parliament. After this, the winner is published in the Public Procurement Bulletin.

#### **1.4.6 Overview of Ghanaian Government Projects**

Government’s policies are often translated into programmes and projects (Goodman & Love, 1980). In other words, they are the instruments upon which government policies

are achieved and, because projects measure economic growth (Alzahrani & Emsley, 2013), government project performance is key to every government, and Ghanaian government projects are no exception. As a result of the good economic and political standing of the country, the need to embark on “more effectively targeted programs to help the poor” and to improve development has become very crucial in Ghana (World Bank, 2012, p.9). This has prompted the government to make significant efforts to undertake more developmental projects (World Bank, 2012). For example, the main focus of the 2012 budget was mainly to provide key infrastructure to the various sectors of the economy – by stimulating public sector growth and making private sector support a priority, so that jobs could be created for the Ghanaian workforce (Ghana Republic Budget, 2012). For these reasons, the 2012 budget was crafted around the theme ‘Infrastructural Development for Accelerated Growth and Job Creation’.

These proactive policy and regulatory interventions are backed by the World Bank, IMF and other development partners such as the China Development Bank (CDB) (see World Bank: country at glance, 2012; Ghana Republic Budget, 2012). The key infrastructure projects earmark for implementation in 2012 were mainly in Electricity, Oil and Gas, Water and Sanitation, Railways, Roads and Ports, Health, Education, and Agriculture. As can be seen from the table below on how much the World Bank had lent to Ghana in 2012 for programmes and projects, the country had borrowed greatly from the World Bank for her projects and programmes in 2012. However, reports (AfDB, 2006; World Bank Report, 2004, 2007; Republic of Ghana’s Ministry of Finance Report, 2007; Klutse, 2009; Central Press, 2011; Daily Guide, 2012; GNA, 2012) indicate that this is not the first time that such initiatives have been taken by the government. Prominent initiatives in recent years include the Affordable Housing Units projects (Klutse, 2009; Imani, 2010; GNA, 2012; Ghanaweb, 2012), educational reform projects (Nyarko, 2011), National Identity Card (ID card) project (NIA, 2011; Abissath, 2012), Ghana @50 projects (Daily Guide, 2013; Central Newspaper, 2012), and Ghana National Insurance Scheme (NHIS) (World Bank, 2007a; Agyeman, 2009; Mensah, 2009).

However, some of these projects failed to achieve their intended objectives (AfDB, 2006; World Bank, 2012). Media reports and existing literature show that Ghanaian government projects have witnessed a number of failures – ranging from infrastructure to services projects. This project failure is fully discussed in the next chapter, under *Ghanaian Government Project Failure*. The table below provides an overview of the Ghanaian government's borrowing standing with the World Bank.

Table 1 Country Lending Summaries - Ghana

**World Bank Client Connection**

Country Ghana

**IBRD/IDA Country Lending Summary  
Number of Loans/Credits/Grants**

	IDA Credits	DCRT				NP L		Total
Disbursing	25	2	0	0	0	0	0	27
Repaying	13	0	0	0	1	0	0	14
Fully Repaid	111	0	13	0	1	10	1	136
Other	30	6	0	1	0	0	0	37

**Loans/Credits/Grants Summary In USD Equivalent**

	IBRD	IDA Credits	IDA Grants	Total
Original Principal	190,500,000.00	7,814,556,042.11	382,200,000.00	8,387,256,042.11
Cancellations	780,020.83	311,322,243.31	883,449.52	312,985,713.66
Disbursed	189,719,979.17	6,270,909,937.14	309,153,452.82	6,769,783,369.13
Undisbursed	0	1,382,401,420.42	84,199,991.11	1,466,601,411.53
Repaid	189,339,979.17	4,180,707,176.99	0	4,370,047,156.16
Repaid third party	380,000.00	0	0	380,000.00
Due	0	2,463,452,911.25	0	2,463,452,911.25
Exchange Adjustment	0	0	0	0
Borrower Obligation	0	2,463,452,911.25	0	2,463,452,911.25

Source: World Bank (2012)

## **1.5 ORGANISATION OF THESIS**

Chapter one presents the introduction to the research. As the name suggests, this introduces the entire research by highlighting the need and purpose for this study. It also discusses the local content of the research. It then introduces the rest of the chapters.

Chapter two reviews the prior relevant literature on the subject under study. This discusses in detail the prior studies on project failure, causes of project failure and effects of project failure. It also discusses the theoretical framework for the study.

Chapter three presents the methodology for the study by discussing the research philosophies underpinning this research, the choice of research methods, research strategies, types of research, sampling techniques, and justifications for the various choices made for this study.

Chapter four explains in detail how the data for the study were collected and analysed. This is only for the groundwork undertaken during the actual data collection and data analysis processes.

Chapter five presents the research results. This is specifically focused on the field data collected.

Chapter six presents the results of the study by linking them to the literature review to determine how different and similar this study is to prior studies.

Finally, chapter seven presents the conclusion of the research by summarising the main findings of the study. It also highlights the contributions that this study makes to both the academic and the practising fields. It also highlights the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for further studies.

## **1.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter has discussed the need for this study by highlighting how project failure is increasing, and the need to improve project management in order to reduce wastage of money by companies and governments. It also looked into the objectives of this research.

Moreover, this chapter has provided a brief overview of the local context in which this study is being conducted. The main objective was to provide a general overview of the country as a developing country and to explain the state of project management practices in Ghana and government projects in particular by highlighting the role of politics, economics and socio-cultural factors in project management practices. It has also discussed the state of the Ghanaian government's projects.

The economic, political and socio-cultural factors were highlighted to provide how these influence Ghanaian government projects. The chapter also looked at how World Bank directives as well as the Ghana Procurement Act can influence the Ghanaian government's project performance.

The next chapter looks at the prior literature on the concept of project failure, and causes and effects of project failure. This is used to develop research questions and hypotheses; and a theoretical framework for the study.

# CHAPTER TWO

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This section reviews prior studies on the subject being researched. A literature review is “a useful methodology to gain in-depth understanding of a research topic. A systematic examination of existing publications can help researchers in identifying the current body of knowledge and stimulating inspirations for future research” (Mok et al., 2015, p.447). This serves as a guide for the development of a theoretical framework and hypotheses for this study. This will enable the researcher to apply them to the research findings to arrive at justifiable recommendations and conclusions.

This chapter is divided into four (4) main sections. Section one discusses the concept of project failure. The main rationale is to paint the broader picture of project failure within which the Ghanaian government project failure framework – which will subsequently be discussed in the next sub-sections – can be better appreciated. As the main purpose of this study centres on project failure, this section provides the various schools of thought about what constitutes project failure by highlighting the extent to which projects fail in the world, and developing countries and Ghana in particular. However, because this study is about projects and project management, it begins by throwing light on what constitutes a project and project management. In the main, this section starts by discussing a brief history of project management as a body of knowledge, and then defines the terms project and project management by highlighting the main differences that exist between the two concepts. It goes further to discuss in detail the various definitions of the concept of project failure and the dichotomy between project failure and project management failure.

The second section discusses in detail causes of project failure and the effects of project failure on stakeholders by highlighting the flaws of these studies, and how this research intends to bridge the literature gap.

The third section discusses the theoretical blocks that underpin this study. Specifically, it intends to achieve two main objectives. It discusses the theories upon which this study is based, by trying to show how they fit into the research topic and provides justification for the choice by linking them with previous research that used these theories. The main aim is to describe the theoretical blocks upon which this study is based. This will help the researcher to develop a theoretical framework for the research. The last section summarises the chapter.

## **2.1 BRIEF HISTORY OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Project management evolved from management discipline in the 1950s (Cleland & Gareis, 2006), although it is difficult to provide a specific history of the field (Pollack & Adler, 2015). The use of project management as a management practice can be traced back to the advent of business management, but the discipline being recognised as a body of knowledge or subject of studies can be dated back to the 1950s and 1960s (Peckendorff, 1995). Soderlund (2004) specifically traces the genesis of project management to the publication of Gaddis' work in 1959. Modern-day project management can be credited to the work of Henry Gantt, who invented the Gantt Chart as a standardised project management model (Wren, 1979; Partington, 1996). Moreover, this era witnessed the use of planning tools such as Critical Path Method (CPM) and Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) in project management (Peckendorff, 1995). Prior to this era, project management was confined to the US army, and projects were managed on an *ad-hoc* basis with the use of Gantt Charts and informal techniques and tools (Kersner, 2009; Soderlund & Lenfle, 2011).

The field of projects and project management has received much attention and have become very popular of late with the media, academia and practitioners due to projectisation and programmification of companies (Mayor et al., 2006), project failure (Amid et al., 2012; Aziz, 2013; Marzouk & El-Rasas, 2013), and the money being wasted by organisations and/or governments (see Fabian & Amir, 2011; Amid et al., 2012; Daily Guide, 2012; GNA, 2012; Central Press, 2013; KPMG, 2013). Moreover,

projects and project management have become strategic tools for many growth industries and large investment companies and government undertakings of late (Soderlund & Maylor, 2012; Serra & Kunc, 2015). As a result, projects and project management are having a significant impact on companies and governments (Soderlund & Maylor, 2012); and as such some authors have labelled society as being 'projectified' (Molloy & Stewart, 2013). Therefore, project management is "becoming increasingly important" to organisations (KPMG, 2013, p.9). However, despite rapid development in project management as a field of academic endeavour in recent years (Berggren & Soderlund, 2008), it lacks universally accepted theories for its research and practices as a body of knowledge (Soderlund, 2004), it is narrowly focused (Ludin & Soderholm, 1998; Crawford et al., 2006), and the pace of its research is too slow (Morris, 1994) and insufficient (Davis, 2014).

Moreover, research on project management has a scanty theoretical basis and lacks concepts (Shenhar & Dvir, 1996). The theories underpinning project management are relatively small, and these theories are too generic and lack empirical backing (Peckendorff, 1995; Partington, 1996). This has marginalised project management as a field for academics; critics argue that "the area is too applied, too closed to practice for academic study" (Soderlund & Maylor, 2012, p.691), and therefore there is a strong need to build and test models in order to get a theory for its academic research (Kwak & Anbari, 2009).

However, this view is in sharp contradiction with Soderlund's assertion that there is no universal theory that can be used in project management due to the fundamental differences that exists across projects, and that no project is similar to another (Soderlund, 2004). This is echoed by Klein et al. (2015), who assert that, due to the uniqueness of projects, there is the need for improvisation during project management. Soderlund's argument is premised on the categorisation of project management into two traditions: the engineering tradition and the social science tradition. The engineering tradition avoids uncertainties to achieve determinateness whilst the social science tradition assumes uncertainty to achieve indeterminateness, and the two traditions are incompatible. In view of this, Soderlund (2004) argues that there can be two separate

theories on project management, one being generic and the other being specific. The reason is that there are some elements of projects that are generic whilst other aspects are specific; for example, all projects have uniqueness, task complexity and time limitedness. The general aspect can have a generic theory or one theory that is applicable to all projects and then the other varied aspect can have another theory. However, Soderlund (2004) failed to prove either of these two theories.

The two views about projects and project management having a significant impact on companies and government and at the same time being marginalised by academia for its research have created a paradox between “the logic of impact” and “the logic of the academy” (Soderlund & Maylor, 2012, p.690) and, until this tension is resolved, project management will continue to face challenges as an academic field. Thus, “the debate whether ‘project management’ research fits into practice or academia is long standing” (Davis, 2014, p.189). This is echoed in the work of Ramazani and Jergeas (2015), whose study concludes that there is a gap between what is offered in project management education and the real world (practice). In fact, Pollack and Adler (2015) specifically argue that these two opposing positions about project management have caused diffusion in the field and, as a result, articles have been published in subject areas which relate to industries where projects are implemented. Klein et al. (2015) argue that this dichotomy has created complexity in applying theories, models and framework to the practice (Klein et al., 2015). Due to this, researchers have not reached consensus about a particular theory, method or approach to project management (Klein et al., 2015). This paradox about project management is perhaps the reason why there is no universally accepted definition of project and project management, or what should constitute universally accepted project management practices. The next section, 2.1.1, is devoted to the various definitions that have been provided by authors, and highlights which one(s) are applicable for this research and why.

### **2.1.1 Defining Project and Project Management**

The meanings of project and project management are well documented in project management literature. Different authors and different countries’ Body of Knowledge

(BoK) have attempted to define or describe project and project management but the literature indicates that they have not reached a consensus. The next sub-sections, discuss in detail the meanings and the main differences that exist between the two concepts by highlighting opposing views held by various authors and BoK, and common characteristics of the concepts. This section also provides a definition of the two concepts for this study.

### **2.1.1.1 Project**

Cleland and King (1983) describe a project as a complex effort to achieve a specific objective within a schedule and budget target and this typically cuts across organisational lines. This task is unique and is normally not repetitive within the organisation. Smith (1985) shares similar views and describes a project as a one-time unique endeavour to do something that has not been done that way before. Barnes (1989) defines a project as something which has a beginning and an end. The definitions provided by Cleland and King (1983), Smith (1985) and Barnes (1989) fail to recognise the purpose of embarking on projects and the human resources that are involved in them. This makes the definitions incomprehensible, hence, unable to cover the whole concept of the term 'project'.

On the other hand, Andersen et al. (1987) and Turner (1993, 1999) each provide a more comprehensive definition which covers the whole concept. These definitions do not only make provision for the purpose of projects but also the resources needed for the accomplishment of a project. Andersen et al. (1987) for instance define a project as a human endeavour which creates change, is limited in time and scope, has mixed goals and objectives, involves a variety of resources and is unique. Turner (1993) defines a project as "an endeavour in which human, material and financial resources are organized in a novel way, to undertake a unique scope of work, of given specification, within constraints of cost and time, so as to achieve beneficial change defined by quantitative and qualitative objectives" (Turner, 1993, p.35). In Turner's subsequent book, published in 1999, he simply defines a project as "an undertaking to deliver beneficial change" (1999, p.13). In this book, three main characteristics are

visible: a project is unique – no project before or after will be exactly the same; it is undertaken using novel processes – no project before or after will use exactly the same approach; and it is transient – it has a beginning and an end (Turner, 1999, p.19). In other words, Turner's (1999) definition implies that there are fundamental differences that exists across projects, and that no project is similar to another (Soderlund, 2004), or: if different projects have similar characteristics, this does not mean they are same and can be managed in the same way.

This study adopts the definition of Turner (1993) as it the most suitable. Its definition is comprehensive and it covers all the aspects of the Ghanaian government's projects. It is the most appropriate because the Ghanaian government's main purpose for embarking on projects is to add 'hard or soft' (as Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010 put it) benefits to its citizens (see GNA, 2012; Daily Guide, 2012; Ghanaweb, 2012). As pointed out in the previous chapter, Ghanaian government projects often bring about beneficial change to the country. This involves resources that bring about incremental changes to the country as a whole (see Ghana Government budget, 2012, 2015).

#### ***2.1.1.2 Project Management***

Many authors have provided different definitions of the concept of project management. However, to date, these definitions can be grouped into two main areas: (1) those who view project management as a science that follows specific models and management practices, and (2) those who do not view project management as a science that follows specific models and practices.

Taking the first group, Turner (1993), for instance, summarises project management as the art and science of converting vision into reality. Oisen (1971) describes project management as the application of a collection of tools and techniques such as CPM and matrix organisation to direct the use of diverse resources toward the accomplishment of a unique, complex, one-time task within time, cost and quality constraints. Each task requires a particular mix of these tools and techniques structured to fit the task environment and life cycle which is from conception to completion of a

task. The British Standard for project management BS6079 (1996) defines project management as planning, monitoring and controlling of all aspects of a project and the motivation of all those involved in it to achieve the project objectives on time and to the specific cost, quality and performance. Kersner (2009) defines project management as planning, organising, directing, and controlling of company resources for a relatively short-term objective that has been established to complete specific goals and objectives.

The Association of Project Management (APM) UK describes project management as planning, organising, monitoring and control of all aspects of a project and the motivation of all involved to achieve the project objectives safely and within agreed time, cost and performance criteria and the purpose is to manage change. According to the Project Management Institute (PMI, 2008) Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK Guide), project management is the application of knowledge, skills and techniques to execute projects effectively and efficiently. It's a strategic competency for organizations, enabling them to tie project results to business goals — and thus, better compete in their markets.

The theoretical foundation upon which this (PMI's) very definition is based has been criticised by Koskela and Howell (2002) as being implicit and obsolete. They further argue that the theoretical bases for its definitions and practices have serious deficiencies, because the understanding of the nature of a project is faulty. This accounts for why there are many models for project management practices, and calls for wider and more powerful theoretical foundations for project management definition and practices (Koskela & Howell, 2002). Despite the flaws in these definitions and the model of practices prescribed by this body, the PMI continues to dominate in project management. This study argues that this is so because there is no *perfect* alternative.

On the other hand, the views of the second group are in sharp contrast to those of the first group. For instance, Hogberg and Adamsson (1983) argue that project management is not an exact science following given laws or established rules. It is rather, a task which is largely based on human relations and the specific knowledge, experiences, character and cultural background of each individual. They cite the

differences in culture of America and Scandinavia by comparing their work ethics to back their claims. Whilst the former's work ethics is based on *individualism* – where the individual is seen as a hero, a champion for work well executed – the latter is based on *collectivism*, where group work and achievement is appreciated. Their assertion is drawn from earlier work of Hofstede (1983) that argues that the existing project management models being used by the USA are based on the American culture, and that the widespread of the American project management model over the world is as a result of their lead in development. Hofstede's (1983) work, which studied the mental programming of people from 53 geographical areas, shows that cultural differences affect the approach needed for successful project management in these countries.

Hofstede (1983) and Hogberg and Adamsson's (1983) view of culture in project management is backed by a relatively recent study conducted by Maumbe et al. (2008) on *Questioning the pace and pathway of the government development in Africa: A case study of South Africa's cape Gateway project*. The study found that governments in Africa are adopting e-government without considering its regional importance. The pace and manner in which the governments of Africa are making copy-cut from the developed world is not compatible with local environments, such as cultural and social class differences, and this partly accounts for e-government project failure in Africa, and South Africa in particular.

It can therefore be argued that defining project management as a science that requires a specific methodology is flawed, given that cultural differences across geographical locations can influence project performance. On the other hand, defining project management without set models, frameworks and management practices because of culture is not enough, in that project managers will not be able to manage projects efficiently without following any set models, frameworks and management practices. Given that neither of the two opposing views about project management is comprehensive enough to apply to this research, the study adapts the two views. Therefore, for this study, project management is defined as the use of management models, tools and practices accepted in the local socio-cultural management practices' context; to plan, organise, direct and co-ordinate an organisation's resources to

accomplish a task with a defined start and end date to achieve specific goals and objectives. This definition is applicable in Ghana's situation: the Ghanaian government projects involve all the project management practices outlined – they follow project management practices and models prescribed by the World Bank in the 'project life-cycle for developing countries', as discussed in chapter one (World Bank, 2013). However, because management practices differ from country to country due to the cultural differences that exist across different countries (Hofstede, 1983; Hogberg & Adamsson, 1983; Maumbe et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012), and Ghana is no exception, it can be argued that this definition fits this study.

From the various definitions provided, it can be argued that project management (PM) and project are not the same. However, they share certain common characteristics such as time limitedness, predefined requirement, and the use of resources. Project management can be considered as a subset of project (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996), in that project management is the means by which the aims of a project are accomplished (Ika, 2009; Young et al., 2012). In other words, project management is a means to an end (the end is the project's goals). The aim of a project is often aligned to long-term strategic goals of the organisation whereas PM is aligned with the short-term goal of delivering the product of the project (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996; Savolainen et al., 2012).

## **2.2 THE CONCEPT OF PROJECT FAILURE**

This section discusses the concept of project failure. The aim of this research is to find causes and effects of project failure and therefore, this section provides the various schools of thought about what constitute project failure. This highlights the extent to which projects fail in the world and developing countries, and Ghana in particular.

The main rationale is to paint the broader picture of project failure within which the Ghanaian government project failure framework that will subsequently be discussed in section 2.5 can be better appreciated.

### 2.2.1 Defining Project Failure

Over the years, a number of companies and governments all over the world have witnessed project failure (e.g. McManus & Wood-Harper, 2008; Ruuska & Teiglanad, 2009; Liu et al., 2011; Havila et al., 2013; Patanakul, 2014). This has cost companies and governments huge sums of money. For example, a study conducted in 2001 by KPMG found that 56% of firms had to write-off at least one Information Technology (IT) project in 2001 as a failure (Electric News Business, 2002). The study, which covered 134 listed companies in the UK, US, Africa, Australia, and Europe, indicated that the average losses incurred as a result of these failures was estimated to be about €12.5m, with the single biggest write-off valued at almost €210m. A nationwide survey in New Zealand in 2010 found that two-thirds of organisations have experienced at least one project failure in the previous year, thereby losing approximately NZ\$15M on the average (KPMG, 2013). The same study shows that more than half of the respondents did not achieve their projected project results. A relatively recent study by the same firm shows that “only 33% of projects were delivered on budget” (KPMG, 2013, p.18). The study also indicates that only 29% and 35% of projects were delivered on time and scope respectively. By comparing the two studies, there is a clear indication that project failure is on the increase, as indicated in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Nationwide survey on Project Failure in New Zealand

	2010	2012
Consistently on budget	48%	33%
Consistently on time	36%	29%
Consistently delivering stated deliverables	59%	35%

Source: KPMG (2013, p.19)

A study into 214 projects shows that only one in eight information technology projects can be considered as truly successful (McManus & Wood-Harper, 2008). It was reported in the Guardian that the UK has wasted over US\$4 billion on failed IT projects from 2000 to 2008 (Asay, 2008). A study in 2009 by Standish Group International into projects in US found that the overall project failure rate was 72% (SGI, 2009). In fact, IS/IT project failures are many and this has motivated practitioners and researchers to

investigate the problems behind such failure (Patanakul, 2014). Health and Information Systems in South Africa, Information System (IS) projects in China, and almost all World Bank-funded projects in Africa are either total or partial failures (Heeks, 2002, 2005). An example is the World Bank's Chad-Cameroon Pipeline project. The project, which cost US\$4.2 billion, was abandoned in 2008 (Fabian & Amir, 2011). In fact, deviations in projects and project management (which is a typical example of project failure) have become normal in organisations (Pinto, 2014). In the case of construction projects, cost overrun has become a common problem not only in developing countries but all over the world (Cheng, 2014). For example, a study into the impact and sustainability of e-government services in Nadu, India, found that, after one year of successful operations, it had to be abandoned because the project was unable to maintain the necessary levels of local political and administrative support to remain institutionally viable (Kumar & Best, 2006). Reports about World Bank-funded projects in Africa show that they have witnessed either total failure or partial failure (as Heeks, 2002, 2005 puts it). Reports in Ghana indicate that Ghana lost US\$128million through ineffective project implementation between 2009 and 2011 (Daily Graphic, 2011; Amponsah, 2013).

These works show that project failure is high; however, these reported failures might not necessarily be so, depending on who is defining what constitute project failure (Lyytinen & Hirschheim, 1988; Agarwal & Rathod, 2006; Procaccino & Verner, 2006; Ika, 2009) or who is doing the evaluating (Carvalho, 2014), and the timing of the definition or evaluation of the performance of the project in question (Heeks, 2002, 2006) or the criteria used in measuring project success (Amir & Pinnington, 2014). For instance, a study conducted by Ruuska and Teiglanad (2009) on Bygga Villa (Sweden) identified satisfaction of the individual stakeholder's needs as a subjective component of project success. In their analysis of five cancelled software projects, Ahonen and Savolainen (2010) found that one of the projects was classed as successful by the supplier (performing organisation) but considered as a failure by the customer (owner). The supplier considered it as successful because it was able to meet the project's baseline but the customer never used the new system. Therefore, what is considered as failure might not be viewed as such by other set(s) of stakeholders or individuals assessing the

performance of the project. A more recent study by Davis indicates that the factors used to determine project success are subjective of different stakeholders' perception of what constitutes project failure/success (Davis, 2014). In fact, what constitutes project success or failure "depends on the issues of definition, measurement and interpretation" – thus, it is the practitioner who determines what constitutes this failure/success (Molloy & Stewart, 2013, p.81). Some authors specifically assert that project success is a matter of perception (Baccarini, 1999; Flvbjerg et al. 2003).

Nevertheless, the studies' of Heeks (2002, 2006) challenge the subjectivity of project failure to some extent. The studies contend that, if a project fails at the initiation phase, that project could be classed as a total failure. In other words, if an initiated project is abandoned before implementation, such an outcome could be defined relatively objectively. The work of Puri et al. (2000) can be cited as a clear example here. The study concluded that, after a year of planning, analysis and design, the information system which was proposed by India's Indira Gandhi Conservation Monitoring Centre to be a national information provider based on a set of core environmental information systems had to be abandoned. Another example is the Senior High School (SHS) educational reform project initiated in 2007 by the Ghanaian government to extend the three-year (3) duration of senior secondary education to four (4) years. After only one and half years of implementation, it was abandoned (Imani, 2007, GNA, 2012). If the context of project failure is subjective and/or relatively objective, what then is project failure, and how can projects be classed as failures or successes?

The extant literature has attempted to define or explain what constitutes project failure over the years; nevertheless, the literature indicates that a consensus has not been reached. There has been a traditional definition that is centred on the project baseline, otherwise known as project constraints or what Atkinson (1999) famously terms as the 'Iron Triangle'. This definition does not view project success/failure beyond the *product or delivery* stage. The traditional definition restricts project performance to only the managerial phase of a project (Abednego & Ogunlana, 2006). However, recent developments in project management practices, and authors and practitioners' awareness of the existence of numerous stakeholders associated with projects,

especially public or government projects (Patanakul, 2014), have caused a paradigm shift from the traditional definition of project success/failure towards after-delivery stage or post-delivery phase to the impact stage (Todorovic et al., 2015). Despite this paradigm shift in the definition of project success/failure, this change is not visible in some projects such as software development projects (Savolainen et al., 2012). For example, even though the study conducted by Toor and Ogunlana (2010) indicated that the management of Thailand's mega construction projects were conscious about the traditional success criteria factors, issues such as safety, efficiency, and conformance to stakeholder satisfaction were dominant factors.

Advocates of the traditional definition of project failure such as de Wit (1988), Turner (1996), Kappelman et al. (2006), El Emama and Koru (2008), and Anda et al. (2009) have concluded in their studies that project success/failure should be judged on whether the project has met the set time, cost and requirement. Proponents of this definition contend that a project is said to have failed when it fails to meet one and/or all the triple constraints. However, de Wit (1988), Turner (1996) and Wateridge (1998) did not rule out existence of possible success/failure criteria.

Other writers argue that project failure should go beyond the traditional axiom that has been postulated by authors such as de Wit (1988), Pinto and Slevin (1988), Turner (1996), Kappelman et al. (2006), El Emama and Koru (2008), and Anda et al. (2009). For example, Wideman and Shenhar (1996) argue that there have been some instances whereby projects were unable to meet baseline time, budget, and requirements, yet those projects were still considered successful; thus, it is not enough to assess project performance on the traditional key performance indicators (KPIs) (as Toor & Ogunlana, 2010 prefer to call them). The widely cited Sydney Opera House project supports this assertion. Despite the project taking 15 years to complete, at 14 times over budget, it is considered an engineering masterpiece (Jugdev & Muller, 2005; Ika, 2009; Savolainen et al., 2012). In software development projects, the traditional approach can be strongly questioned. In these projects, the requirement(s) are almost certain to change before the actual commencement of the project but rarely are

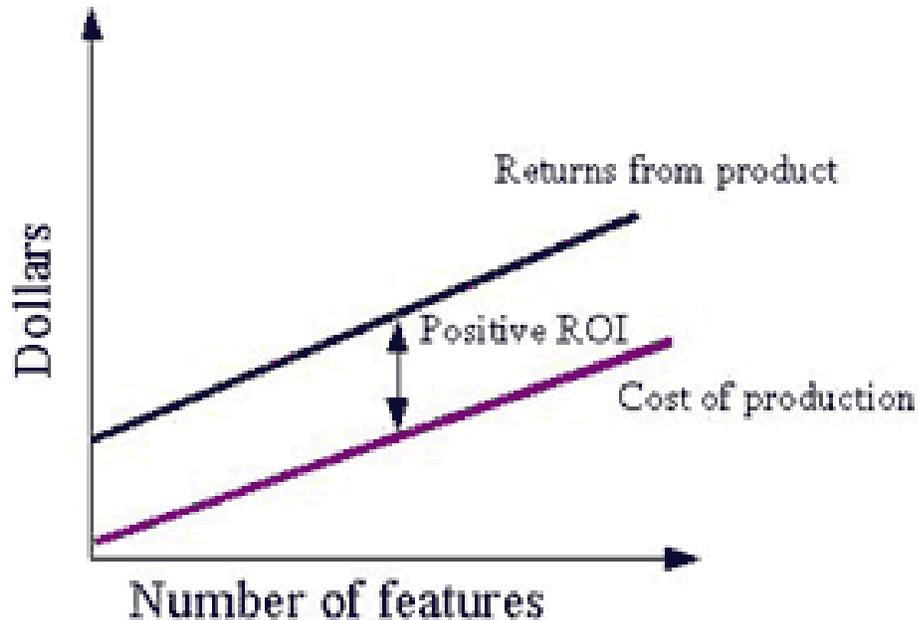
estimates of schedule and cost adjusted before the start and this, therefore, will automatically cause deviation in schedule and cost (de Bakker et al., 2010).

In the work of Meredith and Mantel (2002) and McManus and Wood-Harper (2008), there is a total deviation away from the traditional perspective to stakeholder perspective. In this view, project failure or success is based on stakeholder satisfaction. In other words, a successful project is one that meets stakeholders' satisfaction. This implies that any project that fails to satisfy stakeholder(s) is to be considered as a failure, although the project might have met all the three baselines of the project. The International Project Management Association (IPMA) adds that project success/failure should be assessed from the stakeholder's point of view (IPMA, 2006). Further, project failure or success is therefore dependent on how stakeholders are managed and failure to manage them properly means the project is bound to fail (Mulenburg, 2007; Bourne, 2008; Haughey, 2008; Thompson, 2009). However, satisfying all stakeholders associated with a particular project is extremely difficult due to the numerous amounts of them, especially in public sector projects (Jensen, 2001; McManus & Wood-Harper, 2008). Nonetheless, these stakeholders should be satisfied to a certain degree, or the majority of them must be satisfied (McManus & Wood-Harper, 2008).

Mangione (2003) in his article, *Software Project Failure: The Reasons, The Costs*, comes out with a very interesting but contentious argument. This takes an economic position in the definition of what should constitute project failure. The literature contends that economics determine the success of any software project and its value to a company, in that the amount of money spent on development of the software determines the cost of the asset and, as such, the return generated by the product is its value. It posits further that the difference between the returns on the investment made and the cost incurred on that investment is called Return On Investment (ROI). Thus, the difference between cost of investment and value of returns is termed ROI. Therefore, a project is said to have failed if the ROI is negative and successful if the ROI is positive. This postulation, therefore, implies that not meeting the project constraints or not satisfying the stakeholders are not what constitute project failure but rather project failure is seen as the difference between the cost of finishing the project

and the value of the project's deliverables. The figure below throws more light on the theory.

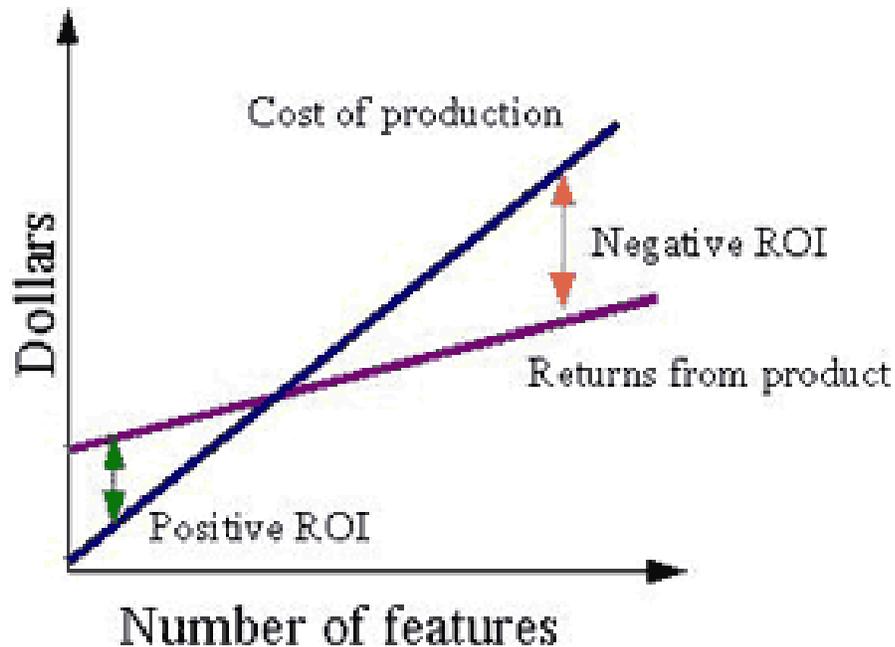
Figure 2 Return On Investment (ROI)



Source: Mangione (2003, p.1)

The ROI of a product is the difference between its cost of production and its return. If the return is greater than the cost of production, then it is said to possess a positive ROI. Therefore, organisations must consider the cost of adding features to a product. Figure 2 above shows a software project whose returns outpace the cost of production, thus producing a positive ROI. Therefore, from the figure above, the project is successful according to this definition of what constitutes project failure proposed by Mangione (2003).

Figure 3. Return On Investment (ROI)



Source: Mangione (2003, p.2)

Figure 3 depicts a product that initially has a positive ROI, but whose added features cost (marginal cost) more than the amount of returns generated by the features. Thus, this initially profitable product becomes a drag on the company. ROI is said to be negative if it costs more to produce a product than it generates.

Even though Mangione (2003) makes a good argument on the economic perspective, the definition fails to recognize that organizations and governments work within time, budget and requirements, and as such awarding projects to performing companies and agents without giving them any set timeframe, budget to work with, and meeting set standards for their end-users is not possible. Hence, failure to recognise project constraints makes the economic perspective argument fundamentally flawed because it is in contradiction with the very definition of a project. Secondly, this approach fails to recognize that various projects have other motives apart from increasing shareholders value and as such the motive of embarking on any project should also be considered in assessing its success or failure, and not only the economic value. For instance, if the motive of a project is to serve as a social responsibility towards its immediate environment or community, or the project is to add 'soft' value to the citizenry of a nation or local community (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Hermano et al., 2013); this implies that

the project might not necessarily bring any quantifiable economic value to its shareholders. Further, there are other projects which do not have shareholders but have other stakeholders, and therefore, this concept will not be applicable. A typical example is government sector projects – on which this study is focused. Moreover, the argument is centred on the capitalist economy which makes it myopic and inapplicable in other socialist states. Therefore, the proposed ROI as a yardstick to measure project success/failure is not comprehensive. Although, there are many flaws with the economics perspective, the notion of adding value to companies and its shareholders have been emphasised by previous and ensuing writers (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996; Cooke-Davies, 2002; Kersner & Saladis, 2009; Kersner, 2010). However, they did not restrict it to only increasing shareholders' value, but, also stakeholders as echoed in Salazar-Aramayo et al. (2013).

Atkinson (1999) shares the view of Wideman and Shenher (1996) that project failure should go beyond the triangle stage. Atkinson (1999) contends that to judge projects' performance at the 'iron triangle' phase is not sufficient. Like De Lone et al. (1992), Meyer (1994), and Toor and Ogunlana (2010), he posits that project success/failure should go beyond the time, cost, and requirement phase to include the post-delivery phase in order to look at the product phase. In view of this, Atkinson (1999) adds three more ways in which projects should be assessed. This is called *The Square Route Framework*. This is fully discussed under the theoretical framework in sub-section 2.3.3.

## **2.2.2 The Distinction between Project Failure and Project Management Failure**

Another debate worth noting is the project failure and project management failure distinction. A sharp distinction between the traditional definition and recent school of thought has been made in the project failure discussion. Proponents of this distinction contend that there is a clear distinction between project failure/success and project management failure, and therefore it is not valid to assess the performance of a project using the same criteria (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996; Ika, 2009; Young et al., 2012; Salazar-Aramayo et al., 2013).

Project management failure is linked to the *iron triangle* or the triple constraints whilst project failure is linked to the impact of the project on the client or the end users of the project deliverables (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996) and/or the benefits that the organisation receives from the project (Serra & Kunc, 2015). Munns and Bjeirmi (1996) argue that there have been situations where projects have failed to meet the baselines, yet such projects were still considered to be successful after a period of time, based on the benefits gained from their outputs. The premise upon which their assertion/conclusion is based is that authors have confused themselves with the differences between project and project management definitions and their purposes. They agree that these two terms are mutually dependent and overlap, yet there is a clear distinction between them. A project can be considered as achieving of specific objective, which involves a series of activities and tasks which consumes resources that is to be completed within a specific set time span. On the other hand, project management is the process of controlling the achievement of project objectives (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996). Thus, project management involves the use of a company's resources to manage projects by the use of tools and techniques (Serra & Kunc, 2015). Whereas a project looks at the long-term benefits to the company (client/end user), project management looks at the short-term goal that will contribute to achieving the long-term goal(s) of the company that the project seeks to achieve. Munns and Bjeirmi (1996) contend that the long-term goal of the project is to bring about return on investment, profitability, competition and marketability. These goals could be affected or could be influenced by: objective, project administration, third parties, relations with clients, human parties, contracting, legal agreements, politics, efficiency, conflicts and profits.

On the other hand, project management deals only with goal setting and the implementation of the goals, and therefore project management becomes a subset of the wider context of the project (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996). Thus, the goal of project management is to ensure the success of the project (Berssanti & Carvalho, 2014). Project management can be influenced or affected by: inadequate basis for projects, wrong people as project managers, unsupportive top management, inadequately defined tasks, lack of project management techniques, misuse of management techniques, project closedown not planned, and lack of commitment to the project

(Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996). As a result, success is assessed by using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which is an adherence to budgets, schedule and technical specifications (Bryde, 2005).

The ultimate aim of project management is to achieve the triple constraints; hence, failure to reach any such targets is called project management failure (Jugdev & Muller, 2005; Salazar-Aramayo et al., 2013). On the other hand, project failure also means failure to achieve the long-term goals of the client company or the end-users not being satisfied with usage of the deliverables (Ika, 2009; Savolainen et al., 2012; Salazar-Aramayo et al., 2013). In other words, project failure is tied to long-term strategic goals of the parent company whilst project management failure is tied to the iron triangle. This is echoed in an attempt by Serraa and Kunc (2015) to analyse the Benefits Realisation Management influence on project success in Brazil, the UK and USA. Patanakul and Shenhar (2012) link this to the contribution of the project to the business strategy (which is often long term). They analyse success from two dimensions – project management performance, which is linked directly to budget, schedule and requirement goals, and the benefits accrued from the deliverables of the project (thus, long-term and wider goals).

Although their distinction between project management failure and project failure sounds like one of the best definitions of project failure/success concepts, the overemphasis of the goal of the project to the client's long-term strategic plan is subject to further debate. It can be argued that not all projects' goals are directly linked to the long-term strategic plans of the companies. Some projects are carried out by companies as a 'force' on them from external forces which might not necessarily be part of the company's long-term strategic plan. For instance, if a company is forced by government regulators or environmental activists to assist its immediate environment, it has to embark on a project that might not necessarily bring any long-term benefits. In this case, the company could have embarked on a different project which could have served it better than such 'forced' project. One may argue that it will still serve the long-term goal of survival as the company has to meet its social responsibility in order to survive. However, this argument could be defeated by asserting that the company will not

actually benefit in real terms, as the benefits will only be directed towards other stakeholders at the expense of the parent company. Such projects could even be detrimental to a company's progress and profits.

Further, this is arguably the best definition or constituent of the project failure/success classification debate. However, there is a fundamental error with the terms used. Advocates of the project management success/failure and project success/failure dichotomy make it clear that, whilst the former is tied to the triple constraints, the latter is tied to the product of the project. If that is the case, then this study argues that the terms used for the latter (project success/failure) should be changed to *Product Success/Failure*. Therefore, the terms should be changed to project management success/failure (tied to the iron triangle), product success/failure (tied to product success) and a combination of the two called *project Success/Failure*. Further, both project management success/failure and product success/failure should be a sub-set of project success. This study further argues that what constitutes project success is a project that is able to meet both project management success and product success, and a project is a failure if it fails to meet either both or one of these.

## **2.3 GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE**

This research is restricted to Ghanaian government projects and therefore there is the need to discuss government project failure. This will help the researcher to appreciate government project failure across the world and how this sits in this study. It is on record that developed economies all over the world have had major infrastructural development, which means massive projects have occurred at some point in time in their development history (see Eichengreen, 1994; Eichengreen, 1996; Eichengreen & Vazquez, 1999). In fact, "project-based work has become a critical component of global industrial activity" (Pinto, 2013, p.643), and as such projects are inevitable in development. The post-World War II period saw high levels of economic growth, mainly in the Western world. This growth, which has been variously named as *post-World War II economic expansion*, *post-war economic boom*, the *long boom*, *Golden Age of*

*Capitalism*, etc., saw states embark on major strategic projects to facilitate their plans (Eichengreen, 1994; Eichengreen, 1996; Eichengreen & Vazquez, 1999). The shift away from agricultural development strategy pre-World War II to science development through Research and Development (R&D) post-World War II up to date that has made the United States of America a global superpower was administered through various projects. Clear examples include government-funded research projects instituted in universities - for postgraduate students to conduct research to enhance economic and defence development, for example, the Manhattan Project, which was specifically aimed at nuclear weapons (Alic, 2008).

More recent growth witnessed in certain countries, especially in emerging economies, indicates that government or public projects are indispensable. The introduction of an eGovernment system to facilitate government transactions is a typical example of how important these projects can be – it helps government(s) to use technology, especially web-based applications, to enhance access to and efficiently deliver government information and services (Brown & Brudney, 2001; UN & ASP, 2002; Kumar & Best, 2006), to establish relationships between governments and its citizens, other governments, and businesses (Means & Schneider, 2000), to use ICT facilities such as the internet and the web, in the form of databases, networking, discussion support, multimedia, automation, tracking and tracing, and personal identification technologies (Jaeger, 2003; Luk, 2009), and to facilitate communication during the implementation of strategic national developments (Gichoya, 2005). Even the privatised and capitalist economic growth witnessed by many countries was initiated and regulated by various governments through projects (see Eichengreen, 1994).

This indicates that governments over the world play a key role in the delivery of public projects. One may be tempted to argue that no country will be able to develop without engaging in public projects. These projects are normally funded by the government in the form of tax-payers' money, multilateral companies (e.g. Toor & Ogunlana, 2010), NGOs, and public-private partnerships (e.g. Abednego & Ogunlana, 2006; Ruuskaa & Teigland, 2009), World Bank (Fabian & Amir, 2011). The focus is often geared towards enhancing the life of the general populace in the form of 'physical' or 'soft' benefits

(Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Hermano et al., 2013). However, some of these projects have witnessed failure of some sort, and this failure is becoming more common and part and parcel of every government of late; ranging from the developed world to the developing world (e.g. Espiner, 2007; Kobie, 2009; Savolainen et al., 2012). In fact, in some projects, such as ID projects, failure has become a rule rather than an exception (Ika et al., 2012; Hermano et al., 2013). In the case of IT projects, even 'successful' projects run well over budget and behind schedule (Pinto, 2013).

One report shows that, even in a developed country like the UK, seven out of 10 governments IT projects fail (Espiner, 2007). The chief information officer of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Mr Harley, noted that only 30 per cent of government IT projects and programs are successful (Espiner, 2007). The abandoned UK ID card project is a typical indication of the extent to which projects have been failing in the government sector (Kobie, 2009). The Royal Academy of Engineering and British Computer Society (2004) found that 84% of public sector projects ended up in some sort of failure. After three years of implementation of a benefit scheme that involved the Department of Social Security, the computer company ICL, and the British Post Office, it was abandoned at the cost of £300 million (The Economist, 2002). A New Zealand government study concluded that 59% of its projects had problems and 3% were considered to be total failures (SIMPL/NZIER, 2000). One-eighth of New Zealand's yearly budget, in the region of \$N100M, was spent on the police's IS development project, which was abandoned in 1999. The question is why do these projects fail?

In this research, government projects, otherwise known as public projects, are defined as any projects that are undertaken or initiated by the government of a country, be it at the national level or local level.

As pointed out in chapter one, there are numerous reported cases of the Ghanaian government's projects failing and, because this study is centred on this topic, the next sub-section discusses in detail the state of project failure in such projects. This will provide the platform by which to understand and appreciate the state of the problem being investigated.

### **2.3.1 Ghanaian Government Project Failure**

As stated in an in chapter one, projects failure rate in Ghanaian government projects is very high. One notable area of this failure is in the housing sector. Studies and statistics show that there are insufficient houses for Ghanaian citizens and as such most of these citizens 'sleep rough' in kiosks, tents, containers, shops, offices, etc. (homeless people) (Boamah, 2010). The houses that are available are mostly owned by private individuals and housing-estate companies, and they are unaffordable for ordinary Ghanaians (GSS, 2002; Boamah, 2010). Estimates show that Ghana's housing deficit is over 1m houses (HFC Bank, 2002; GSS, 2005b; Mahama & Antwi, 2006; Imani, 2009; Boamah, 2010). Due to the magnitude of the housing problem, various government regimes have attempted to address the problem. For instance, the NPP administration, which held office between 2000 and 2008, proposed 'affordable housing units' to solve the housing deficit problem in the country (Klutse, 2009). The main purpose of this project was to help those poor people living in a very deplorable settlement, make the capital city and other major cities attractive (Amponsah, 2010), and also to create employment, especially for women (Klutse, 2009). However, the project was abandoned soon after it started (Klutse, 2009).

In an attempt by the current government (NDC) to address this housing problem, a similar project was proposed and started but this time with a slight focus in terms of the target beneficiaries. Whilst the previous government had focused solely on the general populace, the new government focused on the security personnel. The project was estimated to cost US\$10 billion (Imani, 2010). The target was to build 300,000 houses over five years, starting with 200,000; 30,000 of the initial 200,000 were to be built for security personnel in the country (Citifmonline, 2012). Formal approval was given on 23<sup>rd</sup> of July, 2010, and announced in parliament. The project was to form a partnership between Ghana and a South Korean company (STX Korea). The Korean company was supposed to provide the funding needed to carry out the project. However, the project had to be abandoned after parliament had approved it, lands had been given out to developers, and a sod had been cut by the president, Evans Atta Mills, on 27<sup>th</sup> January,

2011 (Daily Guide, 2012). On 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, the Minister of Employment and Social Welfare, E.T. Mensah, announced that the government had to re-possess all 15 sites that had been handed over to STX Korea (Ghanaweb, 2012). A 2012 report from the Ghana News Agency (GNA) indicated that the government and its sector ministry (the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing) were making efforts to reactivate the abandoned housing project (GNA, 2012); however, there is no report that shows this has actually happened.

In education, project failure is not different. Despite the improvements in education after the colonial era as a result of World Bank and IMF-supported projects (see World Bank, 2004 for example); the sector has witnessed project failure in educational reforms over the years. Many educational reform projects have attempted to solve the educational problems since the first Republic of Ghana in 1961 (Nyarko, 2011). These include: Kwapong 1974 and Dzobo 1972/1987 educational reforms. Despite the huge sums of money being spent on these projects, the sector continues to suffer from many setbacks. It has been rightly criticised by commentators and academia for not doing enough to solve the educational problem (Nyarko, 2011). Results from the 2011 Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) showed that 50% of students had failed (Nyarko, 2011), implying that these reforms have not been able to solve the problem they were intended to solve. It can therefore be argued that these projects are not achieving their targets, as Atkinson (1999) postulates in his square root project success/failure framework.

A more recent failed project is the abandonment of the four-year SHS education system project. In 2002, a committee of 29 members headed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Education – Winneba (UNEW), Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah, were mandated to review the education system (Ghanaweb, 2015). The report led to the four-year SHS project which was implemented in 2007. At this time, the Ghanaian government, under the administration of NPP, then commenced the educational reform project to change the Senior Secondary Schools to Senior High Schools, with the main change being the study duration time. The purpose was to extend the three-year duration to four years (Daily Graphic, 2008). In 2009, after one and half years of

operation, it was formally announced that the project would be abandoned from the 2010/11 academic year.

Another high-profile project worth discussing is the National Identification System (NIS) project. This was a project to issue ID cards for all nationals and foreign nationals residing in Ghana. It was set up in 2008 under the National Identification Authority (NIA). The ID card project has proven to be a failure as it has failed to fulfil its objective. First of all, the fundamental purpose of the card being used as a national ID card remained unfulfilled. A 2011 report indicated that issuing of the ID cards had stopped and the very few that had been issued were not accepted as proof of ID in banks (NIA, 2011). The most discouraging part of this was the fact that the Electoral Commission; which is a government institution, had registered and issued new voter ID cards for the December 2012 general election. This registration and issuing of new biometric voter ID cards for the December 2012 election was a clear indication of the failure of the National ID project (see Abissath, 2012). Thus, this national ID card was meant to serve also as a voter' ID card and therefore issuing of different voter ID card implies that, the project has failed.

Another notable project that has witnessed failure is the Ghana @50 projects. In 2007, Ghana celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence from colonial rule. To commemorate the occasion and to provide along-lasting legacy, the anniversary, among other objectives, earmarked various projects, which included the building of Jubilee Parks in all 10 regional capitals, construction of toilets in all local communities, and the building of 140 Golden Jubilee Kindergartens throughout the country (Daily Guide, 2011; Central Newspaper, 2012). However, reports indicate that most of these projects have either been abandoned or are not meeting the required standard and purpose of their usage. One clear example is the total abandonment of the Ghana @50 toilets (Daily Guide, 2011; Central Newspaper, 2012) and the Jubilee parks (Daily Guide, 2011). With regard to the toilet project, not even a single one of them is in use, and they have been left in the bushes and under the usage of squatters and 'area boys' (gangsters) (Daily Guide, 2011). The question is: what accounts for all these failures? The next section therefore discusses the various reasons that have been cited for

project failure in the past. This will serve as a guide to the findings and recommendations of this study.

## **2.4 CAUSES OF PROJECT FAILURE**

Causes of project failure has been one of the most discussed and talked about topic in recent years by the academia, practising managers, governments, and social commentators all over the world, and as a result there is a body of extant literature devoted to this discussion. A number of studies conducted by these writers indicate that there are a number of causes of project failure all over the world. For instance, Frimpong et al. (2003) and Long et al. (2004) identified 26 and 64 causes of project failure respectively.

Projects are unique due to the fundamental differences that exist across them, and no project is similar to another (Soderlund, 2004; Mir & Pinnington, 2014). Due to this, the causes are often unique to certain industries and the systems in the countries where they are carried out (Amid et al., 2012), geographical location (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010), and socio-cultural settings (Mukabeta et al., 2008). However, research indicates that there are common causes that run through the project management literature. These include: expertise or knowledge (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009), funding (Fabian & Amir, 2011), planning (Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011), resources (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009), communication (Ochieg & Price, 2010), scope change (Kaliba et al., 2009), and socio-cultural factors (Maube et al., 2008). The next sub-section discusses these common causes in detail.

### **2.4.1 Communication**

Studies over the years have proved that effective communication is vital in the project environment – it helps to avoid duplication of information, and also provides all the necessary parties involved in the project with relevant, timely information for effective and efficient delivery of the project (Souder et al., 1997; Ernst, 2002; Chan et al., 2004;

Cooper et al., 2004; Thamhain, 2004; Close, 2006; Raymond & Bergeron, 2008; Weijermars, 2009; Wong et al., 2009; Wi & Jung, 2010). Therefore, failure to communicate effectively prior to and during project implementation is a recipe for disaster.

In the words of Ochieg and Price, internal and external communication is the invisible glue that holds dislocated multicultural project team together (Ochieg & Price, 2010). Therefore, if there is miscommunication, projects are bound to fail (Frese & Sauter, 2003). Frese and Sauter (2003) attribute project failure to four issues: lack of efficient internal communication links, lack of efficient external communication links, lack of responsive decision-making and lack of effective teamwork. The first two reasons are directly linked to communication and the last two are indirectly linked to communication. Thus, the first two involve internal and external communication among various stakeholders of a project whilst the latter two cannot take place without communication. Lack of responsive decision-making and lack of effective teamwork are indirectly associated with communication. There is normally lack of response to decisions if the management involved fails to communicate with their subordinates or superiors appropriately, whilst lack of teamwork normally occurs when team members fail to take part in decision-making or fail to communicate whatever goes on in the team or in the project. Communication is seen as a panacea to project success and lack of it is a recipe for disaster. Lack of good communication can easily turn a corporate strategy or an Information System (IS) project into a modern day Tower of Babel (Frese & Sauter, 2003). This implies that there will be a state of confusion among project team members and other key stakeholders associated with the project and, if this happens, the project is bound to fail.

During the implementation of project(s), there can be schedule, cost and performance alteration, hence, new data on the project, but this alterations mean nothing if the right communication is not carried out among the stakeholders who matter (Bourne, 2009). Bourne (2009) argues that the challenge faced by schedulers and controllers in a project team is communication and not control.

The findings of Ochieg and Price (2010) are a confirmation of Bourne's assertions – in that effective communication in a cross-cultural team in a multicultural project is the prelude to project success. The study, which interviewed 20 senior project managers in Kenya and the UK (10 in Kenya and 10 in the UK) about managing cross-cultural communication in a multicultural construction project team, shows that both Kenyan and UK participants agreed that effective communication on projects can be aided by early establishment of clear lines of responsibility and processes to resolve the project team members' disputes or issues. This early establishment of a clear line of responsibility can only happen through an appropriate communication channel and, if this does not happen at the right time, projects are bound to fail. The findings show that effective communication is the key to manage project expectations, misconceptions, and misgivings on multicultural projects teams. For example, good communication strategies are primary in establishing, cultivating and maintaining strong working relationships on heavy construction engineering projects (Ochieg & Price, 2010). This implies that, without communication, disputes and misconception cannot be resolved, thereby leaving these problems to escalate, and this eventually causes projects to fail.

One may question the study's generalisability due to the small sample size; however, the experience of the interviewees (each had at least 10 years of experience in the field being studied) makes the findings more reliable.

Lack of communication in some circumstances could lead to conflict in a project's management. This is manifested in the study of conflict among project partners by Ruuska and Teigland (2009). The study concluded that lack of communication leads to conflicts in projects and eventual project failure. In the study, it was found that almost all the other problems that lead to conflict in a project were rooted in a lack of communication. For instance, failure of the various partners of the project to communicate their goals to each other properly led to the management making a project plan without incorporating other members' goals into the plan. Secondly, the project had no charter because of this same problem. Thirdly, the project manager failed to communicate clearly with various partners because he lacked broker skills. This shows that communication is a key issue if a project is to be successful

### **2.4.2 Planning**

Planning is one of the key elements of every project and failure to plan clearly can cause a project to fail. This is one of the most common problems that bring about project failure. If project deliverable and how these would be achieved are not clearly outlined in the project planning phase, the project is likely to fail (Mochal, 2005; Pinto, 2013). In other words, projects that start without understanding the full content or the project baseline/constraints of what the project seeks to achieve are susceptible to failure. In fact, Pinto (2013) specifically traces the root cause of project failure to the poor initial planning phase of projects.

Research shows that ineffective planning accounts for most project failure. For instance, in construction projects in Nigeria, studies indicate that planning and scheduling account for delays (Odeyinka & Yusif, 1997). A similar study identified this same problem in the Iranian construction industry (Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011). With regard to large construction projects, the same reason was found to account for project delays (Assaf & AL-Hejji, 2006). A survey study into causes of delay in construction projects from contractors and consultants' point of view also indicates that improper planning accounts for delays (Odeh & Battaineh, 2002).

### **2.4.3 Socio- cultural factors**

Research on cross-cultural management indicates that Western management concepts, models and practices are incompatible with other cultural and social settings (Blunt, 1980; Hofstede, 1983; Hogberg & Adamsson, 1983; Adler, 1983; Blunt & Jones 1997; Dia Mamadou, 1991; Lubatkin et al., 1999; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003). This indicates that management concepts do not have cross-cultural validity (Muriithi & Crawford, 2003) and as such adopting management practices that are not country-specific can contribute to project failure. The work of Hofstede (1983) on the mental programming of people from 53 geographical areas shows that cultural differences affect the approach needed for successful project management in these countries.

In relation to project management, this is not different. Studies on project failure in developing countries show that the fundamental reason often cited for project failure is culture (Heeks, 2002; Saad et al., 2002; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Alsakini et al., 2004; Maube et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012). In other words, the political institutions, legality, identity, and economic policies of different countries could be the same, but there are informal values, attitudes and behaviours which are intrinsic in citizens that differ from one country to another and these informal characteristics are formed based on shared cultural values (Hofstede, 1983). Typical examples of such cultural values include relationships being more important than task, one's extended family offering protection in exchange for loyalty, learning being considered as a one-time process only, emphasis being on tradition, material success and progress are considered dominant values in society (Hofstede, 1991).

The importance of socio-cultural differences across national borders in the execution of projects cannot therefore be overlooked. For instance, studies have shown that political, sociological and psychological behaviours of citizens differ from country to country (Hofstede, 1983), and as such project management models and practices do not have cross-cultural validity (Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Alsakini et al., 2004; Maube et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012). These studies point out that the socio-cultural settings of a country influence project performance (Hogberg & Adamsson, 1983; Heeks, 2002; Saad et al., 2002; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Alsakini et al., 2004; Maube et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012). Project failure in developing countries can be blamed on the context of the design and usage (design-actuality gap) (Heeks, 2002). That is, the design and usage are not compatible. This is revisited under causes of project failure in developing countries in sub-section 2.5.1 to throw more light on the subject matter.

#### **2.4.4 Scope Change**

This is one of the main areas that contribute to project failure. Most project research highlights that scope change is a major contributing factor for project failure (Kaliba et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2011). In most projects, requirements are either altered before the commencement of work or altered halfway through the project's life cycle, but rarely are

these changes effected by the completion date. This is more evident in IS project management (Ahonen & Savolainen, 2010).

From a more generic perspective, Zhang (2013, p.1) argues that “project changes have been conventionally treated as having heavy or negative impacts on project completion and, in theory, they should not happen if project activities have been perfectly planned and scheduled”. In other words, changes in the scope of projects are bound to happen and if they happen, it has negative effects on the completion time – more especially in complex projects that involves multi-stage iterative process.

#### **2.4.5 Resources**

The term resource covers a very broad area and can be classified as tangible or intangible resources (Teigland & Lindqvist, 2007). These include but are not limited to financial, human, goodwill, reputation, expertise, and material resources (Teigland & Lindqvist, 2007). Studies show that many projects fail due to lack of or inadequate resources. This section discusses the most common resources often cited for failure.

Material Resources – These are the physical goods needed for the execution of a project and, without them, projects that require physical deliverables cannot be implemented. In most cases, there is lack of or inadequate physical resources. For example, in research into conflict in the Bygga Villa project, the study discovered that one major reason for conflict among project partners was the scarcity of resources, which contributed to the initial project failure (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009). The size of the partners (some partner were unable to provide resources due to their organisational size) and other projects competing for the same resources were the main issues. This lack of resources can create conflicts among various stakeholders associated with a project and this in turn leads to project failure (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009). This problem does not only include inadequate resources and personnel skills; buying the right material resources is also very important for a project’s success (Krigsman, 2006). For instance, investigation into Airbus’ A380 mega jet delay found that the former CEO,

Christian Streiff, chose the wrong software, which was incompatible with the jet, and this resulted in failure (Krigsman, 2006).

Financial Resources – Financial difficulty is often cited as one of the main causes of project failure all over the world. Many projects have been abandoned in developing countries due to lack of or inadequate funding. The Chad-Cameroon pipeline project, which cost the World Bank US\$4.2 billion, failed because the World Bank withdrew its financial backing (World Bank, 2006; Fabian & Amir, 2011). The project, which was one of the most expensive projects funded by the World Bank in Africa at the time, is a clear indication of how a project's success is dependent on sound financial backing. This same problem exists in the Malaysian construction industry (Sambasian & Soon, 2007). In Jordan, the problem is the same: financial difficulty faced by contractors is the most frequent and first cause of building construction project failure in the country (Sweis et al., 2008). Most experts believe that this is natural because contractors in Jordan are independent, small companies who underbid to win contracts, and they have limited access to credit facilities (Sweis et al., 2008). In construction projects in Nigeria, the situation is also the same. Studies of construction projects show that financial difficulty on the part of the client contributes to delays in delivering projects (Odeyinka & Yusif, 1997). In Iran, construction projects suffer from delays due to contractors' financial difficulties (Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011).

Human Resources – The research into the conflict in the Bygga Villa project discovered that one major reason for conflict among project partners was the scarcity of resources, which contributed to the initial project failure (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009). The size of the partners (some partner were unable to provide resources due their organisational size), other projects competing for the same human resources, and lack of academia (human resources) were the underlying factors for the scarcity of resources. For the latter reason, the project had to wait for certain researchers to defend their theses before work could continue. In some situations, contractors on some projects have to hire foreign nationals before the projects can be completed, and this comes with pros and cons. A clear example is the case of Malaysia. A study to find causes of construction project failure in Malaysia shows that inadequate workers and lack of skilled workers

account for why construction projects were failing (Sambasian & Soon, 2007). A significant number of construction workers had to be hired from Indonesia to contribute to Malaysia's construction projects. The lack of skilled workers and the inadequacy of the ones available in the country meant that contractors had to rely on foreign workers and, although foreign workers have their advantages, the problems that may be created due to different cultures and work ethics cannot be underestimated, as Hofstede (1983), Lubatkin et al. (1999), and Muriithi and Crawford (2003) have emphasised.

The need for the right people for the right job is very crucial in project management and as such the need for right people with appropriate skills to correctly execute projects is very crucial (Mochal, 2005; Lever, 2008). Research on project failure points out that the failure of many projects can be partly attributable to lack of skills. For example, a study conducted by Ruuska and Teigland (2009) into the Bygga Villa project indicates that the project leader lacked broker skills and this was causing conflicts among project partners, which thereby caused the project to fail. In order for the project to be successful, management had to replace the project manager with a more appropriate one. This is further echoed in the work of Hwang and Ng (2013, p.272), which argues that "a competent project manager is vital to project success". Thus, in order to manage projects professionally and successfully, the project manager has to possess the required knowledge and skills (Hwang & Ng, 2013). Statistically, according to Frank (2002) as cited by Hwang and Ng (2013), project managers have a 34-47% direct influence on project success, and therefore failure to recruit, train and nurture the right project manager for a project's management is a recipe for disaster.

Perkins (2006) attributes the root cause of project failure to 'Knowledge': either project managers do not have the requisite knowledge, or they do have it but fail to apply it appropriately. This theory employs '*The Project Failure Cause-Effect Diagram*' to give further explanation. According to this theory, there are a number of issues that may cause projects/programmes to fail, but all these causes can be traced to a root or fundamental cause, and that is knowledge. In other words, if a project fails because of any particular reason, that reason can also boil down to the fact that project managers or senior management might not have the right skills or technical know-how to execute

such a project, or they do have the right knowledge but have failed to use it appropriately. For instance, if a project has failed because of failure to manage risks during project implementation, this failure can be due to either the project manager not having the right skills or experience to deal with risk management, or s/he did have the skills but failed to apply the knowledge s/he has of risk management appropriately.

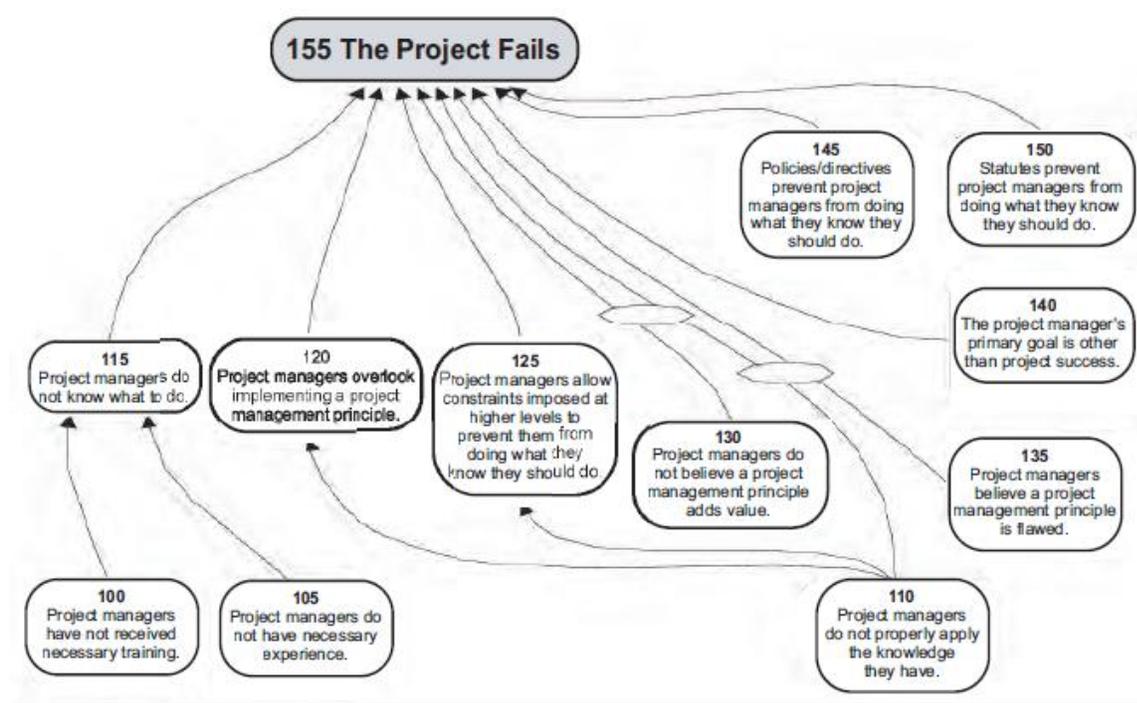


Figure 4 The Cause-Effect Diagram

Source: Perkins (2006, p.13)

There are two questions that the theory fails to address. Firstly, if a project manager has all the knowledge necessary to undertake the project and knows how to apply this knowledge but the resources available to undertake the project are insufficient, will the project be successful? Reports on project failure due to lack of resources abound, more especially in developing countries or less developed countries where various sectors of the economy compete for the same scarce resources for development. For instance, financial difficulty has been cited as the main reason for delays in construction projects in Jordan (Sweis et al., 2008). The recent financial crisis that has seen the UK government and many European Union (EU) countries adopt austerity measures such

as cuts to police budgets is a clear example of how knowledge alone cannot determine project success (see Metro, 2012, p.5).

Secondly, if a project manager has all the knowledge necessary to undertake the project and knows how to apply this knowledge and all the resources have been provided, and in the middle of the project there is some new government legislation or an external force such as a natural disaster (e.g. flooding, tsunami, hurricane), will the existing knowledge be enough to make the project successful? In other words, if any external forces such as Political, Economic, Socio-Cultural and Technological (PEST/PESTLIED) (Mulenburg, 2007) hit the project, would the knowledge be enough to protect the project from failure? Natural calamities such as floods and tsunamis have been partly blamed for causes of delays in International Development (ID) projects in some Asian countries such as China, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand in recent years (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010). These examples indicate that associating the root cause of project failure only to knowledge is flawed. Although knowledge and skills are not panaceas for project success or failure it can be said that, without them, all the other resources used in the implementation of a project will not be enough to make the project a success.

Therefore, all the other resources need to be present before a project can be successful. It can be argued that, without resources, there cannot be a project, in that project activities do not operate in a vacuum. Lack of or inadequate resources can cause projects to fail. If the resources needed for the project are not up to the required quantity or quality, irrespective of the skills of the management team, the project is bound to fail.

## **2.5 CAUSES OF PROJECT FAILURE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

Because the research aim is to find the main causes of project failure in developing countries, this section discusses in detail prior studies on this issue.

Various reasons have been identified for causes of project failure in developing countries. For example, an investigation into causes for time and cost overrun on groundwater construction projects in Ghana revealed 26 reasons for such failure (Frimpong et al., 2003). It found that, whereas some of these causes were controllable, others were uncontrollable. In relation to schedule delays in road construction projects in Zambia, Kaliba et al. (2009) identified financial processes and difficulties on the part of contractors and clients, contract modification, economic problems, materials' procurement, changes in drawings, staffing problems, equipment unavailability, poor supervision, construction mistakes, poor coordination on site, and changes in specifications as the main causes of such delays.

An analysis of cost and schedule performance of international developmental projects revealed an extraordinary cost and schedule variance (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010). The research, which used China, Thailand, Bangladesh and India as the case study, shows that cost and schedule variances (cost and schedule overrun) exist in such projects (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010). However, the results also show an extraordinary pattern of variance. Studies over the years (Kaming et al., 1997; Flyvjerg et al., 2003; Matta & Ashkenas, 2003; Odek, 2004) show that projects that experience schedule overruns have corresponding cost overruns but the result from Ahsan and Gunawan's study shows that the International Development (ID) projects from the four Asian countries experienced schedule overrun and yet had cost underrun. This extraordinary result is attributable to: depreciation or devaluation of local currency lower than estimated bid price, international competitive bidding – international companies are allowed to bid for the project, hence, making the operational cost less expensive, less use of contingency fund – this emergency fund is made available for projects, but it is not always used with ID projects because host countries try to overestimate it to avoid running out of funds when an emergency happens, the project's scope is cut, design change, local tax, and interest policy changes.

In relation to Critical Success factors (CSFs), Kwak (2002) identified a number of CSFs of ID projects, which included: political, legal, cultural, technical, managerial, economic, environmental, social, and corruption. Palmer (1986) attributes project failure in

developing countries to lack of routine maintenance. The use of *turnkey* project management practices in developing countries has also seen failures (Alsakini et al., 2004).

In Africa, a poor relationship among stakeholders is one of the main reasons for government project failure (Rwelamila et al., 1999). Botswana's government projects have experienced a lack of 'ubuntu' (African group solidarity) among the various stakeholders in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) public building sector project.

These studies indicate that there are a lot of different reasons for project failure in different contexts. Moreover, research shows that the causes of project failure in developing countries are not much different from those in developed countries, except for the failure caused by the adoption of Western project management models, methodologies, and project management practices (otherwise known as socio-cultural factors). The next sub-section, 2.5.1, discusses these reasons in detail.

### **2.5.1 Socio-Culture and Project Failure in Developing Countries**

The fundamental reason often cited as a cause of project failure in developing countries is the adoption of foreign project management practices and models which do not fit into local socio-cultural systems (Saad et al., 2002; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Alsakini et al., 2004; Heeks, 2002, 2006; Maube et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012). Miscommunication in industrial *turnkey* projects in developing countries which causes such projects to fail can be blamed on cultural differences that exist on sites (Alsakini et al., 2004).

The Iranian industries' attempt to incorporate Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) into their operations has witnessed some degree of failure due to this very problem (Amid et al., 2012). Iran's unique country system is the main reason why the adoption of ERP has not been successful (Amid et al., 2012). Although other reasons such as poor project management, lack of a full-time and balanced project team, and poor human resource management – over emphasis on technical and financial issues at the expense of the people involved – have been cited as hindrances to ERP

implementation, the most dominant and fundamental reason has been Iran's unique system (Amid et al., 2012). Iran's unique system makes it extremely difficult to adopt foreign ERP models and practices because the country's organisational and cultural mind-set makes them incompatible. The study concluded that ERP keeps on failing due to the Iranian system, which is incompatible with foreign ERP being adopted. The Iranian organisational structure is hierarchical, with a high degree of bureaucracy and formalisation; hence, it is difficult to incorporate ERP into management practices. Further, achieving short-term goals and objectives is more important to managers than long-term goals due to the structure and nature of the organisational issues. Because there is a high rate of management substitution and replacement in organisations, managers are compelled to achieve short-term goals in order to be considered to be successful, and this is in contrast to ERP philosophy (Amid et al., 2012). Due to the uniqueness of the Iranian systems, regulations and procedures, especially financial process, it is extremely difficult if not impossible to implement an international system in the country. This implies that foreign vendors have to customise these technologies to suit the Iranian system. This often creates a 'design-actuality gap' (Heeks, 2002, 2005, 2006).

Heeks' (2002) case study into Information System (IS) project failure in developing countries shows that there is an actuality gap between industrialised IS designs and the applicability of such designs in developing countries, and that a belief in foreign or imported products from the developed world accounts for the IS project failure in developing countries. Using IS as a case study; IS models are designed by foreigners who are normally from Western countries. They therefore design them in the context of Western culture and practices, and then implement them in developing countries (Heeks, 2002). The mind-set of the designer(s) is based on their experience in the industrialised countries, and therefore what they design does not support local socio-cultural settings of users in the developing countries, hence, project failure. Thus, there is a gap between the design and the reality of usage at the local level (developing countries), and this therefore causes such projects to fail. Figure 5 below illustrates this further.

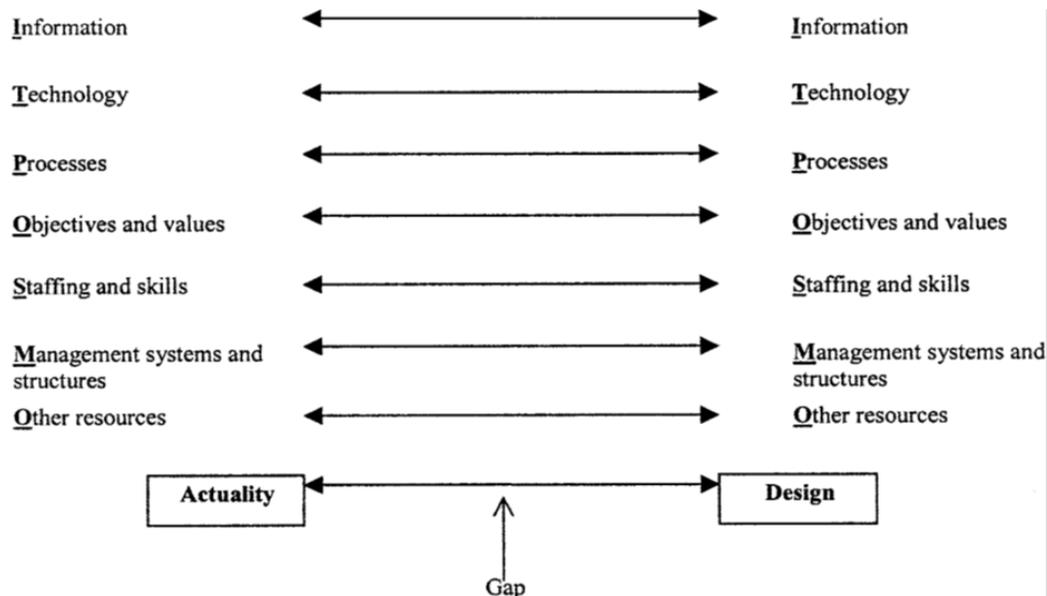


Figure 5 Design-actuality gaps

Sources: Heeks (2002, p.105)

Further, this gap can be split into two – hard gap and soft gap (hard-soft gap) (Heeks, 2002). The hard gap is the physical materials being used, and the soft gap has to do with the knowledge, values, etc. This confirms the ideas of earlier researchers who argued that culture plays a crucial role in the success of projects and, as such, applying same project management practices might not be feasible in some cultural contexts (Hogberg & Adamsson, 1983).

In order to correct this situation (project failure), Heeks (2002) suggests two ways in which locals could improvise to divert failures – actuality-supporting applications and nature of design. One, developing countries should have designs that are *ceteris paribus*, actuality supporting application[s]. However, according to Akrich (1992, as cited by Heeks 2002), such designs would be difficult to achieve because of a design-imposing approach. Thus, a situation is created, whereby these designs are created by developed countries' designers for developing countries and, as a result, this actuality-supporting application even increases failure risk. Two, the nature of design improvisation can be affected by the balance between explicit and implicit components

in the design. The explicit components, which include total cost or the type of computer to be used, are relatively easy to alter to meet user actuality, but it is difficult to alter the implicit components of the nature of design such as designer assumptions about the values or knowledge of local users. Again, local ability to be able to manoeuvre to avoid the actuality gap is contingent upon design divisibility, but this divisibility is lacking in the developing countries' IS projects, partly due to the short 'donor timescale and attention span' of funders. Moreover, if there is a local capacity for technology, improvisation could be possible, but this is also lacking in developing countries. That is to say, if there is local technology that can combine both imported content and local content (hybrid), then there could be room for manoeuvre (improvisation) to reduce the risk of failure, but this is non-existent in local communities (developing countries). In addition, improvisation-supporting approaches and techniques could be used, but such an approach is only workable in industrialised countries and as such inapplicable in developing countries. This approach is the use of participative techniques, where group working and end-user involvement are used. This is rarely workable in developing countries due to their cultural mind-set. This is echoed by Klein et al. (2015), who assert that, due to the uniqueness of projects, there is a need for improvisation during project management.



Deep- versus shallow-inscribed applications

Figure 6 Actuality-supporting application and nature of design

Source: Heeks (2002, p.109)

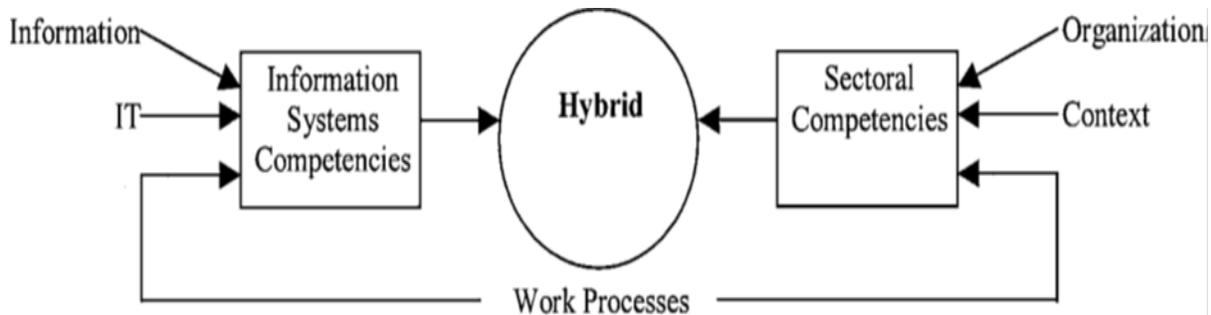


Figure 7 The competencies of hybrids

Sources: Heeks (2002, p.110)

Most African projects fail because they do not have their own project management models (Maube et al., 2008). Failure of projects in Africa is attributable to human and technological factors, and management concepts being applied, but this can be traced to the use of Western project management concepts, which are not workable in Africa due to the cultural differences that exist between the Western world and African countries (Heeks, 2002; Saad et al., 2002; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Alsakini et al., 2004; Maube et al., 2008). For instance, efforts made by the Algerian government to move into industrialisation in the 1960s and 1990s failed because of this same problem (Saad et al., 2002): projects were implemented but failed due to cultural differences that existed between the adopted model and the Algerian environment. E-government projects in Africa have failed because African governments have been adopting models that are based on the industrialised countries' models, which do not fit into the cultural environment of Africa (Maube et al., 2008).

The quest by Muriithi and Crawford (2003) to find causes of project failure in Africa, found that all the causes were due to the fact that project management concepts, models, and practices being adopted in Africa were Western, and these models and practices were incompatible with Africa's culture and social life. The study concluded that African cultures are collectivist, have high power distance, moderate uncertainty avoidance, and are masculine. The collectivist culture, characterised by poverty, declining real wages, and weak political institutions, means that managers feel and work towards what will please the family, clan, ethnic group will rather than being neutral – which is a formal requirement of management. Africans have a deep-rooted moral

obligation to their poorer relations and this puts pressure on their personal income and project resources. Power distance, implies that, patronage and tall structures in organisational management. Top management in these African states are inward-looking – they do not want to delegate due to risk aversion; managers tend to avoid risk due to the unstable nature of the socio-political environment in Africa. Foreign employees earn more than their local counterparts doing similar work, which brings about ill-feeling. The extent to which a project team or management regard these values determine a project's success or failure (Muriithi & Crawford, 2003).

During Algeria's quest for development between 1965 and 1990, the country's government adopted Technology Transfer (TT) projects to facilitate this development (Saad et al., 2002). These projects failed to some degree, mainly due to the fact that the technology being transferred was incompatible with the local environment (technical, organisational, market, social, political, cultural). Failure was due to the restricted availability of indigenous knowledge and information, among other factors such as poor preparation procedures before negotiations, lack of proactive search for projects and partners, selection of projects and partners not based on national realities, significant dependency on learning by doing and codified knowledge, ignoring the dynamic dimension of the process of technology transfer and the consolidation stage (Saad et al., 2002).

## **2.6 CAUSES OF PROJECT FAILURE IN GHANA**

Many reasons have been cited for causes of project failure in Ghana and Ghanaian government projects in particular. These include socio-political, economic, technological, knowledge, macro- and micro-global (AfDB, 2006, Moderator's Report, 2007), and project management education (Moderators Report, 2007; Amponsah, 2010), among others. The next sub-section discusses these causes in detail.

### **2.6.1 Project Management Education in Ghana**

Project management knowledge in Ghana is very low even among tertiary institutional lecturers (Moderator's Report, 2007). This can be attributed to the lack of project management as a discipline in the country's curriculum in educational institutions. Until 2006, Ghana had no single tertiary institution offering project management as a course of study. The maiden one started in the Ghana Institute of Public Administration (GIMPA), a private institution which introduced an undergraduate degree in Operations and Project Management. Concerns have been raised by the World Bank and academia in the country about this issue, and the Moderators' Reports in 2007 emphasised it.

A report by the World Bank in 2007 indicated that Ghana had performed poorly in programmes and projects because of a lack of professional managers (World Bank Report, 2007). Prior to this report, the same institution had reported that the Ghana National Insurance Scheme (NHIS) was suffering from administrative lapses because of lack of knowledge on the part of administrators (World Bank Press Release, 2007). Specifically, this press release, as cited by Damoah (2011), stated that Ghana's health insurance system required skilled labour for the DMHISs and the providers to manage and administer the new health insurance system, yet there was insufficient administrative, managerial, and technical human capacity to handle the scheme. The implementation of the NHIS introduced extra administrative overheads to health facilities. When the NHIC introduced its ICT network platform and the providers start to develop their IT solutions, managers and administrators in the DMHISs and the providers needed technical know-how to handle this increasing pressure, but this knowledge, according to the World Bank, was not adequate in Ghana's healthcare sector.

### **2.6.2 Financial Difficulty and Project Management in Ghana**

Ghana's projects have suffered several setbacks such as total abandonment and delays in the past, mainly due to financial difficulties. Groundwater projects, which are the main source of water for rural dwellers, have witnessed delays mainly because of the difficulty in making monthly payments for completed work (Frimpong et al., 2003).

Payment delays sometimes result in project abandonment in Ghana, and, in some extreme circumstances, contractors go bankrupt (Adams, 2008). In some circumstances, the project fails to commence after initial planning (as Heeks, 2002, 2005, 2006 puts it). For example, the quest by the Ghanaian government to build 30,000 houses for the security forces (police, military, and customs) to improve the security personnel's living conditions has proven that lack of finance can cause good intentions to come to no avail. The project was initiated and approved by parliament but failed to commence due to the government's inability to secure a loan from the South Korean STX Company (Daily Guide, 2012; p.1). The government's failure to secure the loan meant that the government had no choice but to abandon the project.

### **2.6.3 Corruption and Project Management in Ghana**

Corruption has bedevilled project management practices in Ghana and government projects in particular, and it has become part and parcel of officials undertaking projects in the country (see TI, 2008; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012). However, this social vice has been defended and justified vehemently by some state officials. They cite among other reasons low salaries, the project not being their personal property, poverty, feeding a habit, gaining of societal status and sharing of the national 'cake'. Even though it is difficult to find a criminal code that defines corruption (Azeem, 2009), corrupt practices such as bribery of local or foreign government officials and private companies, facilitation of payments, fraud, embezzlement, theft, collusion, and rent-seeking exist in the country. A renowned Ghanaian political scientist, Gyimah-Boadi, posits that corruption is pervasive and has to do with motive and opportunity (Gyimah-Boadi, 2002). According to Gyimah-Boadi, the opportunity for corruption normally occurs when systems and institutions of accountability are weak – lack checks and balances – and when moral decency is very low among officials. This social phenomenon fosters an anti-democratic environment which creates uncertainty, unpredictability and declining moral values which disrespect constitutional institutions and authority (Gyimah-Boadi, 2002; Mensah et al., 2003).

A study conducted by Transparent International (TI) between 1999 and 2008 points out that Ghana is far behind in the fight against corruption (TI, 2008). The scores range from 10-0, with 10 being the countries with least corruption and 0 being the most corrupt; Ghana has always been in the lower brackets (3.3-3.9). In 2007, Ghana had a Corruption Performance Index (CPI) score of 3.7, thereby positioning the country 69th out of 180 of the world's countries that were studied (TI, 2008). According to the report, only countries with an index of 5 and above do not have a serious corruption problem. Consistent with the definition offered by the World Bank (World Bank, 2013), the definition of corruption in the study was an abuse of public office for private gain, and measured the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among a country's public officials and politicians. Transparency International's research findings indicate that the state of corruption in Ghana is serious. Nevertheless, this definition has been criticised for leaving the impression that it is only people who occupy public office who are capable of abusing their office or power (Tax Justice Network (TJN), 2008). TJN argues that the World Bank and TI description of corruption does not provide room for corrupt practices such as market rigging, insider trading, tax dodging, non-disclosure of conflicts of interest, and illicit party funding (Azeem, 2009). Even though the TI study's findings give a picture of the state of corruption in the country, if TJN's criticism and definition is taken into consideration, the state of the phenomenon could even be worse.

Internal reports on corruption in the country show similar findings to that of the TI (2008) report. For example, a report in 2007 by the Public Accounts Committee on the Auditor-General's report in 2006 on Public Accounts submitted to Parliament and the follow-up public hearings states that there is a serious corruption problem among public officials. The same report shows a similar trend in the 2010/2011 report published in 2012 (Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012). The 2013 one is not different. A survey on corruption in Ghana conducted by the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) and Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD) also shows a similar problem.

These corrupt practices in Ghana affect project management and project performance. If this happens, cost escalation becomes inevitable. However, efforts have been made over the years to curb the phenomenon. The Ghanaian government has made

significant attempts to curb corrupt practices in the country by enacting laws and setting up independent bodies and agencies to address the phenomenon (Amponsah, 2010). Notable among them are the Ghana Public Procurement Act, the Financial Administration Act and its Regulations, the Assets Declaration Act, the Whistleblower Act, the Anti-Money Laundering Act, the Public Officers Liability Act, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the CHRAJ, Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII). Even though these efforts have helped to expose corruption (Short, 2010), recent reports (Meet the Press, 2009; Takyi-Boadu, 2011; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012) indicate that the phenomenon still exists in the country and in government projects in particular.

#### **2.6.4 Ethical Issues in Project Management Practices in Ghana**

Closely related to corruption are ethical issues in the management of projects in Ghana. Public officials have indulged themselves in practices that raise ethical issues over the years in execution of government projects. Ethical issues in project management practices in Ghana are not perceived to be as serious as portrayed by Heidman et al. (2005). Notable among them in recent years is when the late President, Professor Evans Attah-Mills, on President's Question and Answer Time (Meet the Press) stated that it was normal for a Minister of State to travel for an official government assignment with his girlfriend and that "it is not the first time it has happened" (Meet the Press, 2009).

There have been instances where a state official chairs a government project, and becomes the sole supplier of materials for the project at a rate which is above the market rate for the same project (see Takyi-Boadu, 2011; Ghanaweb, 2011; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012). Additionally, in some circumstances, government officials do not pay contractors on time, which leads contractors to go bankrupt, hence, causing their business to collapse (Adams, 2008).

### **2.6.5 Socio-cultural factors and Project Management in Ghana**

Ghana is a country with a rich culture which is well respected by its citizens, especially with regard to its religious values. As indicated in chapter one, religious values are well adhered to by Ghanaians. Sometimes when projects do not go as expected, pastors and other religious leaders are called upon to pray for the project. Communication in Ghana is mostly indirect and people often resort to silence as a means of getting their points across. The use of proverbs, wise sayings, and analogies is the most common practice, and people considered to be wise are those who are often quiet and able to express themselves in these proverbs and adages. It can therefore be argued that these cultural traits and practices can influence project management and performance in the country. For instance, respect for elders as against good management practices hinders good project performance.

Even though reported cases of project failure in Ghana are many, and a lot of reasons have been cited for such failure, a review of the literature shows that journal articles devoted to the subject matter are rare. For instance, the work of Ayee (2000) indicates that there had not been any empirical evidence to back up this claim for project failure and, to the best of my knowledge, there has been only one journal article and one thesis since, and these are Frimpong et al. (2003) and Amponsah (2010) respectively. However, the former study is full of flaws and the latter is restricted to only three sectors of the economy – construction, banking and agriculture – and this call for further debate. The latter for instance, which investigates causes of schedule delay and cost overrun of groundwater projects in Ghana, indicated that, between 1970 and 1999, 33 out of 47 projects were delayed whilst 38 overran, indicating a 75% schedule and cost deviation with only 25% meeting the planned and budgeted cost. Further, the study pointed out that there are 26 reasons why projects fail. Out of these causes, five (5) were seen by contractors, owners, and consultants (respondents) as the most important factors. These were: agents having difficulty in making the monthly payments, poor contractor management, material procurement, poor technical performances, and escalation of material prices.

Although this study gives a picture of the state of project failure in the construction industry, the rigorousness of the study is questionable and, as such, it might not show the true scale of the situation. First and foremost, the choice of the sample and the method used in collecting the data is questionable. Using random sampling without picking a specific number such as the 3rd, 4th, 6th, 10th of the population brings the reliability of the study into question. Moreover, the study failed to indicate the number of respondents from both the public and private sectors the study set out to cover. Using random sampling, and without showing the number of representatives from each sector, implies that it is possible for the respondents to come from only one sector (private or public) and therefore the study can be seen as unrepresentative of both sectors. In addition, the study failed to indicate the level of experience of the respondents in dealing with groundwater construction and project management in general; therefore, the respondents' opinions cannot be relied upon. It is possible that all the respondents might be junior or newly recruited employees who might not have adequate experience to provide information that portrays the true picture of the subject matter being studied. Moreover, the research was conducted in the construction industry, which therefore makes it industry-specific and unable to reflect the other industries in the country.

Even though much has been researched about causes of project failure, to date, project management literature can be divided into three groups. Group one takes a generic view of project failure (Frimpong et al., 2003; Kaliba et al., 2009; Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Liu et al., 2011; Amid et al., 2012). The second group focuses on private sector projects (Mangione, 2003; Consoli, 2006; Mairea & Collettere, 2011). The last group focuses on government or public sector projects; however, this focuses exclusively on single case(s) projects (Kumar & Best, 2007; Maubeta et al., 2008; Fabian & Amir, 2011; Patanakul, 2014). This makes the research industry-specific by default and this therefore affects generalisability.

Moreover, different respondents have different perceptions about those projects that are of high importance and vice-versa (Kometa et al., 1994; Frimpong et al., 2003; Amponsah, 2010). Thus, different categories of study respondents differ in their perceptions of the factors that influence project failure (Frimpong, 2003; Sambasivan &

Soon, 2007). This research bridges this gap by taking a holistic view of government or public sector project failure. Secondly, in relation to Ghana, this will provide empirical evidence to support reported claims of project failure in government projects. Thirdly, this study contributes to the academic field of project failure in Ghana specifically and in developing countries in general.

The studies also show that the causes are not the same and that they have relative importance (Frimpong et al., 2003; Ngacho & Das, 2014). Thus, the various causes of project failure do not have the same influence in causing projects to fail. In other words, each cause has a different weight when it comes to its ability to influence (cause) project failure. In the case of Frimpong et al.'s (2003) research, out of the 26 reasons that were found to account for groundwater projects' failure, five (5) were seen by contractors, owners, and consultants (respondents) as the most important factors. They were: agents having difficulty in making the monthly payments, poor contractor management, material procurement, poor technical performances, and escalation of material prices. In the case of Ngacho and Das (2014), out of the six KPIs – time, cost, quality, safety, site disputes and environmental impact – time was the most influential (important), followed by cost, site disputes, environmental impact, quality performance and lastly safety. Therefore, the question to answer in this regard is: *Which of these factors are more important in causing the Ghanaian government's project failure?*

## **2.7 EFFECTS OF PROJECT FAILURE**

The third part of the research is to find out from the general public, project management practitioners and contractors what they perceive as the effects of the Ghanaian government's project failure on the key stakeholders of such projects. However, in line with the aims and objectives of this study, effects are restricted to only the negative ones. Therefore, there is a need to review prior studies in this subject area. This will provide justification for the research findings and recommendations.

Many effects of project failure have been cited in management and project management literature; however, a review of the literature indicates that the effects are specific to

specific projects and/or specific industries. For instance, research into causes and effects of project failure in Malaysian construction industry by Sambasivan and Soon (2007) identified six (6) main effects. These were: time overrun cost overrun, disputes, arbitration, litigation and total abandonment. The study, which used a questionnaire survey to collect data from clients, consultants and contractors, concluded that there is a direct correlation between causes of project failure and the effects of project failure. That is to say, the effects of the project failure could be traced to specific causes of the project failure.

A study into the effects of construction delays on project delivery in Nigeria also found similar effects even though the respondents were different (Aibinu & Jagboro, 2002). The respondents (quantity surveyors, architects and engineers, and contractors) who were surveyed provided the following: time overrun, cost overrun, dispute, arbitration and litigation, and total abandonment. A survey investigation into material and equipment procurement delays in 22 highway projects in Nepal found that there was a negative impact on the projects (Manavazhia & Adhikarib, 2002). A study into significant factors causing and effects of delays in Iranian construction projects identified six (6) major effects: time overrun, cost overrun, disputes, arbitration, total abandonment, and litigation (Pourrostan & Ismail, 2011).

In development projects, Ayodele and Alabi (2011) identified wasted resources and loss of tax revenue by the government and other stakeholders associated with such projects as the main effects of abandonment. Similarly, Ngacho and Das (2014) identified economic and social effects of the general populace – although they did not specify the effects. In real property projects, the effect of abandonment is lowering of the value of the properties within the neighbourhood (Efenudu, 2010). In an assessment of the causes and effects of abandoned development projects in real property values in Nigeria, Woka and Miebaka (2014) identified eight (8) effects: it affects the real property total values reduction; it affects the total income receivable from real property; it becomes a disappointment to the owner and the populace; it increases the negative effects of environmental issues on the real property and the built environment; it negatively reduces the motivation to attract investment in real properties; it becomes a

waste of financial and material resources; employment opportunities in real property and other sectors are impacted negatively; and it deprives the government of the expected revenue from property tax.

When looking at Malaysian housing projects' abandonment, Abdullah et al. (2014) found that the main effect of abandoned projects is that house buyers will still pay for houses before they handed over at a later date. Along the Spanish coast, the abandonment of urbanisation projects affects the environment in the form of visual effects, landscape modification, biodiversity decrease and increased pollution (Carrero et al., 2009). Carrero et al. (2009) further identified the socio-economic effects as unemployment, conflicts between public administration and private sector, loss of economic value of the area, marginalisation of the population and transfer of cost between the private and public sector.

From the literature, it can be said that there is a common trend that these studies follow: similar effects are associated with projects when they fail (Sambasivan & Soon, 2007; Enshssi et al., 2009). However, the relative importance is dependent on who is looking at it, as studies show that different respondents have different views when it comes to the relative importance of particular factors (Kometa et al., 1994; Aibinu & Jagboro, 2002; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007, Pourrostan & Ismail, 2011).

Even though none of the previous research has looked into effects in relation to stakeholders, those carried out in relation to project completion show that the effects are not the same and that they have relative importance (Aibinu & Jagboro, 2002; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007, Pourrostan & Ismail, 2011). Thus, they have varied weights. In other words, different respondents have different perceptions about those that are of high importance and vice versa. Thus, the question here is: *Will respondents from Ghana follow the same trend?* Therefore, this study follows the same method to find out which of these effects are more important.

In addition, because there are no earlier studies on effects of project failure on stakeholders, there is no literature to use as a guide; however, as earlier stated, Ghanaian government projects have a strong stakeholder base and as such any failure

will have effects on the key stakeholders. However, the severity of the effects on these set(s) of stakeholders might not necessarily be the same. Therefore, this study wishes identify and evaluate the key stakeholders who are the most affected by Ghanaian government projects failure. Therefore, the next question is: *Which of these key stakeholders are affected most when Ghanaian government projects fail?*

## **2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This section discusses the theoretical block(s) that underpin this study. Specifically, it intends to achieve two main objectives. Firstly, it discusses the theories upon which this study is based, by trying to show how it fits into the research topic, and provides justification for the choice by linking it with previous research that used the theory. The main aim is to describe the theoretical blocks upon which this study is based. This will help the researcher to develop a theoretical framework for the research.

### **2.8.1 Stakeholder Theory**

In this study and others that have been reviewed in this section, stakeholder theory is approached from a project management perspective. In the past, stakeholder theory was rarely used in project management research. However, growing research into the subject matter in recent years as a result of writers becoming more aware of the various stakeholders associated with projects has seen extant research being carried out using stakeholder theory. In fact, in the past decade, research into project management and project failure has been conducted using stakeholder theory (e.g. Saebo et al., 2011; Axelsson et al., 2012). In line with these prior studies, this study therefore adopts stakeholder theory as the principal underlying theory.

Specifically, this study uses stakeholder theory to analyse the various stakeholders associated with Ghanaian government projects. Like most government projects, the Ghanaian government's projects have a strong stakeholder base and as such this theory captures all stakeholders in under this study. However, other theories were

considered before the choice of stakeholder theory was made.

Stakeholder theory was first propounded by Freeman (1984), although some writers credit the first definition and concept with the internal memo report of the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) in 1963, which defined stakeholders as those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist (Fontaine et al., 2006). The foundations of the theory claim that firms have “an ethical duty to stakeholders above and beyond what is required by law and, in particular, ethical duties that require the firm to operate in ways that will foreseeably reduce long-term profits” (Heath & Norman, 2004, p.249). A stakeholder is any organisation or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives (Freeman, 1984). According to Freeman (1984), organisations have various stakeholders whose activities impact on them and vice versa. The stakeholders include governments, investors, suppliers, employees, and customers. These stakeholders contribute inputs to the organisation and expect outputs from it (Donaldson & Preston, 1995), and will act for or against a focal organisation depending on whether their interests are affected positively or negatively. Stakeholder theory further argues that all persons or groups participating in a firm’s activities do so to obtain benefits (Freeman, 1984).

There have been major debates about the theory over the years, especially during the 1990s. Authors have provided different views about the theory by criticising Freeman’s Stakeholder Theory, and different arguments and counter arguments have been presented. For instance, the Stanford definition, which is the genesis of stakeholder theory, has been criticised as being too narrow; however, Freeman’s definition also suffers from being too broad (Olander, 2007). Lu et al. (2013) specifically criticise Freeman’s definition of the term stakeholder as being unambiguously open to include virtually anyone. In sharp contrast to Freeman’s definition, Clarkson (1994) offers a very narrow definition to the stakeholder definition debate – which asserts that stakeholders are only those who bear some level of risk as a result of having invested in the firm in the form of capital, human or financial resources, or any form of valuable investment, or those who are placed at risk as a result of the firm’s activities (Clarkson, 1994 as cited by Lu et al. 2013).

Goodpaster (1991) contends that stakeholder theory introduces ethics into management, and that the stakeholder idea is typically offered as a way of integrating ethical values into management decision-making. In view of this, Goodpaster offers two approaches to stakeholder theory – the stakeholder analysis and stakeholder synthesis. He then classified the decision-making process of a company or an individual into six sequential steps, namely: perception, analysis, synthesis, choice, action, and learning. He argues that the stakeholder theory as postulated by Freeman (1984) only refers to stakeholder analysis and as such ends at the analysis stage. This implies that, in the practical or real world, organisations ignore stakeholders when choices and decisions are being made as well as when implementing them. Goodpaster (1991) asserts that, even though decision-makers identify the affected parties in every option and determine their positive and negative impacts; nevertheless, this information is not considered further during the decision-making process or the implementation stage of a company. Furthermore, positive and negative effects on comparatively less powerful stakeholders may be ignored in the synthesis, choice and action phase. On the other hand, stakeholder synthesis includes: the synthesis, choice and action phase of the decision-making process. Under stakeholder synthesis, stakeholders are only taken into account if they are powerful enough to affect the goals of shareholders. Based on this argument, Goodpaster splits stakeholders into two groups – multi-fiduciary stakeholders and strategic stakeholders. The multi-fiduciary stakeholder means ethics without business and the strategic stakeholder synthesis means business without ethics. Goodpaster argues that managers who pursue the multi-fiduciary stakeholder orientation face opposition from advocates of the strategic stakeholder orientation. This clearly indicates that there can be a strong defence for the multi-fiduciary orientation on the basis of ethics, and he therefore calls this inconsistent and refers to the situation as the stakeholder paradox.

Freeman (1994) rejects Goodpaster's (1991) 'stakeholder paradox' claim by criticising the idea of non-fiduciary obligations surrounding a fiduciary relationship, and therefore refers to this as 'moral obligation'. In an attempt to explain 'moral obligation', Freeman appeals to the '*nemo dat principle*' – shareholders cannot expect managers to disobey reasonable community standards of ethics. He argues further that, although corporate

law mandates managers to manage firms in the interests of shareholders, this corporate law is not the law that governs organisations and that there are other laws and regulatory bodies in the USA such as the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, the Securities Exchange Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency and others that govern organisations. Although Freeman rejects Goodpaster's stakeholder analysis preposition and his 'stakeholder paradox', he welcomes his interpretation of strategic stakeholder orientation, but not in the context of 'business without ethics'.

Donaldson and Preston (1995) offer four (4) these to the stakeholder theory debate – descriptive/empirical, instrumental, normative and managerial. They contend that the first three are aspects of the theory, and that these aspects are quite different but they are mutually supportive. The normative part serves as the basis upon which all other aspects of the theory are grounded. First and foremost, the theory describes the corporation as a collection of co-operative and competitive interests who possess an intrinsic or inherent value. They argue further that this can be tested for descriptive accuracy. Secondly, the instrumental aspect of the theory provides a link between *means* to an *end*. This provides a framework by which to test the possibility of existence of a connection between stakeholder management practice and corporate performance management achievement goals. Thirdly, stakeholder theory is normative, in that it prescribes how the world would be, and it describes how organisations should treat their stakeholders. In order to attain this, they make two assumptions – one, stakeholders are individuals or groups; they are identified by their interests in the corporation and have lawful interests in corporate activity. Two, stakeholders' interests have an intrinsic value in nature and as such stakeholders deserve consideration for their own sake without necessarily furthering the interests of some other group such as shareholders. Lastly, the authors opine that stakeholder theory is managerial in nature.

Jensen (2001) criticises the theory by arguing that it fails to show how managers will be able to make decisions that will make stakeholders satisfied given that various stakeholders of a corporation have different interests/stakes in the focal organisation. For him, it is highly impossible for corporate managers to maximise more than one corporate direction. He argues that goal-directed behaviour requires an idiosyncratic

valued objective function. As a result of this, Jensen contends that stakeholder theory may best help the interests of managers and directors. Taking directors and managers' bonuses for instance, he is of the opinion that once this is attached to performance, they will pursue short-term goals that will maximise their chances of getting a 'fat' bonus at the expense of the numerous stakeholders that are associated with the company. He also links change of personal management interests to the class of stakeholder(s) being served. In view of this, Jensen contends that firm value maximisation is meaningless if a group and/or any of the stakeholder(s) is ignored, and suggests a better alternative to firm value maximisation, which is called the Enlightened Value Maximisation or the Enlightened Stakeholder Theory. The theory is similar to the stakeholder theory except that it offers a criterion for making a trade-off among the various stakeholders with competing interests. For example, whilst stakeholder theory allows managers and directors to freely decide which one of the stakeholders' interests to serve at one particular point in time without offering a criterion for making the trade-off, the enlightened stakeholder theory prescribes one firm objective that serves the interests of all stakeholders – long-term value maximisation.

Nonetheless, despite these diverse opinions about the theory, there is a common thread that runs through various definitions: stakeholders have an interest in the focal organisation and will act for or against a focal organisation depending on whether their interests are being affected positively or negatively (Freeman, 1984; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Atkinson et al., 1997; Rowley & Moldoveanu, 2003).

### ***2.8.1.1 Stakeholder Analysis***

Thompson (2009) identified two steps that must be followed to manage stakeholders. Firstly, there should be stakeholder analysis, which is crucial in managing stakeholders. This involves the identification of stakeholders of the project. The next step is to work out their power, influence and interest. This identification helps to know on whom to focus and how to deal with each group (Davis, 2014). Then development of a good understanding of the most important stakeholders should be worked out to win their support.

The second step is management of the stakeholders. This can be done through making a 'Planning Tool' (Thompson, 2009). After this, communication is most important. In order to communicate effectively with stakeholders, Yang (2014) asserts that stakeholders have to be grouped according to their interests. This is discussed in detail in the next sub-section.

One study into stakeholder analysis indicates that there is no one method for stakeholder analysis is perfect; the selection of analytical perspective is an art with extensive considerations of 'when, what, and how' to choose methods to achieve the project objectives (Yang, 2014). This implies that stakeholder analysis and identification of method(s) to be used must be project-specific. The next sub-section provides some of the methods that have been used in the past.

#### **2.8.1.2 Stakeholder Identification**

Alexander and Stevens (2002) provide practical guidance for identifying stakeholders. This begins with the identification of project leaders. In this approach, managers assist *performing organisation(s)* in listing all the various parties and/or people who will be involved in the implementation of projects. This is done on the basis of decision levels and hierarchies that exist in the organisational structure. Sharp et al. (1999) present a methodology where the first step is to define a 'stakeholders' baseline' formed by stakeholder groups such as users, developers, legislators and decision-makers. They further evaluate who the suppliers and clients are, and then identify which of those stakeholders in the baseline interacts with the other. In this way, identification is concluded when all groups in the baseline are analysed. In a similar way, Robertson (2000) and Alexander and Robertson (2004) present a model that describes diverse stakeholder types using 'the onion model' and locate each type in one of the 'onion levels' (rings). They work with producers, consumers, sponsors, influencers and consultants and others as stakeholder types. They explain how each type must be identified in the model, and then included in each concentric circle. However, they posit that this approach does not take into consideration the work context of the project.

However, these procedures have been criticised for being more of a practical than of a theoretical framework that can be used in stakeholder identification (Ballejos & Montagna, 2008). In line with this criticism, Mok et al. (2015) assert that the foundation for stakeholder identification and prioritisation is not strong due to the limited cognition of project managers and incomplete stakeholder boundaries. Despite this criticism levelled against stakeholder identification procedures, other stakeholder theories have successfully been used in stakeholder identification by researchers. One popular stakeholder theory for such purpose is the Stakeholder Salience Theory proposed by Mitchell et al. (1997). The work of Elias et al. (2002), Pan (2005) and Olander (2007) is notable in project failure research – they have successfully applied the theory in identifying stakeholders in their studies.

In the theory, Mitchell et al. (1997) identify three main criteria – stakeholders' *power* (ability to influence the firm), *legitimacy* (relationship between stakeholder and the firm based on contracts and legal title), and *urgency* (the degree to which managerial delay in attending to the claim is unacceptable to stakeholders). They call these criteria stakeholder salience (power, legitimacy and urgency), and are of the view that a stakeholder should possess at least one of these attributes, but they further opine that managers tend to pay more attention to those who possess all three attributes.

In view of these stakeholder attributes, Mitchell et al. (1997) further categorised stakeholders into seven groups: (1) Dormant stakeholders – they possess the power to impose their will but do not have any legitimate relationship or urgent claim, and their power remains unused; (2) Discretionary stakeholders – they possess legitimacy but have no power or urgent claims, therefore there is no absolute pressure for management to engage in an active relationship; however, they may choose to do so; (3) Demanding stakeholders – they have an urgent claim but no power or legitimate relationship; this is bothersome but does not warrant more than passing management attention; (4) Dominant stakeholders – they have power and legitimacy and therefore their actions bother management; (5) Dangerous stakeholders – possess power and urgency but have no legitimacy; they are coercive and have the possibility of being violent, hence, 'dangerous'; (6) Dependent stakeholders – possess legitimacy and

urgency but have no power, therefore they depend on others for power to carry on their will; and (7) Definitive stakeholders – have power and legitimacy; they are normally part of the organisation's dominant coalition and therefore if their claim(s) is urgent, management gives priority to them. The figure below gives a clear picture of the various stakeholder categories identified by Mitchell et al.

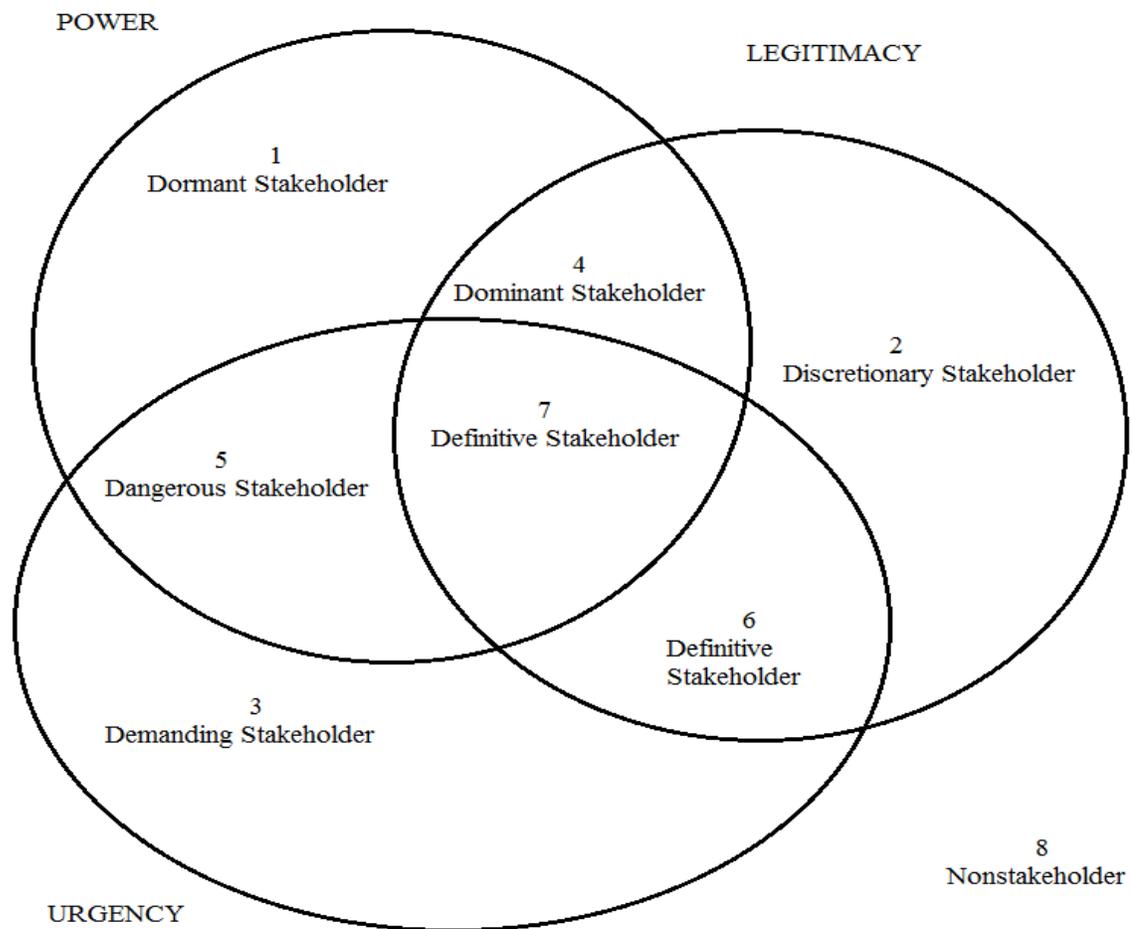


Figure 8 Stakeholder typology

Source: Mitchell et al., 1997, p.874

Stakeholder identification is very crucial for the success of every project (Ballejos & Montagna, 2008). However, studies over the years show that researchers have not

reached a consensus on the process and procedures for their identification. This indicates that researchers have not reached a consensus as to the criteria and/or method or approach to be used. It can therefore be said that this is so because of the differences that exist across different projects and that no project is similar to another (Suderland, 2004; Kersner, 1993, 2009). However, most of these criteria are drawn from Freeman (1984) and Mitchel et al. (1997). Even though researchers have not come to an agreement about this process, many procedures and theories have been proposed. Some have used stakeholder attributes such as types, roles (Robertson, 2000; Alexander & Robertson, 2004; Ballejos & Montagna, 2008), influence or power (Ballejos & Montagna, 2008) and interest, or stakeholder salience (Mitchell et al., 1997).

### ***2.8.1.3 Stakeholder Mapping***

This is a strategy used in identification of the various stakeholders associated with a particular company and/or its project. Specifically, it identifies stakeholders by ‘mapping’ the organisation and/or project to all the individuals and groups of individuals who are connected to the project. Like the stakeholder matrix, stakeholder mapping traces stakeholders with either the interest and/or the power to influence a project.

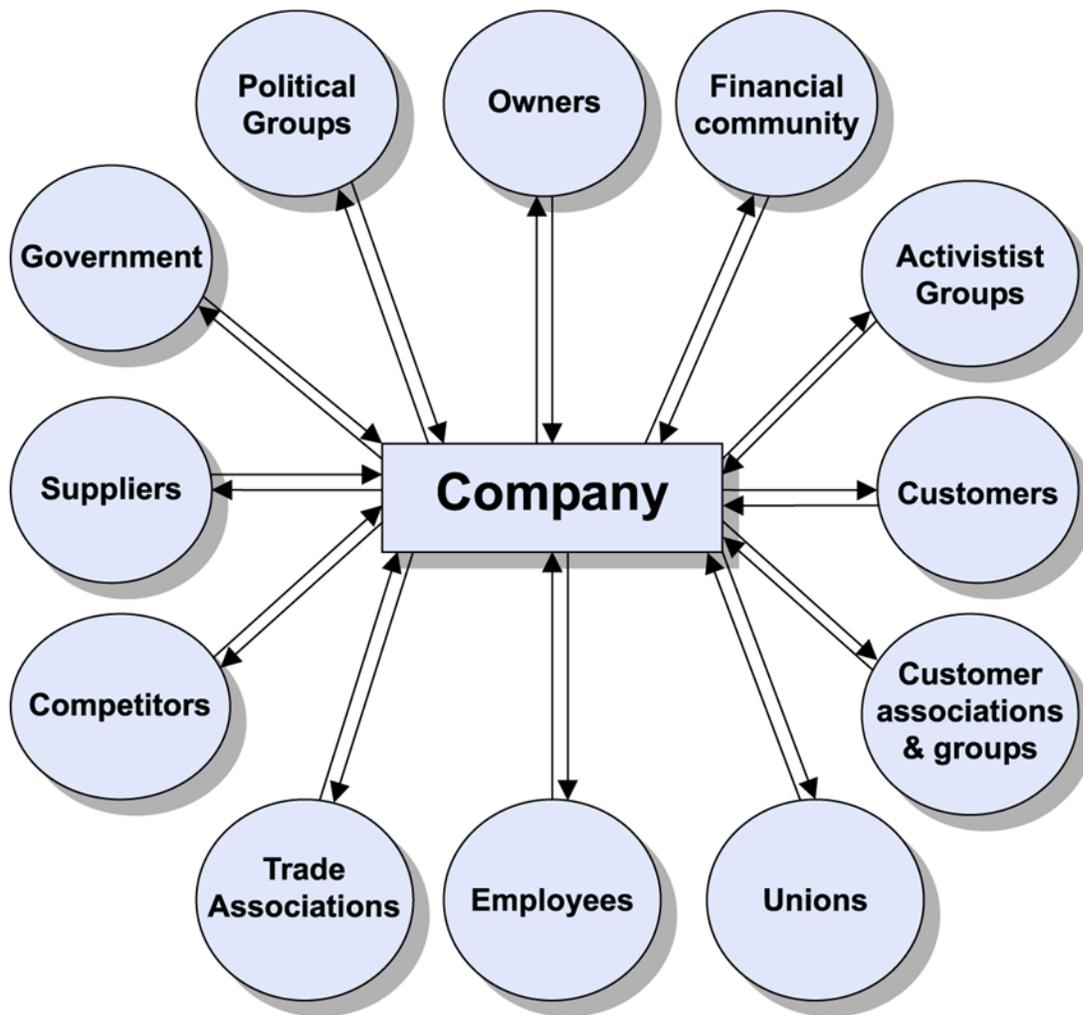


Figure 9 Stakeholder Map

#### **2.8.1.4 Stakeholder Matrix**

Ballejos and Montagna (2008) grouped stakeholders into four quadrants (stakeholder matrix) according to their power or influence and their interest. The first quadrant (A) consists of stakeholders who have high interest and high power to influence projects. The points of view and goals of these stakeholders need to be understood more, especially their objection to anything in the project. They require much time and attention in order to grasp their needs (Ballejos & Montagna, 2008, p.288).

The second quadrant (B) consists of stakeholders who have a high level of interest in the project but their influence is very low. However, they can be a valuable source of

information when they agree on the projects. In government projects, they are normally the citizens who concern themselves with the project deliverables (Diallo & Thuillier, 2004).

The third quadrant (C) consists of those stakeholders who have high power to influence the project but are less interested in the project. These stakeholders therefore do not pay particular attention to the project's details, because they consider that these details do not affect them. However, their needs and requirements need to be met if a project is to be successful. In some circumstances, they are the sources for financing the project and therefore their approval of the project is paramount. In this case, enough information about the project needs to be given to them in order to avoid them being obstacles to it. Such stakeholders include government and government agencies, regulatory bodies and industry regulators.

The last quadrant (D) consists of stakeholders who have little interest and minimum or no power to influence the project and as such little attention needs to be given to these sets of stakeholders. However, they still need to be given information about projects when necessary. The figure below gives a full picture of the stakeholder matrix grid.

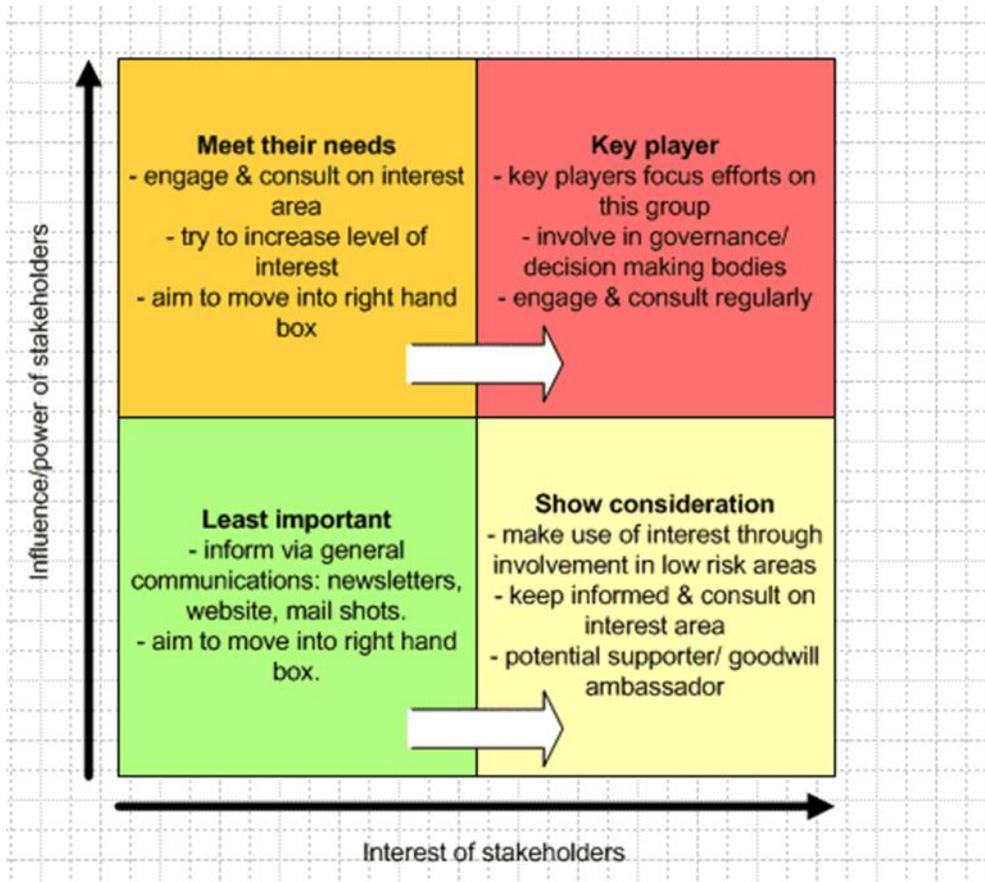


Figure 10 Stakeholder Matrix Grid

Source: stakeholdermap.com (2014)

### 2.8.1.5 Stakeholder Dynamics

Stakeholder theorists and researchers (Atkinson et al., 1999; Haughey ca, 2008; Yuttapongsontorn et al., 2008) have concentrated on individual stakeholder(s). However, studying individual stakeholders in isolation is being over-simplistic about the reality of the subject matter (Pouloudi & Whitley, 1997), in that stakeholders rarely act in isolation (Pan, 2005; Pan & Pan, 2006; Saebo et al., 2011). As Mitchel et al. (1997) put it, and as echoed by Ballejos and Montagna (2008) and Saebo et al. (2011), stakeholders' salience differs from one stakeholder to another, and, as a result, those stakeholders with less salience often seek the support of those who have much salience in order to make their claims heard. In order to do this, they form coalitions to influence

organisations and/or projects. This indicates that stakeholders can interact to influence project performance and, as such, attention needs to be given to various coalition groups during project management (Missonier & Loufrani-Fedida, 2014). Yang (2014, p.482) refers to this interaction among stakeholders as a “social network”.

Moreover, stakeholders’ interests and power change over time throughout project life cycles (Freeman, 1984; Aaltonen et al., 2008; Saebo et al., 2011; Missonier & Loufrani-Fedida, 2014), depending on the strategic issue under consideration (Freeman, 1984). Different stakeholders’ interests might change – interest can be low or high or none, depending on how it is being affected (Pan & Pan, 2006). Further, the mix of stakeholders of a particular project may change over time – some may join whilst others leave – due to many reasons, such as not being interested in the project anymore (Elias, 2002, p.304).

It can be argued that, because those stakeholders who are not powerful enough could seek claims through others (Mitchell et al., 1997) and could also form coalitions to influence the project (Pan, 2005; Pan & Pan, 2006; Saebo et al., 2011), they are dynamic and as such stakeholders should not only be managed as individual(s) but should also be managed as collective units.

Stakeholder theory has been applied in economics, politics, management, and law, among other areas. In this study, stakeholder theory is approached from a project management perspective. The next sub-section, 2.8.2, discusses stakeholder theory and project management in detail by highlighting the importance of stakeholders’ management in the implementation of projects, and how this theory applies to the case being studied.

### **2.8.2 Stakeholders and Project Management**

In every project, there are numerous stakeholders whose activities can affect or be affected by the project and who therefore have interest in the deliverables or output of the project (Haughey ca, 2008). In other words, stakeholders can impact the output of

the project or can affect or be affected by the project (Olander, 2007; Heravi et al. 2015).

From a project management perspective, project stakeholders are persons or groups of persons who have a vested interest in the success of the project and the environment within which the project operates (McElroy & Mills, 2000; Post et al., 2002). However, like the Standford definition, this (McElroy & Mills, 2000; Post et al., 2002) also suffers from being too narrow (Olander, 2007). Project Management Institute (PMI) adopts Freeman's (1984) definition and defines project stakeholders as individuals and organisations that are actively involved in the project or whose interests may be affected as a result of project execution or completion (PMI, 2004). However, the PMI definition is also too broad (Olander, 2007). Mulenburg (2007) describes a stakeholder as anyone who has a stake in the project's outcome and for him 'stake' in this context refers to interest. However, stake and interest are different, and authors have not been able to provide a sound and clear understanding of the terms 'interests' and 'stakes' in their literature (Yuttapongsontorn et al., 2008). However, stakeholders' interests appear in diverse forms – they have influence or can influence the focal organisation (Freeman, 1984), they have power, legal and moral rights (Carroll, 1993), desired end states (Frooman, 1999), legitimacy and urgency (Rowley, 2004, as cited by Yuttapongsontorn et al., 2008), they have power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell et al., 1997). Stakeholder(s)' interest can either be direct or indirect; depending on the interest they have in the project in question (Mulenburg, 2007; Haughey ca, 2008).

Based on the role of the stakeholders associated with companies as postulated by Freeman (1984), Donaldson and Preston (1995), Rowley and Moldoveanu (2003), and Mulenburg (2007), it can be argued that the success of every project is largely dependent on these stakeholders, and as such the need to manage them well at all levels of the project life cycle is very crucial (Pan, 2005; Pan & Pan, 2006; Heravi et al. 2015). Project success and failure can therefore be linked to the perceptions of stakeholders about the value created by the project and the nature of the relationship that exists between the various stakeholders and the project team (Bourne, 2008). Thus, individuals and institutions that have stakes in the projects need to be explicitly

managed in order to bring about project success (Missonier & Loufrani-Fedida, 2014). This implies that, if the value being created by the project team is perceived by the project stakeholders as unable to create value or conforming to their satisfaction (Toor & Ogunlana, 2010), then the project will be seen as a failure and vice versa.

These stakeholders can be categorised into two groups – internal and external (Olander, 2007). As the names suggest, internal stakeholders are those stakeholders who are directly involved in the implementation of the project. External stakeholders, on the other hand, are those stakeholders who are not directly involved in the implementation of the project. Mulenburg (2007) shares a similar view but goes further to add a third category. According to Mulenburg (2007), the three stakeholder groups are: (i) stakeholders within the project organisation: senior management, sponsor, customers, and users. These stakeholders define the need and requirements for the project. They control the traditional project constraints of cost, time and scope. This includes the organisation of senior management, the sponsor and possibly others who by their position may influence the project. They are senior management who approve and provide resources needed for the project. In most projects, they are the end-users of the deliverables of the project or clients of the projects who act on behalf of the end-users; (ii) stakeholders within the project: these include the project manager, core team members, vendors and suppliers, and support staff. This is where the actual players of the project can be found. They are those who work directly in the project, carrying out the actual work of the project. They are very important stakeholders who make the deliverables come to pass; and (iii) stakeholders from outside organisations: regulators, licensing agencies, pressure groups, etc. They are indirectly involved in the project or the performing organisation. They do not participate in the project work. They are, however, relevant to the project's success because of their potential impact and/or influence on the project. In the UK and most developed countries, these stakeholders are as important as those who are directly involved in projects, as there are a lot of regulations and pressure groups which can influence the outcome of projects. This implies that efforts should be made to actively manage important stakeholders (Saebo et al., 2011).

In order to manage these stakeholders to bring about maximum co-operation in the project life cycle, all stakeholders who are directly involved must be part of the goal and objective setting and must be part of the planning of the project, and this must happen before the commencement of every project (Mulenburg, 2007; Bourne, 2008; Haughey, 2008). Stakeholders often become interested in projects when they actively contribute to goal and objective setting and, if this happens, it can improve business performance (Haughey, 2008). Seeking the views of stakeholders is therefore very crucial to the performance of the project (Haughey, 2008). Further, stakeholders are not always keen to participate in the project but engaging them at all stages of the project life cycle helps to bring about project success. Mulenburg (2007), Bourne (2008) and Haughey (2008) recommend that project managers should ensure that there is a good relationship among all stakeholders at all levels of the project life cycle.

In the case of Ghana and developing countries in general, the project management's ability to bring on board the various key players is very crucial; this is especially so in government projects, which have a strong stakeholder base. Most stakeholders provide resources for such projects and as such they tend to give guidance and orders as to how such projects should be managed (see World Bank, 2013; Fabian & Amir, 2011; Ghana Budget, 2013).

### **2.8.3 Stakeholder Theory and Government Project Failure**

Stakeholder theory was first used in the private sector context (Axelsson et al., 2012). Nevertheless, many writers have applied it in a government or public context in recent years (e.g. Elias et al., 2002; Pan, 2005; Pan & Pan, 2006; Flak & Nordheim, 2006; Sæbø et al., 2011)

For instance, Elias et al. (2002) use the stakeholder framework to highlight Research and Development (R & D) project management in New Zealand. In the study, they identify 10 stakeholders: special interest group, citizen action, community, media, financial, internal, government, supplier, legal & political and consumer. This approach has also been used by Pan (2005) to highlight why poor analysis of the stakeholders of

Singapore's e-procurement system project (E-PRO) was abandoned. Olander (2007) uses stakeholder theory to analyse stakeholder impact in construction project management. In an attempt to understand the dynamics of stakeholders in Norwegian government e-participation initiatives, Sæbø et al. (2011) identify politicians, administrators, consumers, activists and vendors as the stakeholders of these government projects.

## **2.9 OTHER THEORIES CONSIDERED**

### **2.9.1 Resource Dependency Theory**

The first theory that was considered for this study is the Resource Dependency Theory (RDT). RDT, which was propounded by Pfeffer and Salackcik in 1978, holds the view that resources external to organisations affect their behaviour, and as such the activities of an organisation are influenced by external environmental forces (Pfeffer & Salackcik, 1978). The fundamental assumptions underlying the RDT theory are that: organisations depend on resources and these resources come from sources external to the organisation (Hillman et al., 2009); these external environments consist of other organisations and therefore, the resources that an organisation needs are often in the hands of other organisations; organisations therefore depend on each other. As a result, those who possess resources have power; thus, the basis of power is resources. Therefore, power and resources are directly linked. These resources include: labour, capital, raw material, and others.

In project management, resources are very crucial for project implementation – as studies (Krigsman, 2006; Perkins, 2006; Teigland & Lindqvist, 2007; Sweis et al., 2008; Ruuska & Teigland, 2009) show that, without resources or enough of them, projects are bound to fail. This means that the project management's ability to procure the right resources is very crucial for the project's performance. In developing countries, reliance on external sources of resources (especially funding) for developmental projects is very high (see Fabian & Amir, 2011; World Bank, 2012; Ghana Budget, 2012, 2015), and as such the need for governments and government agencies and/or performing

organisations to develop skills necessary to win support from external donors is very crucial for project management.

Ghana's government relies heavily on the external environment (international organisations and governments, donor agencies and NGOs) for resources for project implementation. As stated in chapter one and in a previous section in this chapter, most developmental projects are funded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and other donor agencies. These external bodies control these projects directly or indirectly, depending on the agreement. They do this by setting up rules and regulations for the implementation of the project (see World Bank project life cycle for Ghana, 2012). Sometimes they set rigid conditionality that even affects the citizens of the country. Typical examples are the freezing of public sector employment by the IMF in Ghana in 2009 (GNA, 2009) and the on-going IMF bailout of Ghana (IMF, 2015). Further, in 2012, the UK Prime Minister, Mr David Cameron, issued a warning that if the Ghanaian government did not legalise gay/lesbian marriage, the UK would not give aid to the country again (GNA, 2012; Daily Guide, 2012; Ghanaweb, 2012). Many projects in Ghana have failed because donors or foreign partners have withdrawn their resources from them (Imani, 2010; Ghanaweb, 2012).

The literature indicates that Ghana's government projects depend greatly on external resources for their implementation. However, this study does not use this theory, because it only captures the resources part of this study and therefore it is not looking at the holistic view of the subject matter being investigated. Moreover, there are other components (such as stakeholders, and planning among others) of the research which are not captured. In addition, the research is more on the extent of project failure, causes of project failure and its subsequent effects on key stakeholders. Therefore, the research is more focused on stakeholders – the reasons (causes) for the failure of Ghanaian government projects are more related to the stakeholders.

### **2.9.2 Resource-Based View Theory**

The next theory considered is Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory. RBV is closely

related to RDT. RBV is a strategic management theory that is widely used by managers in project management (Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014). It argues that resources are rare; however, they are the main drivers of competitive advantage, especially in project management capabilities (Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014).

RBV argues further that firms have a competitive advantage over other firms and this is dependent upon the resources that those firms have, which are rare, inimitable and non-sustainable, and as such ability to have these can influence a firm's competitive advantage (Wu, 2010; Killen et al., 2012; Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014; Ghapanchi et al., 2014). Thus, competitive advantage and firm performance are strongly influenced by the firm's resources: there is a strong link between resources and a firm's performance and competitive advantage (Ghapanchi et al., 2014). In other words, resources that are available to firms are scarce, especially a firm's resources in the form of capabilities, and as such the ability to have sustained resources and capabilities gives the firm a competitive advantage and good performance. In a nutshell, RBV holds the view that resources are inevitable if a firm wants to have a competitive advantage or good performance.

In project management, performing organisations develop certain capabilities (human resources) which are difficult to imitate and this is directly associated with performance; this gives them competitive advantage (Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014). These resources are both tangible and intangible (Killen et al., 2012; Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014).

This shows that project success is dependent largely on resources, which indicates that resources are valuable to firms (Hulland et al., 2007). However, this theory is not used in this study because, like the Resource Dependency Theory, it concentrates on resources and focuses slightly on the knowledge and/or skills of project management. Nevertheless, there are other components (such as stakeholders and planning among others) of the research which are not captured. Moreover, the research is more on the causes of project failure and its subsequent effects on key stakeholders. Therefore, the research is more focused on stakeholders – the reasons (causes) for the failure of Ghanaian government projects are more related to the stakeholders.

### **2.9.3 Knowledge Management Theory**

Knowledge Management Theory was also considered for this research; however, it was not sufficient to capture the necessary elements in the research. Like the RBV, organisational knowledge serves as a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Birasnav, 2013). In other words, knowledge is a prelude to competitive advantage. In essence, a firm's management of knowledge is directly related to its performance, and as such firms that are able to manage knowledge correctly have the capability to sustain competitive advantage (Birasnav, 2013).

Due to the valuable nature of knowledge and the fact that it resides in the brains of human beings, Birasnav advocates that firms must “develop strategies to create organisational knowledge through leveraging employees' knowledge” (Birasnav, 2013, p.1). Thus, making conscious efforts to manage knowledge enhances a firm's ability to innovate and/or develop new products to survive in the turbulent competitive marketplace (Birasnav, 2013).

This knowledge can be classified into two parts – explicit and tacit knowledge (Parent et al., 2014). “Explicit knowledge is more easily articulated, written or codified, tacit knowledge is rather inarticulate, developed with experience, and deepened through problem solving activities” (Parent et al., 2014, p.2). On the other hand, tacit knowledge is understood as particularly valuable due to its nature and the degree to which it is complex, (non)codifiable, (non)teachable, system dependent, and results in observable products (Zander & Kogut, 1995). However, Parent et al. (2014) associate the application of the two types of knowledge with both information and knowledge.

### **2.9.4 Corporate Social Responsibility**

Another theory that was considered is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Many definitions and meanings have been provided by different authors; however, the theme that runs through CSR is that organisations take responsibility for the impact that their activities have on their customers, employees, communities and the environment in

which they operate (Russell, 2008). In other words, CSR has to do with the voluntary responsibility of an organisation towards its stakeholder(s). However, recent developments by pressure groups and/or governments over the world have made CSR go beyond the traditional understanding of the concept. Moreover, in practice, CSR means something different to corporate managers (Dahlsrud, 2008). A review of 37 definitions of CSR by Dahlsrud (2008), for instance, shows that there are five main dimensions to CSR: stakeholder, social, economic, voluntariness and environmental dimensions.

In project management and in the Ghanaian government's projects in particular, CSR can be approached from all three dimensions provided by Dahlsrud (2008). From the stakeholder perspective, Ghanaian government projects have a strong stakeholder base. In most cases, they are carried out because of foreign influence and donor or funding agencies. Typical examples have been provided in chapter one and previous sections of this chapter. Socially, it is the social responsibility of the Ghanaian government and performing organisations of Ghanaian government projects to provide help and support to local areas where projects are carried out. This provides the social well-being of citizens. Economically, it is the responsibility of the government to implement projects to improve the economic life of the citizens as well as the country as a whole. Voluntarily, it can be argued that the government is obliged by the constitution to implement projects; however, this can be viewed from two different perspectives: one, the donor perspective – this is a situation where donors volunteer to fund projects to enhance the life of the Ghanaian populace; and two, the performing organisation perspective – a situation whereby organisations performing government projects voluntarily provide support to locals in the form of infrastructures, funding for schools, among other things. The environmental dimension is very crucial in most Ghanaian government projects (see World Bank, 2013). Most projects carried out in developing countries have a very significant effects on locals (Campbell, 2012; Cash, 2012), and the case of Ghana is not different. Projects in Ghana often have environmental hazards and as such it has become very important for the government to ensure that projects, carried out by both public and private organisations, provide the necessary support to the immediate environment in which they operate (Amasa, 1975; Obiri et al., 2006).

However, this theory was not used because it does not capture all the themes in the study. For instance, it does not capture resources, communications, knowledge or skills, among others.

### **2.9.5 Square Root Framework**

This study is supported by the Square Root Framework. In an attempt to define what should constitute project failure, Atkinson (1999) provides a framework called *The Square Route Framework*. According to the framework, project failure should go beyond the triangle stage. Atkinson (1999) contends that it is not sufficient to judge projects' performance at the 'iron triangle' phase. Like De Lone et al. (1992), Meyer (1994), and Toor and Ogunlana (2010), he posits that project success/failure should go beyond the time, cost, and requirement phase to include the post-delivery phase to look at the product phase. In view of this, Atkinson (1999) adds three more ways in which projects should be assessed. This framework uses the Information System (IS) as an example and argues that, apart from the 'iron triangle', project should be assessed on the Information System, benefits to organisations, and benefits to the stakeholder community. The square root framework further states that a successful IS project is one that IS has maintainability, reliability, validity, and quality usage. The benefits to an organisation are provided by an IS system that improves efficiency and effectiveness, increases profitability, meets strategic goals, reduces waste, and organisational-learning. The benefits to the stakeholder community include: satisfied users, positive social and environmental impact, personal development, professional learning, contractors' profits, capital suppliers, content project team, and economic impact on the surrounding community. The diagram below throws more light on the framework.

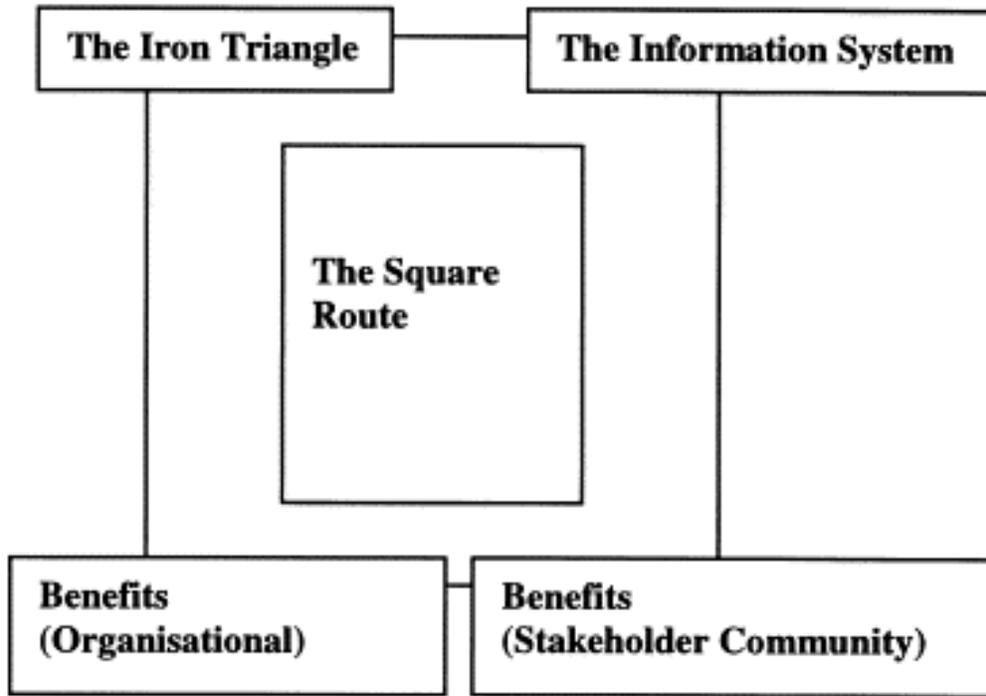
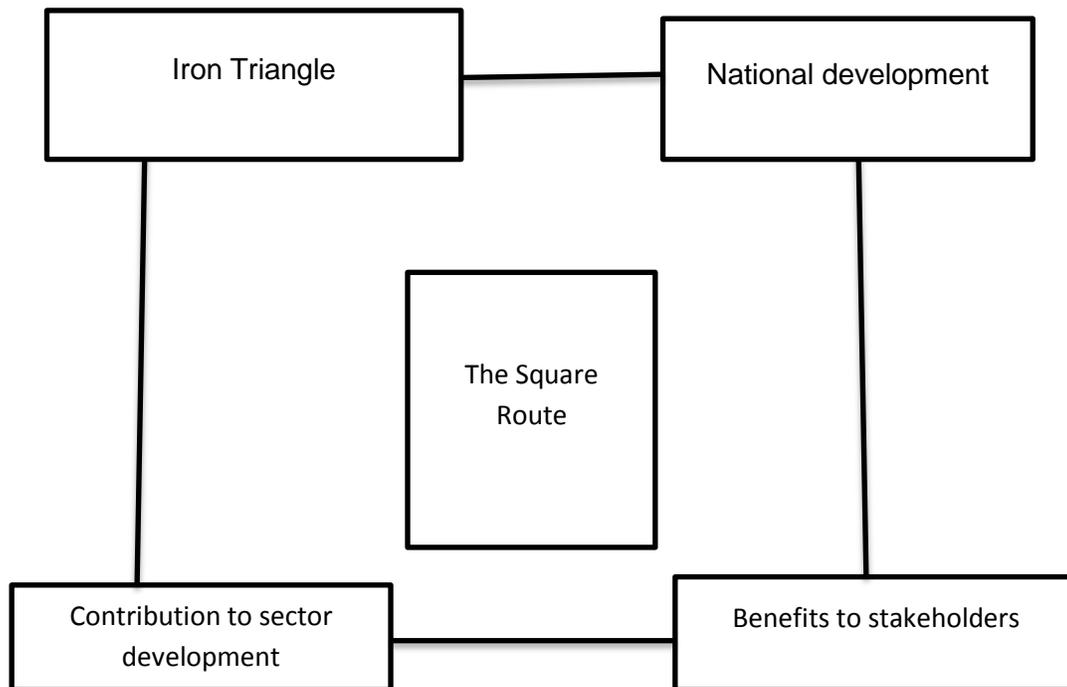


Figure 11 The Square Route Framework

Source: Atkinson (1999, p.341)

Atkinson's (1999) Square Route Framework is comprehensive and all-encompassing; and therefore, the square root framework is adapted for this study. Thus, this study adapts the framework by replacing the IS and benefits to organisation with sector and national development respectively. Therefore, in this study Ghana government project failure is examined using the six failure criteria outlined in the adapted framework presented in the figure 12 below.

Figure 12 The Square Route Framework for Ghanaian government projects



Source: Author's Construct (Adopted from Atkinson, 1999, p.341)

## 2.10 STAKEHOLDERS OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

In the case of Ghanaian government projects, the stakeholders are numerous; however, for the purpose of this research, only key stakeholders are identified and used. In doing so, Freeman (1984) and Mitchel et al.'s (1997) theories will be used as the basis for identifying the stakeholders. This offers a wider approach for identification of stakeholders and their attributes, which can help group the various stakeholders, in order to know which set(s) of stakeholders are key in Ghanaian government projects.

Using the stakeholder identification methods described above, the following stakeholders have been identified as key stakeholders of Ghanaian government projects: the government, general public, contractors, donors, consultants, local businesses, and financial institutions.

In government or public projects, the emphasis is more often than not placed on the

general population, be it at the national or local level. The aim is often to create goods and/or services in the form of 'physical or soft' products for the enhancement of their livelihood. In the case of development projects, Ngacho and Das (2014) specifically argue that they are able to create both economic wealth and social services in such countries as well as having negative impacts and these are on the general populace. In fact, in some projects such as urban development projects, some authors equate stakeholders to the community or the public (Yang, 2014). Moreover, the citizens can influence the type of project to be implemented. In Ghana, many projects have been implemented as a result of citizens' demands, agitations and demonstrations. A typical example is the Eastern Corridor Road Project, which commenced in 2014 as a result of the ultimatum given to the government by the chiefs and opinion leaders of the Volta Region (Ghanaweb, 2014; Daily Guide, 2014). Therefore, the citizenry becomes one of the main or key stakeholders, in that the deliverables of the project impact their life. In addition, in most cases, especially developed countries, such projects are financed by tax-payers' money and, as such, the tax-payers become key stakeholders. The public, therefore, are only interested in the impact the project will have on them (Diallo & Thuillier, 2004).

Secondly, the government and the party in power: based on the above explanation, it can be argued that the government is a key stakeholder in Ghanaian government projects as the government serves as an agency executing projects on behalf of the citizens. In addition, development projects play a key role in the growth of the economy in developing countries by contributing to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and through employment generation – these are regarded as the responsibility of the government to foster through the implementation of projects (Ngacho & Das, 2014). Therefore, the sitting government and its political party becomes a key stakeholder in the implementation of such projects. This is echoed in the work of Amponsah (2013), which argues that the performance of the Ghanaian government as a whole is partly influenced by its ability to execute projects successfully and that is the reason why, when elections are near, the government cuts 'sods' and commissions a lot of projects.

Thirdly, the contractors – contractors are the direct executors of Ghanaian government

projects. Fourthly, donor agencies and countries are those who provide funding in the form of cash and in kind. Moreover, consultants provide the technical advice and monitoring services to executors of these projects and therefore could influence the government's project performance; as such, failure will affect them and vice versa. In addition, the local community including their businesses are also key stakeholders which could be affected by these projects. They could be impacted by the execution of these projects. Lastly, financial institutions – they provide financial support to these projects. In fact, in Ghana and many developing countries, financial institutions would have to raise certificates of payment and other payment on behalf of the government.

## **2.11 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS**

First and foremost, the literature established that Ghanaian government projects fail (World Bank Report, 2004, 2007, Central Press, 2011; Daily Guide, 2012; GNA, 2012, 2014); however, there were no statistics that indicated the level of failure using different failure criteria such as time, cost, deliverable, stakeholder satisfaction, contribution to the sector where they are implemented and national development. Further, it did not reveal which of these failure criteria perform the worst (thus, fails the worst). In other words, in comparative terms, the literature did not show which failure criterion was the worst.

To address this, the study intends to answer the question below:

1. *Which of the failure criteria identified in the literature do Ghanaian government projects fail most?*

Secondly, the literature identified a number of factors that cause projects to fail, which included expertise or knowledge (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009), funding (Fabian & Amir, 2011), planning (Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011), resources (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009), communication (Ochieg & Price, 2010), scope change (Kaliba et al., 2009), and socio-cultural setting (Maube et al., 2008). However, it was revealed that projects are unique due to the fundamental differences that exist across them, and that no project is similar

to another (Soderlund, 2004; Mir & Pinnington, 2014). Due to this, it was established that the causes are often unique to certain industries and the performing countries' systems (Amid et al., 2012), geographical location (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010), socio-cultural settings (Mukabeta et al., 2008). This indicates that in the case of Ghana, the causes might be the same or different and therefore, in order to identify the causes of Ghanaian government projects failure, the questions below would be answered:

2. *What are the factors that causes of Ghanaian government projects failure and their relative importance?*

Thirdly, the literature indicated that different categories of respondents or a study's participants agreed on the most important factors (Frimpong et al., 2003; Fugar & Agyakwah-Baah, 2010). Therefore this research would find out the degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important (influential) factors of Ghanaian government projects failure. In order to do so, the following hypothesis will be tested:

*Null Hypothesis =  $H_0$  = there is a high degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important factors that causes of Ghanaian government projects failure*

*Alternate Hypothesis= $H_1$  = there is a low degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important factors that causes of Ghanaian government projects failure*

Furthermore, the literature indicated that project failure brings about certain effects (Aibinu & Jagboro, 2002; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007, Pourrostan & Ismail, 2011). However, in relation to effects on stakeholders; which this study is focused, there were no specific prior studies that have been devoted to the project management literature. To identify the effects, the study intends to address the following question:

*What are the effects (negatives) of Ghanaian government projects failure on key stakeholders associated with such projects and their relative importance (severity)?*

In addition, like the causes factors, the study intends to establish whether there is an agreement among the three categories of respondents on the most important effects, and therefore the hypothesis to test this is:

*Null Hypothesis =  $H_0$  = there is a high degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important effects of Ghanaian government projects failure*

*Alternate Hypothesis =  $H_1$  = there is a low degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important effects of Ghanaian government projects failure*

Moreover, the study intends to identify the stakeholders that can be affected most by Ghanaian government project failure. In order to do so, the question below will be answered:

*3. What are the most affected stakeholders of Ghanaian government projects failure?*

## **2.12 SUMMARY**

This chapter was divided into two main sections – a review of prior literature on project failure and causes and effects of project failure, and the theoretical framework development for the study.

In this respect, the sub-sections began by discussing the concept of project failure. The main rationale was to paint the broader picture of project failure within which the Ghanaian government's project failure framework could be better appreciated. As the main purpose of this study centres on project failure, this sub-section provided the

various schools of thought about what constitutes project failure by highlighting the extent to which projects fail in the world and developing countries, and Ghana in particular. However, because this study is about projects and project management, it began by shedding light on what constitutes a project and project management. In addition, the sub-section discussed in detail causes of project failure and the effects of project failure on stakeholders by highlighting the flaws in earlier studies, and how this research intends to bridge the literature gap.

Secondly, this sub-section has discussed in details the various theoretical blocks that underpin this study. The section had two main purposes – firstly, it discussed the theories upon which this study is based, by showing how they fit into the research topic and provided justification for the choice by linking it with previous research that used the theories. Secondly, this helped the researcher to develop a theoretical framework for the study. The section was divided into three main sub-sections. Sub-section one discussed stakeholder theory as the principal theory for this research. The second sub-section began by discussing the various theories they were considered but were not used for this research by highlighting why they were not used.

Further, the section highlighted how this applies to Ghanaian government projects. In addition, the final theoretical framework for this study was presented – this is adapted from Atkinson's square route framework developed in 1999 (Atkinson, 1999). This discussed the four main basis of assessing project performance: project baseline; time, budget and requirement; contribution to sector where projects are implemented; and national development and stakeholder satisfaction. This was found to be more comprehensive and also fits into the study. Finally, research questions and hypotheses were presented and developed respectively, based on the literature.

The next chapter discusses the methodology for the study by highlighting on the various research philosophies, approaches, strategies, methods and sampling techniques considered for study. Choices and reasons for each choice are provided – this does not discuss how data was collected.

# CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

The reason for every piece of research is to reach findings that are not biased, but reliable and valid by conducting enquiry and investigation (Simon, 1996; Bell & Bryman, 2007; Bryman, 2012). They enable the researcher to make clarification and confirmation of previously researched information (Simon, 1996). New relevant information on the research topic could also be unearthed (Simon, 1996).

Research methodology is the overall approach to the research process from the theoretical underpinning to the collection and analyses of the data (Hussey & Hussey, 1997). It is the technique used for data collection, and this involves specific instruments such as structured interview, participant observation, questionnaire, group focus discussions, etc. (Bell & Bryman, 2007). In essence, research methodology describes the whole processes and procedures use in the undertaking of research investigation (Bryman, 2012). In other words, research methodology tries to answer the following questions: (1) why certain types of data are collected; (2) what data in itself are collected; (3) sources of data collected; (4) how they are collected; and (5) how they are analysed.

As the name suggests, methodology discusses all the necessary approaches, procedures, and/or methods that the researcher uses in collating the required and necessary data for the study being conducted. For this research, all the data and information that the project needs in order to make justifiable conclusions come under the methodology. The methods and techniques used for this study are identified, and the reason for each choice is provided under this section. It comments on limitations and delimitations of this study. In addition, the strengths and weakness of the approach

used are discussed. The final section summarises the chapter by highlighting the main points presented within it.

### **3.1 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY**

Research philosophy is the development of knowledge in terms of its nature in a particular field of study (Johnson & Clark, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Saunders et al., 2012). It describes the knowledge assumptions adopted by a researcher and how specific research approaches, research strategies and methods could be used by the researcher for the research being carried out (Johnson & Clark, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Saunders et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, the particular approach adopted for any piece of research influences the methodology to be used to carry out the research (Simon, 1996). As Simon (1996) argues, there is never a single, standard, correct method of carrying out a piece of research. This is because there are many ways to tackle a problem - some good, some bad, but probably several good ways. There is no single perfect design. A research method for a given problem is not like the solution to a problem in algebra. It is more like a recipe for beef stroganoff: there is no one best recipe. This implies that there are several research approaches. However, the two main philosophies identified in the Western tradition of science are positivism (scientific) and interpretivist (anti-positivist) (Galliers, 1991; Hussey & Hussey, 1997; Jankowics, 2000; Bryman, 2004, 2012). This section discusses in detail the two main traditions by highlighting their strengths and weakness. This also indicates the choice for this study, by providing a justification for the choice. Also, other philosophical approaches are discussed in order to justify the choice for this research.

### **3.2 PHILOSOPHICAL ASSUMPTIONS**

Researchers' philosophical assumptions of (about) human knowledge and the nature of reality are shaped by their understanding of the research subjects – how the

researchers adopt/adapt their research methods and how they interpret their research findings (Crotty, 2003; Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, the research philosophies and assumptions about the world form the bases of the methodology and methods being used for their research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2012). In the main, research philosophies consist of three main assumptions: ontology, epistemology and axiology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011). The next sub-section discusses these in detail.

### **3.2.1 Ontology**

Ontology is mainly concerned with the nature of reality (Saunders et al., 2012, p.130). Ontology is about how the researcher makes assumptions about how the world functions (Lincoln et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2012; Barmayehvar, 2013). Easterby-Smith et al. (2012, p.18) specifically define ontology as “philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality”. Accordingly, Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) classify ontology into four major positions: realism, internal realism, relativism, and nominalism. The table below provides a summary of these types of ontology. Specifically, this highlights the nature of reality, and this nature of reality consists of two major opposing views – objectivism and subjectivism (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011). However, both provide researchers with an acceptable, valid way to gain knowledge (Saunders et al., 2012).

Objectivism points out that, social entities exist in reality external to and independent of social actors in relation to their existence (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, their existences are not subject to the interpretation of social actors. On the other hand, subjectivism, as the name indicates, posits that social phenomena are in fact created by social actors through their existence (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011). In other words, the existence of a phenomenon is subject to social actors and therefore reality is subjective and this subjectivity is based on social actors. In essence, reality is in constant revision – because social actors keep changing their perception (Saunders et al., 2012).

Saunders et al. associate this with constructionism or social constructionism. This is further discussed below in 3.4.7.

Table 3 Types of ontology

Ontology	Realism	Internal realism	Relativism	Nominalism
Truths	Single truth	Truths exist but they are obscure	There are many truths	There is no truth
Facts	Facts exist and can be revealed	Facts are concrete but cannot be accessed directly	Facts depend on the observer's viewpoint	Facts are all human creations

Source: Easterby-Smith et al. (2012)

### 3.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerns with what constitutes acceptable knowledge and the information that researchers consider to be significant in their area of research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Easterby-Smith et al. (2012, p.18) specifically define epistemology as “a general set of assumptions about ways of inquiring into the nature of the world”. In other words, epistemology refers to the relationship between the knower and the fact that can be known (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Creswell, 2007; Barmayehvar, 2013). Thus, epistemology is about how knowledge can be achieved or attained (Saunders et al., 2012).

Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) classify epistemology into two opposing positions – positivism and social constructionism. A full explanation is provided in sub-section 3.4, *Philosophical position*.

### 3.2.3 Axiology

Axiology is the branch of research philosophy that is concerned with ethics, aesthetics, and religion that play an important role in forming a part of the fundamental philosophical aspects of paradigms (Lincoln et al., 2011). Thus, axiology studies judgement about values (Saunders et al., 2012). This points out that people’s values are the fundamental reasons for encouraging them to participate in a particular action (Heron, 1996). Axiology highlights the significance of researchers’ judgements about values and principles during the research process (Creswell, 2007). This means that

values play an important role in any credible research that reflects the choice of philosophical approach and this can influence the credibility of the research (Saunders et al., 2012).

Axiology can assist researchers in viewing the embeddedness of ethics within a paradigm and considering the role of spirituality in human inquiry within dialogue (Lincoln et al., 2011; Barmayehvar, 2013). Nevertheless, axiology has been overlooked in scientific investigations due to the religious elements in the findings (Lincoln et al., 2011).

In spite of this, the broad definition of religion would embrace spirituality as the encouragement for constructivists to be closer to participative inquirers and for critical theorists to be closer to both (Lincoln et al., 2011).

### **3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

A research paradigm can be defined as a set of philosophical assumptions and beliefs that serve as a guide to the researcher's actions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It describes the way in which to explore social phenomena through a particular understanding (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, paradigm refers to research results as a scientific revolution from independent and creative thinking which can provide new theories, change people's views about the world and provide valuable questions for scientists (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

Until the work of Kuhn (1962), the concept was not popular among researchers; however, it has increased in popularity in recent years – nevertheless, there are a number of meanings and interpretations applied to it (Mangan et al., 2004; Saunders et al., 2012). For instance, Saunders et al. (2012, p.140-141) define a paradigm as “a way of examining social phenomena from which particular understandings of these phenomena can be gained and explanations attempted”. This is often used in social science research (Saunders et al., 2012).

### **3.4 PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION**

Research philosophy is the assumptions about human knowledge and realities of the world during research, and this affects how a researcher chooses a research strategy and methods (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, these assumptions of the nature of reality inform or shape the methods and strategies for a particular piece of research. There are various philosophical positions that can assist a researcher to choose the most appropriate approach for any piece of research (Cooper & Schindler, 2001; Barmayehvar, 2013). However, the two main research philosophies in research are positivism and interpretivism, which epitomise two opposing views about how valid knowledge can be achieved (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011).

As Simon (1996) argues, there is no one single way of conducting research; however, the fundamental assumption is that the researcher needs to adopt certain premises that would explain the research data (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). For example, in the natural sciences such as medicine, the approach that is often used is based on positivism philosophy, whilst in the social sciences such as management, interpretivism is often used (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). In other words, one approach does not fit all, and therefore the research needs to adopt a position that best fits the research investigation (Simon, 1996). The next sub-sections explain the various philosophical positions; and provide the justification for the selection of the ones used in this study.

#### **3.4.1 Positivism**

Positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond (Bryman, 2004, 2012). Positivism is about how one can make sense to others, with an underlying assumption that no one is perfect and, as a matter of fact, knowledge is attained by gradually discovering more about what is out there in the world (Jankowics, 2000). Under positivist research, the emphasis is often placed on a highly structured and systematic

methodology in its data collection (Gill & Johnson, 1997; Saunders et al., 2012).

With this research approach, the researcher(s) is independent, and neither affects nor is affected by the subject of the research (Remenyi et al., 1998). Research results under this approach provide derivations of laws or law-like generalisations that are similar to those of the physical and natural sciences (Remenyi et al., 1998) and, as a result, “it is so embedded in our society that knowledge claims not grounded in positivist thought are simply dismissed as unscientific and therefore invalid” (Hirschheim, 1985, p.33). Gill and Johnson (2010) argue that only observable social reality can produce valid knowledge and the outcome of a study that has adopted a positivism view point can create law-like generalisations. Some authors assert that only observable phenomena can produce credible data (Saunders et al., 2012). However, there is a growing debate as to whether positivism philosophy is entirely suitable for social science research (Hirschheim, 1985).

Proponents of the positivist approach often associate positivism with the use of quantitative data (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2012); however, in certain circumstances qualitative research can also adopt this approach (Simons, 1996; Saunders et al., 2003).

With this philosophical position, the important point is that the data from this study have more reliability, as the methodology uses an existing theory to create hypotheses and the data collected under this study can be used for statistical analysis (Cooper & Schindler, 2011; Saunders et al., 2012). This leads to testing and re-testing of the hypothesis – it can be confirmed, refuted or re-tested (Saunders et al., 2012). As a result, this follows a highly structured method in order for research results to be replicable and thus be reliable (Gill & Johnson, 2010). In the main, positivism involves searching for the truth and this can be attained only by embarking on scientific research with the use of scientific methods (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln et al., 2011; Bryman, 2004, 2012).

### 3.4.2 Interpretivism

On the other hand, the interpretivism approach to research is subject to consciousness and each case is viewed as unique (Remenyi et al., 1998). Interpretivism originates from two intellectual traditions – phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (Saunders et al., 2012). Phenomenology is discussed in the next sub-heading, whilst symbolic interactionism is discussed in the next chapter (the Methods chapter), under the theory behind the development of the questionnaire for this research. The meaning of each case is therefore subjective to the individual(s) involved in the study. This implies that the researcher becomes an intrinsic or an integral part of the situation or case(s) being investigated, hence, the researcher’s perceived knowledge of the situation cannot be completely separately from the actual situation on the ground that is being investigated (Saunders et al., 2012). This therefore implies that subjects can influence the research findings. Here, the researcher becomes a participant or part of the study being undertaking. However, the purpose of making an investigation is to gain sufficient understanding of a phenomenon in order to make future predictions (Remenyi et al., 1998).

Proponents of interpretivism advocate that researchers should understand the differences between humans in their roles as social actors (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, research results are subjective and/or relative, which assumes that realities exist in mental constructions, social and individual experiments, on a local and specific basis rather than an objective basis (Guba & Lincoln, 2005), and therefore results may not be able to be replicated and cannot therefore be generalised (Saunders et al., 2012).

The main distinctions between positivism and interpretivism are summarised in Table 4 below. Moreover, other research philosophies are explained in the next sub-sections.

Table 4 Research Philosophy

Positivism	Interpretivism
High reliability Produces quantitative data Generalises from samples to population Uses large samples Concerned with hypothesis testing Highly specific data Artificial location Low validity	Low reliability Produces qualitative data Generalises from one setting to another Uses small samples Generating theories Rich and subjective data Natural location High validity

Source: Hussey & Hussey (1997, p.54)

### **3.4.3 Realism**

Realism is a philosophical position which comes from the positivism tradition. It takes a scientific position to the development of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2012). Saunders et al., 2012) argue that the essence of realism is that what the senses express about reality is the truth. This means that reality is independent of the mind or human beings (Mingers, 2004; Saunders et al., 2012), and that we can gain reliable knowledge about the reality of the world (Mingers, 2004).

There are two types of realism – direct realism and critical realism. Direct realism assumes that the real world or reality of the world is what people experience through their senses (Saunders et al., 2012). On the other hand, critical realism assumes that the experiences of people are the same as their sensation; that is to say, the real world or reality is the image of things in the world (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, “the condition[s] for knowledge does not arise in our minds but in the structure of reality, and that such knowledge will not be universal and ahistorical” (Mingers, 2004, p.92). Realism posits further that the world will exist whether there is the existence of humans or not, and therefore reality is independent of experience (which is experienced by human) (Mingers, 2004). In other words, reality does not need the existence of humans to experience it in order to confirm the reality of the world. Critical realism is more about realism and empiricism, in that it combines observation with causal relationships and none of them are adequate for knowing reality (Mingers, 2004). Realism argues that using causal relationships to establish law-like rules is flawed, in that it could be a mere coincidence (Mingers, 2004).

### **3.4.4 Pragmatism**

Pragmatism assumes that “knowledge and understanding should be derived from direct experience” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012, p.344). Thus, pragmatism is “about the purpose of science – that it is essentially a practical activity aimed at producing useful

knowledge rather than understanding the true nature of the world” (Mingers, 2004, p.90). Therefore, in effect, pragmatism is about resolving a problem in a specific situation (Mingers, 2004). In other words, knowledge of the world can only be achieved through practical experience of reality, and reality here means a specific situation and/or problem (Saunders et al., 2012). Saunders et al. argue further that the importance of the meaning of an idea or research findings are enshrined in its practical consequence.

Authors of pragmatism argue that there are multiple realities and diverse ways of interpreting the world and conducting research since no point of view can convey the entire picture (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008; Saunders et al., 2012). This implies that research about reality of knowledge is situation-specific. They uphold that individuals are always involved in the process of adaptation within the continuously transforming social world (Jeon, 2004). That is, the ontological position of pragmatism is primarily concerned with relativism or subjectivism and only slightly associated with internal realism (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

### **3.4.5 Empiricism**

This is a research philosophy that originates from the positivist tradition. It posits that acceptable knowledge is one that uses science to explain events that can be empirically observed; this should follow universal laws in the form of certain given conditions: whenever event X occurs then event Y will occur (Mingers, 2004). Empiricist argues that anything that cannot be experienced cannot be; thus, existence is dependent on experience and therefore the ontological position is that knowledge is only achievable on the basis of experience (Mingers, 2004). This is in sharp contradiction to the realist view discussed in sub-section 3.4.3

### **3.4.6 Phenomenology**

Phenomenology concerns itself with how human beings experience their worlds rather than how physical events impacts upon one another (Foddy, 2001). Thus, it considers

how human beings make sense of the world around them (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, meanings of the world are subject to how the actors in society experience society; therefore, collection of data under this research is sensitive to the actors' meanings of the world (Foddy, 2001). This is under the subjectivist tradition.

### **3.4.7 Constructionism**

Constructionism, which is also called social constructionism, views reality as being socially constructed (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, social actors have different ways of perceiving reality and how they interpret the reality of the world. This is because social actors have different ways of viewing the world, which means that the reality of the world is relative (Saunders et al., 2012). This affects social actors' relationships with others; thus, how social actors view and interpret the world influences how they act in relation to other actors (Saunders et al., 2012). This keeps changing over time, when these actors change their perception and how they interpret the world. This is under the interpretivist tradition.

### **3.4.8 Hermeneutics**

Hermeneutics is a research philosophy that holds the view that new ways of interpreting textual material comprise the formal recording of written texts and spoken words (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). The ontological position of hermeneutics is relativism and somewhat related to internal realism (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

The hermeneutics philosophy came about as a result of Protestant groups in seventeenth-century when Germany was trying to interpret the meaning of the Holy Bible (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Proponents of hermeneutics such as Gadamer (1989) assert that contemporary interpretations of earlier texts are influenced by culture, and as such interpreters have to understand the contextual situation of the earlier texts' writers. However, this idea has been criticised as having a gap between the author and the reader due to temporal differences called *distanciation* (Ricoeur, 1981). Based on

this argument put forward by Ricoeur, Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) argue that there may not be any single accurate interpretation of a particular text, because writings and readings are context-dependent.

### **3.4.9 Postmodernism**

Postmodernism with nominalism ontology emphasizes the experimental movement in the architecture and the arts, but critiques the scientific development due to its discontinuation and divergence (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Postmodernism was originally publicised in Jean-François Lyotard's (1984) book called *The Postmodern Condition*; however, the term had been implicitly used since 1926 (Chia, 2008). This philosophical position also challenges the role of industrial organisations within society; however, it highlights the role of invisible aspects of an organisation as a dynamic community (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

### **3.4.10 Feminism**

The feminist research philosophy is nominalist ontology; this came about as a result of a strong critique of the status and role of women in society since women's capabilities were being undervalued by society (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). In social science research, feminism in terms of epistemology can be categorised into two – empiricism and standpoint (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

Feminist empiricism points out that the problem is not with science itself, although the procedures should be rectified (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). On the other hand, the feminist standpoint, which is more of a radical view, posits that social sciences and their methods are basically defective and therefore they require complete reconsideration (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

### 3.4.11 Structuration Theory

Structuration theory, which was propounded by Giddens in 1984, holds the idea of duality of structures (Giddens, 1984 as cited by Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Giddens argues that structure and agency should not be pre-established because each is formed and reformed by the other; thus, there are continual interactions between social structure and social action (Giddens, 1984 as cited by Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Further, he posits that science has universal laws and it fundamentally differs from the social sciences, which have contextually dependent laws, and therefore social scientists should use common language rather specialist language in order to provide meaningful and effective insights into social science (Giddens, 1984; as cited by Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

Table 5 Other Research philosophies

Research Philosophy	Characteristics/Features
<b>Realism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primacy of ontology – the world would exist whether or not humans exist</li> <li>• Reality exists that is independent of human thoughts and beliefs</li> <li>• Knowledge is acquired through direct experience and observation</li> </ul>
<b>Critical realism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condition for knowledge is based on structure reality</li> <li>• Knowledge is not universal &amp; ahistorical</li> <li>• Rejection of idealism and empiricism as standalones for knowing (epistemology)</li> <li>• Causal effect of the world implies existence regardless of perception, or reality exists independent of knowledge of it</li> <li>• Non-determinist causal tendencies that reside at the level of the real and not the empirical</li> <li>• Successful theories are representative of what exists</li> <li>• Mode of inference is retrodution (neither inductive or deduction)</li> </ul>
<b>Pragmatism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Situation (problem)-specific</li> <li>• Practical or experience</li> </ul>
<b>Empiricism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic observation</li> <li>• Law-like findings that follow natural regularities</li> <li>• Principles of inductions</li> <li>• Laws of causality</li> <li>• Universal generalisation</li> <li>• What can be perceived exists</li> </ul>
<b>Phenomenology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence precedes Essence</li> <li>• Descriptive in philosophy</li> <li>• Interpretation of phenomena or others' perceptions</li> <li>• It seeks to understand the meaning of Being rather than what can be known</li> <li>• Knowledge can only be acquired through experience</li> <li>• The researcher can influence the findings because s/he is part of the research.</li> </ul>
<b>Constructionism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no intransitive objects for social science to investigate</li> <li>• Social phenomena are intrinsically (inherently) meaningful and knowledge does not exist independently</li> <li>• Knowledge is context-specific</li> <li>• Ontology is relative and methodology is subjective</li> </ul>
<b>Structuration Theory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duality of structures</li> <li>• Continual interactions between social structure and social action</li> <li>• Science has universal laws and it fundamentally differs from the social sciences</li> </ul>
<b>Feminism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recognition of females in scientific research</li> </ul>
<b>Postmodernism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ontology emphasises the experimental movement in architecture and the arts</li> </ul>

<p><b>Hermeneutics</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of invisible aspects of an organisation as a dynamic community</li> <li>• Research philosophy that holds the view that new ways of interpreting textual material comprise the formal recording of written texts and spoken words</li> <li>• The ontological position of hermeneutics is relativism and is somewhat related to internal realism</li> </ul>
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### 3.4.12 Selected Research Philosophy

The first part of the study uses a qualitative survey instrument – semi-structured interview. This is under interpretivist philosophy, which states that research is subject to consciousness and each case is viewed as unique (Remenyi et al., 1998). Due to the complexity and uniqueness of business situations, business research methods' authors (Saunders et al., 2012) have advocated the use of interpretivist philosophy to interpret the actions of subjects. Therefore, in line with these authors' prescriptions and the research objectives, the first part of this study adopts the interpretivist position. The research intends to find out the perceptions that project management practitioners, contractors and the general public have about the extent of project failure, and causes and effects of project failure in Ghanaian government projects. This therefore requires collecting opinions, views, perceptions and/or how these respondents think about the subject matter. As a result, qualitative data in the form of perception require an interpretivist approach. Thus, the perceptions of respondents are interpreted to develop a theory.

The second part of this study uses a non-experimental quantitative survey evaluation design. This is situated within the positivism research philosophy, whose fundamental epistemological position states that genuine knowledge can only be derived from and validated by science, and that the only knowledge is scientific knowledge, relying more on quantitative observation data and statistical analysis (Bryman, 2004; 2012; Saunders et al., 2012). This part of the research seeks to establish facts about the subject under study, as stated by Saunders et al. (2012). This choice is informed by the research objective, which wants to have statistical facts on the state of project failure, its causes and its effects on key stakeholders of the Ghanaian government's project failure.

However, the overall research approach is based more on an interpretivist research

philosophy. Researchers assuming this approach hold the view that reality of the world is not discovered, it is constructed by persons involved in the study by means of interactions with the object under study (Creswell, 1998; Robson, 2002). Adopting an interpretive approach to the study will enable the researcher to interact with various stakeholders associated with Ghanaian government projects, in order to gain valuable knowledge about causes of their failure and their negative subsequent effects on key stakeholders associated with such projects. With the adoption of a more interpretive position to gain knowledge about the causes and effects of Ghanaian government projects, the relationship between the researcher and the object of study could have an impact on the research outcome in terms of research bias (Creswell, 1998). By way of a strategy to reduce the study bias, the author provides a reflective account on how this was reduced under the *Validity and Reliability* section.

### **3.5 RESEARCH STRATEGY**

A research strategy concerns the plan put in place by a researcher to answer the research question(s); thus, how the research question(s) are answered by the researcher (Saunders et al., 2012). It is the link between the research methodology and research philosophy as well as the choice of data collection methods and analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). However, the choice of research strategy for a particular piece of research is dependent upon the research question(s) being asked and the research objectives – implying that they are not mutually exclusive (Saunders et al., 2012). Due to this, Saunders et al. assert that more than one strategy can be used in one piece of research. Saunders et al. (2012) categorise research strategy into eight (8) types:

- Experiment
- Survey
- Archival Research
- Case Study

- Ethnography
- Action Research
- Grounded Theory
- Narrative Inquiry

The next sub-section discusses in detail the various research strategies by highlighting the choice for this research and the justification for that choice.

### **3.5.1 Experiment**

Experimental research strategy is a strategy which is often associated with natural sciences and is the 'gold standard' against which the rigour of other research is assessed – the root of scientific research; it follows a rigid experiment-based path (Saunders et al., 2012). This type of research uses hypotheses rather than research questions; thus, it tests hypotheses and therefore findings tend to be law-like. These hypotheses are often in the form of variables; thus, dependent and independent variables that test the relationship(s) between them (Saunders et al., 2012). Moreover, Saunders et al. link experiment strategy to exploratory and explanatory research to answer questions such as “‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’” (p.175).

Even though this research strategy is associated with natural sciences, it strongly features in social science and psychological research (Saunders et al., 2012). Field experiment may be used where the focus on variables will tend to make sense. The main reason for using experimental design in social science research is that it is mostly use as a yardstick against which non-experimental research is assessed (Saunders et al., 2012).

### **3.5.2 Survey**

Survey research strategy is popular in business and management research; it is

associated with collection of standardised data from a sizeable population in an economical way (Saunders et al., 2012). The tool often used in its data collection is the questionnaire, and it is within the deductive research approach. It answers questions such as 'what', 'where' and 'how much' (Saunders et al., 2012).

Survey research uses exploratory and descriptive research. This involves collection of data on more than one case at a single point in time. Under this, data are collected in the form of quantitative or quantifiable data in two or more variables. The purpose is to find a pattern of association, and it is a very popular strategy among researchers due to its perceived authoritative nature (Saunders et al., 2012). It involves the collection of quantifiable data that allow descriptive and inferential analysis – by establishing relationship(s) between variables and to produce models of these relationships (Saunders et al., 2012). It produces research findings that can be generalisable to the population of the research (Saunders et al., 2012). The major drawback of this strategy is the nature of having standardised questions, which means that respondents are rigid as to their responses to questions, especially in a questionnaire survey or structured interviews (Saunders et al., 2012).

### **3.5.3 Archival**

Archival strategy; also referred to as historical research design, investigates past events through the collection of data from the past to either refute an issue or to confirm it (Savitt, 1980; Gall, 2007). Thus, the study uses administrative records and documents as its main data (Saunders et al., 2012). Information is often gathered from logs, diaries, official records, reports, archives, maps, pictures, audio and visual recordings. However, it is difficult to prove the authenticity of these data since they are records from the past, and as such, it is extremely difficult to validate their authenticity (Saunders et al., 2012). Nevertheless, archival studies help to unearth past events to confirm current and future truths and therefore help to answer research questions about past events (Saunders et al., 2012).

There is a debate as to whether archival studies use secondary data or primary data.

For instance, Hakim (2000) argues that archival records in the form of administrative records should not exhaustively be regarded as secondary data because they can be analysed as day-to-day activities that have been recorded and therefore they become a direct source of data for research, hence, making them primary data. However, Saunders et al. (2012) argue that the reality is that archival data were not originally collected for the purpose of the research in question and therefore to wholly describe them as a primary source of data is invalid.

### **3.5.4 Case Study**

In this approach, the researcher focuses on achieving an understanding of the dynamics that are present within a single setting. Case studies are normally associated with studies that have a specific location such as a community or organisation (Saunders et al., 2012). Case study is an extensive examination of a single instance of a phenomenon of interest (Hussey & Hussey, 1998), an intensive investigation into a single case, and it is often complex in nature (Stake, 1995). Thus, case study is context-specific (Saunders et al., 2012).

The use of case study as a standalone research approach did not come into prominence until the late 1970s and early 1980s (Simons, 1996). This era also saw the emergence of multiple case studies for research, which led to the formal acceptance of case study research results for generalisations (Simons, 1996). Case study was not accepted as a standalone research approach prior to this era because it was seen as being subjective and difficult to make generalisations or was law-like in its results (Stake, 1978; Philips, 1987; Norris, 1990), and it was associated with qualitative research. Despite these criticisms against case study, it has now gained popularity with researchers. This is because it makes room for participants' perceptions and judgements in the description and construction of understanding (Simons, 1996). Simons (1996, p.230) argues that case study data is open and complex, and this provides multiple perspectives, and therefore it offers opportunities for policy makers to understand situations, which eventually helps them make better judgements. In other

words, it can be argued that, because each case is unique, research findings can help find solutions to specific situations or problems.

There is the temptation to associate case studies with qualitative research; however, case studies may be suitable for both quantitative and qualitative research (Simon, 1996). A typical example is the use of quantitative analysis to study the promotion decisions in USA government departments (Powell & Butterfield, 1997). Even though case study can be used for both qualitative and quantitative research, proponents of case study research design favour qualitative methods.

In the work of Scapens (1990), four types of case studies approach are identified: (i) descriptive – the focus is on describing current practice, (ii) illustrative – the researcher attempts to illustrate new and possibly innovative practices adopted by particular companies, (iii) experimental – the research is on difficulties in implementing new procedure and techniques in an organisation and evaluating benefits, and (iv) exploratory – an existing theory is used to understand and explain what is happening. In this research, the exploratory case study approach is used.

Some well-known studies have been conducted using case study strategy, including but not limited to the study of factories (Buraway, 1979; Pullet, 1981; Cavendish, 1982), management in organisations such as Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) (Pettigrew, 1985), pilferage in a single location like a bakery (Dalton, 1977), a single police service (Holdaway, 1983), and the forensic analysis of the Seattle popular monorail authority (Yuttapongsontorn et al., 2008). Studies into project failure in the past and present have been conducted mostly with the use of case study (e.g. Elias et al., 2002; Abendnego & Ogunlana, 2006; Pan & Pan, 2006; Toor & Oganlana, 2010; Fabian & Amir, 2011).

### **3.5.5 Ethnography**

Ethnography research strategy is basically about the study of groups in an organisation, society or an area (Saunders et al., 2012). This is within the qualitative research design and the earliest strategy in the qualitative divide (Saunders et al., 2012). Ethnography

studies can be categorised into three types – realist ethnography, impressionist or interpretive ethnography and critical ethnography (Cunliffe, 2010).

With realist ethnography, researchers report exactly what they observe among groups; thus, facts of the phenomena being investigated are directly observed and reported as the observer sees it and it should be free from bias and personal passions about the group under study (Saunders et al., 2012). The direct opposite of realist ethnography is interpretive ethnography. This is where the ethnographer interprets what he or she observes in a group and therefore it is subject to the social actor (interpreter). Under this research, the researcher makes contextual meanings by highlighting different meanings to a particular action of the groups under study (Saunders et al., 2012). Lastly, critical ethnography is a type of research where the researcher assumes the position of an advocate in order to bring about changes that will help the marginalised in society or in an organisation, and therefore researchers try to find out the impact of the most powerful in society on the vulnerable (Saunders et al., 2012).

### **3.5.6 Action Research**

Action research was first used by Lewin in 1946, and management researchers have used it extensively in subsequent research (Saunders et al., 2012). Action research design follows a characteristic cycle whereby originally an exploratory position is assumed – where an understanding of a problem is established and strategies are made for some procedure of an interventionary approach (Gall, 2007). This type of research tries to solve real organisational problems by using a collaborative approach (Saunders et al., 2012).

The purpose of action research is to promote organisational learning to produce practical outcomes through the identification of issues, planning action, taking action and evaluating action (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, action research is about “research in action rather than research about action” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2010, p.4). This means that action research is about taking an action to solve an organisational problem; thus, practical research. Action research is therefore emergent and iterative (Saunders

et al., 2012). In other words, action research goes through several stages, whilst the research focus and questions keep changing throughout the stages depending on the findings at each stage; thus, planning actions, actions and evaluations of actions are made in a continuous process until the problem is solved (Saunders et al, 2012). The evaluation serves as a guide for a new direction if necessary.

### **3.5.7 Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory is a research strategy which uses qualitative data to develop a theory based on an inductive research approach (Saunders et al., 2012). The theory was first developed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 as a response to the extreme positivism at the time by disputing the view that social research should use a paradigm based on a premise that theory will reveal a pre-existing reality (Saunders et al., 2012, p.185)

Grounded theory is used as a means to develop theories that explain the social interactions and the processes in a wide range of contexts including business and management (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, in grounded theory research, the focus is to develop a theory which is 'grounded' on the data collected from social actors gained by social interactions (Saunders et al., 2012).

This research strategy involves continuous data collection and analysis by the researcher throughout the research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It also involves the use of a coding procedure to construct analytical codes from the data collected by using a comparative method as a means to evaluate the similarities and differences within the data, and the writing of memos to record the relationships and gaps among the coded categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Saunders et al., 2012).

### **3.5.8 Narrative Inquiry**

Narrative research strategy, as the name implies, narrates a story in a sequential order of events (Saunders et al., 2012). Data collection can also be in the form of observation. This follows qualitative data collection methods such as in-depth interviews and

personal accounts of events that actually occurred; thus, it is very specific and lies within a specific context. This strategy uses a very small sample size but participants are 'typical of the sample' (Saunders et al., 2012); thus, the sample should be able to represent the population, even though it is small. Based on this sample nature, narrative research often uses a purposive sampling method (Saunders et al., 2012).

This strategy is similar to grounded theory; however, narrative strategy provides theoretical explanations but it does not follow the rigorous approach employed in grounded theory strategy (Saunders et al., 2012). The ultimate purpose of narrative research strategy "is to derive theoretical explanations from narrative accounts whilst maintaining their integrity" (Saunders et al., 2012, p.190).

### **3.5.9 Research Strategy Used**

This research uses more than one strategy, employing a combination of grounded theory and survey strategy. As asserted by Saunders et al. (2012), a researcher can use multiple strategies in a single study or mixed methods research. They further argue that this often happens in business and management research. Therefore, in line with Saunders et al.'s (2012) assertions, this research uses the two research strategies to complement each other. This will help improve the reliability of the research findings.

These strategies have been chosen because of the research objectives and the data collection methods used. The research objectives are to find out the extent of failure, and the causes and effects of failure in Ghanaian government projects. Therefore, the first part of the research collects qualitative data to explore the phenomenon under investigation. This is based on the grounded theory strategy; thus, initial theories are developed, which are 'grounded' in the data collected in the form of semi-structured interviews. This follows an inductive research approach. A full theory is not developed, but the theories (themes) that came out of the qualitative data analysis are used as guide together with the literature reviewed in order to embark on the survey research strategy.

The second part uses a non-experimental survey in the form of a questionnaire. The reason for this is to perform statistical analysis in order to evaluate the most significant failure criteria, and the causes and effects of failure in Ghanaian government projects.

## **3.6 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The research approach can be categorised into two types – deductive and inductive (Thomas, 2004, Saunders et al., 2012). However, they can either be used as a standalone approach during research or they can be used together in a single study (Thomas, 2004; Saunders et al., 2012). The next sub-sections explain these two approaches in detail by highlighting their strengths and weaknesses, and also explain the justification for the choice of approach used in this study.

### **3.6.1 Deductive Approach**

Deductive reasoning in a research approach assumes that valid and logical conclusions are derived from a set of premises in that, if the conclusions become true, then all the premises are true (Saunders et al., 2012). That is, logical conclusions are deduced from a set of premises, which if they are true will make the conclusion true. In this reasoning, the approach is from general to particular and therefore, this approach is built on direct studies (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, in the deductive approach, the conclusions will be valid based on the premises but might not necessarily be true. In this type of research approach, hypotheses are developed by the researcher that are linked to a theory from academic literature; thus, from theory to data (Saunders et al., 2012). The researcher then has to design a research strategy to test the theory (Saunders et al., 2012). In this approach, a theory is developed or is known before being subject to a test through the collection of data; thus, a theory is developed before data collection begins (Saunders et al., 2009).

Moreover, this requires rigorous testing of research findings in order to confirm or deny hypotheses; and this often leads to explanations of causal relationships between

different variables relating to a phenomenon under investigation (Saunders et al., 2012). This follows the positivist research philosophy tradition which is often linked to natural sciences and scientific research (Saunders et al., 2012). This implies that research that follows this approach must be very structured, and must be able to replicate itself, and hence be more reliable (Gill & Johnson, 2010). This is quantitative in nature and provides findings that are law-like (Saunders et al., 2012). In fact, Bryman (2012) and Saunders et al. (2012) specifically associate the deductive research approach with quantitative research.

### **3.6.2 Inductive Approach**

Inductive reasoning indicates that the conclusion can be judged and verified through observations as the supporting evidence since there is a logical gap in the argument between the conclusion and the observed premises (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, data are collected in order to form a theory; thus, from data to theory (Saunders et al., 2012). This means that valid and logical conclusions flow from specifics to general – thus, conclusions made before supporting premises are used to confirm the theory. In other words, conclusions are made based on observations or premises; however, they might not necessarily be true (Saunders et al., 2012). In this research approach, researchers have to collect data and generate a theory in the form of a conceptual framework as the outcome of their data analysis (Saunders et al., 2012; Barmayehvar, 2013). Thus, it serves as a building block for the development of a theory (Saunders et al., 2009; Bryman, 2012). This is the direct opposite of the deductive approach.

This approach is directly linked to social science research that follows an anti-positivism philosophy or the interpretivist tradition (Saunders et al., 2012). An inductive research approach uses qualitative data collection (Bryman, 2012; Saunders et al., 2012) and diverse data collection methods in order to explore different points of view or perceptions about a phenomenon (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Saunders et al., 2012). Moreover, an inductive research approach requires relatively a small sample size of

subjects as it deals with specific contexts and events that have already occurred (Saunders et al., 2012), and therefore, it often uses a non-probability sampling method for data collection.

### 3.6.3 Abductive Approach

An abductive approach is one that moves back and forth instead of either from theory to data (deductive) or data to theory (inductive) (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, in abduction research, investigators aim to investigate a phenomenon in order to discover themes and explain patterns to generate or modify a theory through the collection of further data (Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, the researcher can collect data first and, based on the data collected, the researcher can re-direct the research by collecting other data and/or use different method(s) to collect data (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Saunders et al., 2012). The table below provides a summary of the three research approaches.

Table 6 Research Approaches

	<b>Deduction</b>	<b>Induction</b>	<b>Abduction</b>
<b>Logic</b>	In a deductive inference, when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true	In an inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions	In an abductive inference, known premises are used to generate testable conclusions
<b>Generalisability</b>	Generalising from the general to the specific	Generalising from the specific to the general	Generalising from the interactions between the specific and the general
<b>Use of data</b>	Data collection is used to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection and so forth
<b>Theory</b>	Theory falsification or Verification	Theory generation and building	Theory generation or Modification, incorporating existing theory where appropriate, to build a new theory or modify an existing theory

Source: Saunders et al. (2012, p.144)

### **3.6.4 The Selected Research Approach**

This study adopts both the deductive and inductive approaches. As Thomas (2004) and Saunders et al. (2012) argue, the two approaches can either be used on their own in research or they can be used simultaneously; however, this will depend on what the researcher is trying to find. Thus, the research design and the purpose of the study can influence this decision (Thomas, 2004; Saunders et al., 2012).

The first part of the research seeks to find out from project management practitioners, contractors and the general public of Ghana their perceptions about the subject matter. Thus, using semi-structured interviews to explore their views on the subject matter will help the researcher to gain in-depth data or information. In this part, a deductive research is not appropriate as the information needed is qualitative in nature. Here, individuals will serve as actors and therefore cannot follow a rigid and/or highly structured methodology (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Gill & Johnson, 2010). However, the limitation of this research approach lies in the credibility and genuineness of respondents' responses (Saunders et al., 2009). Therefore, using an inductive approach will enable the researcher to develop new theories about the phenomenon being investigated (grounded theory research design).

Nevertheless, as the second part of the study seeks to rank the study's variables in order to find out the most important variables, this requires quantitative data; hence, the need to use a deductive approach. This also tests a set of hypotheses, using a structured quantitative questionnaire to collect data. As stated in sub-section 3.6.1, the deductive approach follows a rigid testing of quantitative data to make findings law-like (Saunders et al., 2012). This will help to establish the most important failure criteria, and causes and effects of the failure of the Ghanaian government's projects. In fact, using a mixed approach will bridge the gap between the deductive and inductive divide.

### **3.7 THE TECHNIQUES (TOOLS) OF RESEARCH**

This term refers to the particular step-by-step procedures that can be followed when gathering and analysing data so as to bring out the necessary information (Jankowicz, 1999). Thus, data collection is one of the most important phases in conducting a research project (Saunders et al., 2009). The following groupings have been made by Jankowicz (1999):

- Semi-Structured/Open-Ended Techniques: these include conversation, focus group, individual interview, and repertory grid.
- Fully-Structured Techniques: include structured questionnaire, structured face-to-face interview, postal & telephone variants.
- Other techniques: these include repertory attitude scaling and observational techniques & field experiments.

In order to achieve the research objectives, the study uses both questionnaire and semi-structured interview to gather information from three groups of stakeholders of Ghanaian government projects. The choice of the two methods is based on the research objectives and research questions. The nature of the research topic made these forms of data collection more appropriate. They will provide raw data about the project and first-hand information which is from the original source (Mingers, 2004).

#### **3.7.1 Semi-structured Interview**

The reason for the choice of semi-structured interview is that it is the best fit for exploratory studies (Mason, 2004; UK Data Service, 2014). As the study area is new, this method is the most appropriate technique to explore the extent, causes and effects of project' failure in Ghanaian government projects in order to obtain possible new themes to help shape the quantitative data collection – questionnaire. The semi-structured interview is flexible and fluid in its structure and collection procedure – the structure of a semi-structured interview is usually organised around an aide memoire or

interview guide (Mason, 2004). This contains topics, themes, or areas to be covered during the course of the interview, rather than a sequenced script of standardised questions (Mason, 2004). Semi-structured interviewing is more flexible than standardised methods such as the structured interview (Bryman, 2004, 2012; Saunders et al., 2012). Even though, in this data collection method, the interviewer will have some established general topics and/or areas for investigation, this method allows for the exploration of emergent themes and ideas rather than relying only on concepts and questions defined in advance of the interview (Bryman, 2004, 2012; Saunders et al., 2012).

Moreover, this data collection method allows the researcher to ask probing questions to obtain in-depth knowledge about the phenomenon under investigation (UK Data Service, 2014). This gives rich and first-hand information that helps improve the research validity (Bryman, 2004, 2012; Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, the semi-structured interview helps the researcher to have in-depth knowledge of the subject matter being investigated. Moreover, this study used purposive sampling, which means that the researcher wanted to interview specific people with specific knowledge on the subject matter, and these people are very busy, top-level managers scattered all over the country, and therefore the best way to reach out to them was in their own time. Other qualitative data collection methods such as focus-group discussion were considered; however, due to time constraints, resources and availability of respondents to attend a roundtable, this method was used.

### **3.7.2 Questionnaire**

On the other hand, a questionnaire provides an efficient way of collecting responses from a large sample size prior to quantitative analysis (Saunders et al. 2009, 2012). Jankowicz (2000, p.222) asserts that “Questionnaires are particularly useful when you want to contact relatively large numbers of people to obtain data on the same issue or issues often by posing the same questions to all”. The large size of the sample for this research makes the use of a questionnaire the most suitable method; the researcher will

be able to contact a large number of respondents at one point in time through hand-delivery of the questionnaires. With hand-delivery, the researcher can check to find out who actually responded to the questionnaire at the collection point (Saunders et al., 2012, p.420).

The advantage of conducting a questionnaire is that it helps the collection of data in a pre-arranged form which can be readily analysed (Kumar, 2005). Moreover, questionnaire is one of the most widely used data collection techniques within the survey strategy. This choice was made based on the objectives of the research – to rank, in order to find out the most important extent, and causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure.

### **3.8 RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Bryman (2004, 2012), research design means general orientation to the social science research. Thus, research design is concerned with the general plan of how a researcher goes about answering the research question(s) (Saunders et al, 2012). Specifically, it involves how the researcher intends to collect and analyse data, by highlighting the ethical issues as well as constraints relating to the procedure (Saunders et al., 2012). Research design can be grouped mainly into three categories – quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research. The next sub-sections discuss these three research types in detail; it will also explain and justify the choice of the design used in this research.

#### **3.8.1 Quantitative Research**

Quantitative research, in most cases, is dominated by numerical and statistical analysis of research data (Saunders et al., 2012). It may also be characterised by the analytical approach to the data generated and are measured numerically by using statistical techniques (Saunders et al., 2012). Quantitative research is sometimes portrayed as being sterile and unimaginative, but it is well suited for providing certain types of factual,

descriptive information; the hard evidence (De Vaus, 2002). Quantitative research is often associated with data collection methods such as questionnaires or data analysis methods such as graphs and statistics, and this is within the positivist research philosophy tradition (Saunders et al., 2012). Moreover, this research design is associated with the deductive approach to research and the strategies often used under this design are experiment and survey research (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, it involves the use of a questionnaire or structured interview, where variables can be controlled to bring about standardised data (Saunders et al., 2012).

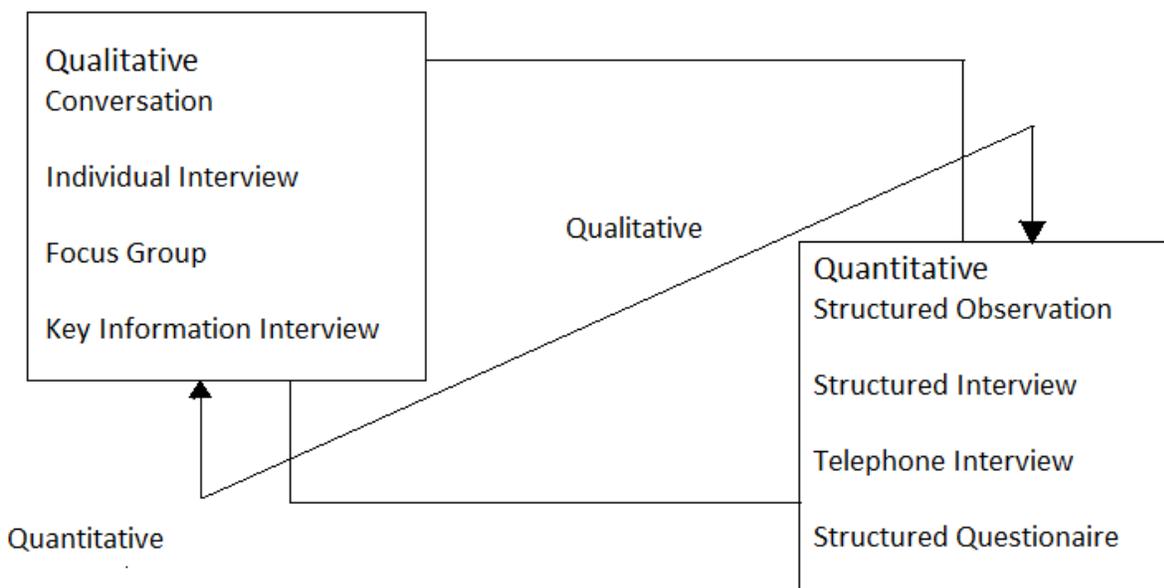
Bryman (2012, p.36) argues that a quantitative strategy “can be construed as a research strategy that emphasises quantification in the collection and analysis of data and (i) entails a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the accent is placed on the testing of theories; (ii) has incorporated the practices and norms of the natural scientific model and of positivism in particular; and (iii) embodies a view of social reality as an external, objective reality”.

### **3.8.2 Qualitative Research**

On the other hand, qualitative research collects data in the form of words as opposed to numbers (Bryman, 2012). This is within the interpretivist research philosophy tradition, which is more of realist philosophy (Saunders et al., 2012). The reason is that reality or facts are subject to the interpretation of the researcher. Even though data collected under this research design provide rich information direct from source, such data have been criticised for lacking generalisability, being too reliant on the subjective interpretation of researchers and unable to be replicated in subsequent research (Simons, 1996). Nevertheless, qualitative methods provide rich data about real-life experience of people and situations (Simons, 1996; De Vaus, 2002). De Vaus (2002) further argues that qualitative data enable researchers to make sense of behaviour and to understand this behaviour within its wider context.

Bryman (2012, p.36) argues that a qualitative research strategy is construed as a strategy where emphasis is placed on words rather than quantification of collection and

analysis of data, and that “predominantly emphasizes an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the emphasis is placed on generation of theories; has rejected the practices and norms of the natural scientific model and of positivism in preference for an emphasis on the ways in which individuals interpret their social world; and embodies a view of social reality as a constantly shifting emergent property of individual’s creation”. In fact, qualitative research is often associated with data collection methods such as interview (Saunders et al., 2012). The figure below provides an illustration of the extent to which a particular technique or method can be adopted.



Historical Review Case Study Survey Experiment

Source: Jankowicz (1999, p 159)

Figure 13 The Research Design

### 3.8.3 Research Design Used

Based on the distinction made between qualitative and quantitative research approaches, it can therefore be argued that it is clear that, whilst the research strategy

of a piece of research can either be qualitative or quantitative, the research method to be adopted is dependent on the research questions being investigated (Bryan, 2012; Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, the decision to use a quantitative or qualitative research design is dependent upon which one is appropriate in the light of the research question(s) being asked. Therefore, it will be appropriate in some circumstances to adopt both quantitative and qualitative approaches since the two can be used in a mutually complementary manner (Bryman, 2012). Saunders et al. (2012, p.161), specifically argue that “in reality, many business and management research designs are likely to be combine quantitative and qualitative elements”.

Therefore, in line with the prescriptions and argument put forward by Saunders et al., this research adopts both quantitative and qualitative approaches – thus, a mixed methods approach. Data collected from the semi-structured interviews in the form of perceptions are analysed with the use of qualitative data analysis techniques. On the other hand, data collected from the questionnaire in the form of scale, percentage, numbers and/or statistics are analysed with the use of quantitative data analysis techniques.

The mixed methods approach is used because the study seeks to explore the extent of project failure, and causes and effects of the Ghanaian government’s project failure, and also to establish the most important failure criteria, causes and effects. With exploratory studies, qualitative data collection is appropriate whilst, in attempt to find the most important criteria, causes and effects, quantitative data collection is appropriate. Therefore, the research questions and objectives shaped the choice of the techniques being used. Specifically, the first part of the study uses *thematic* and *content analysis* to analyse the qualitative data.

***Thematic Analysis:*** Bryman (2012, p.580) defines thematic data analysis as “a category identified by the analyst through his/her data; that relates to his/her research focus (and quite possibly the research question); that builds on codes identified in transcript and/or field notes; and that provides the researcher with the basis for theoretical understanding of his or her data that can make a theoretical contribution to

the literature relating to the research focus”. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.6) simply define thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. However, others have argued that there is no clear definition of thematic analysis and how it is carried out (Tuckett, 2005; Bryman, 2012). Nevertheless, the focus is to categorise data into themes.

**Content Analysis:** Qualitative content analysis groups materials or data into categories that represent similar meanings (Moretti et al., 2011). Thus, the research method involves subjective interpretation of the content of textual data by systematically classifying the data through coding and identifying themes or patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In other words, content analysis gives room for researchers to analyse and interpret qualitative data in a scientific manner (Morretti et al., 2005). From the definitions and arguments put forth by various research method theorists, it can be said that thematic and content analyses are mutually complementary, and therefore they are more appropriate for qualitative data analysis.

On the other hand, statistical analyses performed include Means, Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficients, and Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference in ranks. The main purpose of the choice of statistical analysis was to evaluate the most significant causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure with the view of making appropriate recommendations to relevant stakeholders.

### **3.9 TYPE OF STUDY**

Saunders et al. (2012) classify research studies into three types – Exploratory Studies, Descriptive Studies, and Explanatory Studies. The particular type followed in a piece of research is determined by the research questions being skewed (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, it is the research questions that shape the type of research to follow. The next sub-sections discuss in detail what each entails and which one is being used in this research by providing justification for the choice.

### **3.9.1 Exploratory Studies**

An exploratory design is conducted about a research problem when there are few or no earlier studies to refer to (Cuthill, 2002; Saunders et al., 2012). This study often involves a search of literature to gain insight into the subject matter, interviewing 'experts' in the subject matter, and conducting in-depth interviews or focus group interview or discussions (Saunders et al., 2012). It follows an unstructured data collection methods approach and, as such, it is flexible and adaptable to change in the course of studies (Saunders et al., 2012). This change comes about as a result of the information captured in the data collected, and as such an exploratory study is not often used as a standalone study but as a preliminary study (Saunders et al., 2012).

The main aim is to gain insights into a phenomenon that can lead to further investigation (Cuthill, 2002; Saunders et al., 2012). In other words, it is a preliminary study to the main study to gain useful information on the phenomenon of interest (Saunders et al., 2012).

### **3.9.2 Descriptive Studies**

A descriptive research design is used to attain information regarding the current state of the phenomena and to describe 'what exists' with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (Anastas, 1999). It answers questions of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research problem, and this helps to gain an "accurate profile of events, person or situations" (Saunders et al., 2012, p.171).

It is normally used as a pre-cursor to quantitative research designs, the general overview giving some valuable pointers to what variables are worth testing quantitatively (Anastas, 1999). In other words, it serves as a prelude to further investigation; thus, it is used to gather initial information that can be used to test quantitative research. Saunders et al. (2012) describe this as descript-explanatory studies. In essence, a descriptive study often serves as a stepping stone to an explanatory study and as such management tutors are often wary of it being used as a standalone research, and therefore demand further studies that answer questions such as ... "but so

what”(Saunders et al., 2012, p.171). Thus, describing what actually exists is not considered as enough by management tutors and therefore this type of study should be considered as a “means to an end rather than an end in itself” (Saunders et al., 2012, p.171).

### **3.9.3 Explanatory Studies**

They study a situation or a phenomenon with variables to find out about the relationships; thus, explanatory studies are directly associated with studies that intend to establish causal relationships between variables (Saunders et al., 2012). Thus, this type of research studies variables in order to explain the relationships that exist between or among various variables under investigation. It often uses statistical tests such as correlation to establish clearer relationships that exist between variable (Saunders et al., 2012).

### **3.9.4 Type of Study Used**

Based on the explanation of the three types of studies and in line with Saunders et al.’s (2012) advocacy for the use of combined study types in one piece of research, this research uses both exploratory and explanatory types to answer the research aims. The three main research questions are: (1) the extent of project failure in Ghanaian government projects; (2) the causes of Ghanaian government project failure; and (3) the effects of these failures on the key stakeholders of Ghanaian government projects. Even though causes of project failure have been extensively researched, government project failure has only been researched with the use of single cases; thus, to the best of my knowledge, there is no prior study to refer to. In addition, in relation to project failure and its subsequent effects on stakeholders, this is the first study of its kind. Earlier studies on effects of project failure are rare and the few available have been devoted to project completion (the project in question). This makes exploratory design the most appropriate for gathering initial data that can help the researcher gain insight into the phenomenon under investigation. This will provide information needed to

statistically evaluate the scale of the subject matter. The second part of the research therefore uses a non-experimental research design, which is under the explanatory study type.

### **3.10 SAMPLING METHOD**

Social and behavioural sciences methodologists often place research sampling methods into two groups – probability and non-probability (purposive) (Ross, 2005; Saunders et al., 2012); however, there is a third, which is a combination of the two main sampling methods, and this is called mixed methods (MM) sampling (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Nevertheless, the choice of the sampling method is dependent upon the research question and/or objective(s) of the study (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Bryan, 2012, Saunders et al., 2012). The next sub-headings explain these types of sampling strategies in detail by stating which one is appropriate for this study and providing justification for the choice.

#### **3.10.1 Probability Sampling**

Probability sampling techniques are predominantly used in quantitatively-oriented studies and they involve “selecting a relatively large number of units from a population, or from specific subgroups (strata) of a population, in a random manner where the probability of inclusion for every member of the population is determinable” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a, p.713). In other words, in probability sampling, every member of the population has the chance of being selected for the study and as such findings from such studies are representative of the entire population; hence, they are generalisable (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Bryan, 2012, Saunders et al., 2012). Probability sampling is often associated with survey research strategies where inferences can be made from the population (Saunders et al., 2012).

Probability sampling can be grouped into four types – simple random, systematic random, stratified random and multi-stage cluster. In simple random sampling, each

member of a clearly defined population has an equal chance of being selected to represent the population (Ross, 2005; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). However, this sampling method is rarely used in practical social research, and the reasons are that: (a) the selection and measurement of individual population elements is often too expensive; and (b) certain complexities may be introduced intentionally into the sample design in order to more appropriately address the objectives and administrative constraints associated with the research (Ross, 2005).

In stratified sampling, the population is divided into sub-groups called strata so that each member will belong to a stratum, and then units or members are randomly selected from those strata (Ross, 2005; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Stratification sampling is often employed in the preparation of sample designs due to its ability to generally provide an increased accuracy in sample estimates without incurring substantial costs (Ross, 2005). However, this could lead to proportionate or disproportionate sample design (Ross, 2005).

Systematic sampling is where a researcher selects specific numbers that falls within the population (Bryan, 2012). Thus, units are directly selected from a sample frame without resorting to a table of random numbers (Bryan, 2012). For instance, the tenth person who passes by is selected for the study.

Multi-stage cluster sampling is sampling where the unit is not an individual but a group (cluster) that occurs naturally in the population, such as neighbourhoods, hospitals, schools, or classrooms; researchers often use this sampling strategy if they want to generate a more efficient probability sample in terms of monetary and/or time resources (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). In other words, due to time constraints and resources in relation to the large size of a population as well as the distance, the researcher will not sample individual units, which might be geographically spread over great distances; instead the researcher samples groups (clusters) that occur naturally in the population (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Bryan, 2012). Cluster sampling is sometimes undertaken as an alternative to simple random sampling in order to reduce research costs for a given sample size; thus, cluster sampling does not prevent the usage of random sampling but groups elements

of a population before applying random sampling (Ross, 2005).

### **3.10.2 Non-Probability Sampling**

Non-probability sampling; which is also called purposive by other researchers (Teddlie & Yu, 2007), is a sampling strategy where units from a population are specifically selected for a study (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Bryan, 2012; Saunders et al., 2012). A non-probability sampling strategy involves selecting certain units or members of a population “based on a specific purpose rather than randomly” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a, p.713). That is to say, this purpose must be relevant to the objectives of the research. Non-probability sampling provides in-depth knowledge about a phenomenon under investigation and it is often associated with qualitative research (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Bryan, 2012; Saunders et al., 2012).

Non-probability sampling can be grouped into four main types – quota, purposive, volunteer and haphazard (Saunders et al., 2012). Quota sampling falls under the basic mixed methods sampling tradition, where stratified and purposive techniques are followed (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Here, a small number of cases are typically generated through the characteristics of purpose for the study; however, there is little or no strict procedure on how the elements in each stratum are selected (Ross, 2005).

Purposive sampling is a strategy where members of a population are selected on the basis of a specific purpose or reason which will help the researcher achieve the aims and objectives of the research (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Bryan, 2012). Purposive sampling, which is also known as judgmental sampling, is also based on the premise that the researcher is able to select elements which represent a ‘typical sample’ from the appropriate target population (Ross, 2005).

In volunteer sampling, as the name implies, units or members of a particular population are invited to participate in a study voluntarily; however, they must possess the certain characteristics relevant to the study.

Lastly, haphazard sampled, also called convenience sampling is where units or

members of a population under investigation are selected based on convenience to the researcher. However, this sampling suffers from representation (Saunders et al., 2012).

Table 7 Probability and non-probability sampling

Dimension of contrast	Non-probability	Probability
Other names	Purposeful sampling Non-probability sampling Qualitative sampling	Scientific sampling Random sampling Quantitative sampling
Overall purpose of sampling	Designed to generate a sample that will address research questions	Designed to generate a sample that will address research questions
Issue of generalisability	Sometimes seeks a form of generalisability (transferability)	Seeks a form of generalisability (external validity)
Rationale for selecting cases/units	To address specific purposes related to research questions The researcher select cases from which she or he can learn the most	Representativeness The researcher selects cases that are collectively representative of the population
Sample size	Typically small (usually 30 cases or fewer)	Large enough to establish representativeness (usually at least 50 units)
Depth/breadth of information per case/unit	Focus on depth of information generated by the cases	Focus on breadth of information generated by the sampling units
When the sample is selected	Before the study begins, during the study, or both	Before the study begins
How selection is made	Utilises expert judgement	Often based on application of mathematical formulas
Sampling frame	Informal sampling frame somewhat larger than sample	Formal sampling frame typically much larger than sample
Form of data generated	Focus on narrative data Numeric data can also be generated	Focus on numeric data Narrative data can also be generated

Sources: Adapted from Teddlie and Yu (2007, p.84)

### 3.10.3 Mixed Methods (MM) Sampling

MM sampling strategies involve the selection of units or members for a piece of research by using both probability sampling (to increase external validity) and non-probability (purposive) sampling strategies (to increase transferability) (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). In this type of sampling strategy, two sampling strategies are used to complement each other; thus improving research validity and reliability (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). In other words, it bridges the gap between the probability and non-probability divide. That is to say, the shortcomings of the two main traditions of sampling methods are bridged with the use of a mixed methods approach. Teddlie and Yu (2007, p.89) group MM sampling strategy into five (5) types:

- Basic MM sampling

- Sequential MM sampling
- Concurrent MM sampling
- Multilevel MM sampling
- Sampling using multiple MM sampling strategies

Basic MM sampling comprises the use of stratified random sampling techniques used together. In other words, in this sampling technique, the sample population is divided into strata and then random sampling is applied.

In a sequential sampling strategy, one of the two strategies is used together in a sequential order; thus, one precedes the other. That is, one sampling method from the probability sampling tradition is carried out first and one from non-probability sampling follows and vice versa, depending on the aim of the research. In this tradition, the data findings from the preceding sampling are used to inform or shape the selection of the next sampling units (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Thus, it either moves from quantitative to qualitative or from qualitative to quantitative strand as Teddlie and Yu put it.

Concurrent MM sampling involves the use of mixed methods simultaneously; thus, both probability and non-probability techniques are used separately at the same time. Unlike the sequential type, one method does not inform the other; rather, they are used to validate each other (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). In other words, one technique does not set the stage for the other.

Multilevel MM sampling involves the use of probability and non-probability at different levels of the study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a) and it is commonly used in a “context or settings in which different units of analysis are ‘nested’ within one another, ..., and various types of bureaucracies” (Teddlie & Yu, 2007, p.89).

Sampling using multiple MM sampling strategies involves the use of more than one MM sampling technique. This typology is a simplified form of the range of MM sampling strategies that really exist. For example, concurrent and sequential MM sampling

procedures are based on design types, and those design types are based on qualitative and quantitative strands (QUAL and QUAN) (Teddlie & Yu, 2007).

#### **3.10.4 Sampling Method Used**

Due to the use of two data collection methods (semi-structured interview and questionnaire), each method requires separate sampling techniques. Specifically, this research uses a mixed methods sampling technique by following a sequential sampling approach. In line with a prior study (Nieto et al., 1999), this research follows the qualitative-quantitative strand as described by (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). The reason for this choice is that the first part of the research is an exploratory study, which seeks to gather in-depth information about the phenomenon under investigation and therefore there is the need to gather qualitative data (non-probability) in the form of perceptions and views.

Moreover, as earlier stated in the previous chapter, the study seeks to find out about the relative importance of the extent of failure, causes and effects, and therefore the need to apply a quantitative sampling strategy (probability) is the most appropriate.

#### **3.10.5 Sampling Frame**

A sampling frame is the process of selecting a sample from a well-defined target population and this includes listing of elements in the population (Ross, 2005). In other words, this is a complete list of all the cases or elements in the population from which the sample for the study can be drawn (Saunders et al., 2012). This follows a well-structured procedure, so that the listing will not be contaminated with the excluded population (Ross, 2005). It is directly associated with probability sampling, as, without it, probability sampling is not possible (Saunders et al., 2012).

In this study, the first part (semi-structured interview) will be selected using information captured in the sampling population list. How this was actually carried out is presented in the next chapter.

The second part uses a probability sampling method (simple random). Probability sampling techniques are predominantly used in quantitatively-oriented studies and they involve “selecting a relatively large number of units from a population, or from specific subgroups (strata) of a population, in a random manner where the probability of inclusion for every member of the population is determinable” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a, p.713). In other words, in probability sampling, every member of the population has the chance of being selected for the study and as such findings from such studies are representative of the entire population; hence, they are generalisable (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Bryan, 2012, Saunders et al., 2012). Probability sampling is often associated with survey research strategies where inferences can be made from the population (Saunders et al., 2012). In this research, survey research method in the form of questionnaire is used to collect data from the general public, PMP and contractors and therefore, this is the best fit technique for the data collection. This is further discussed in the next chapter under *population and sampling selection*.

Specifically, this is taken from members of professional associations and institutions such as the Ghana Institute of Engineers, Ghana Association of Managers, Association of Building and Civil Engineering Contractors of Ghana and Chartered Institute of Project Management – Ghana. This is to select the project management practitioners and contractors. The probability sampling size was calculated using Yamane’s formula (Yamane, 1967, as cited by Israel, 1992) to determine the size of the sample.

Moreover, the general public is also included in the sampling frame. Due to the difficulty in identifying the sampling frame and for practical reasons, for the general public, a quota sampling technique is chosen. Quota sampling falls under the basic mixed methods sampling tradition, where stratified and purposive techniques are followed (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Here, a small number of cases are typically generated through the characteristics of purpose for the study; however, there is little or no strict procedure on how the elements in each stratum are selected (Ross, 2005). In addition, it is economically and conveniently viable to use the method for a general population sampling.

### **3.11 SUMMARY**

This chapter has discussed in detail the methods that were used for this research and why the choices were made out of all the methods that are available. It has also looked into the philosophical assumptions underlying this study by discussing all the possible methods and philosophies that could have been used.

The research strategies that are available have also been discussed in detail, together with the choices made for this research – why a particular one(s) was chosen and others rejected has also been discussed. In all, a semi-structured interview and questionnaire data collection method has been discussed; this choice is based on the research aims and objectives. The research follows the interpretivist and positivist philosophical tradition; however, the entire research is of the interpretivist approach. The next chapter discusses the methods that were followed in the actual data collection and data analysis.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## METHODS

### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses in detail the various methods used for this research. As the name implies, this looks at the step-by-step procedure used in gathering data for the study. The ultimate purpose is to show how the researcher gathered information to arrive at research findings and conclusions.

Method is about how the research was conducted; in other words, the actual steps followed to collate data and analysed. This study used two data collection methods, semi-structured interview and questionnaire. The semi-structured interview was used to gather the qualitative data and the questionnaire was used to gather the quantitative data from the general public, contractors and project management practitioners. This study used a mixed methods strategy – a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

***Semi-structured interview:*** this gathers qualitative data. A purposeful selection was made. This sampling approach uses non-probability sampling techniques. As described by Patton (2002, p.40), in this sampling approach, there is far less emphasis on generalising from sample to population and therefore greater attention is paid to a sample ‘purposely’ selected for its potential to yield insight from its illuminative and rich information sources. The selection was based on the criteria that those being selected could have a certain level of knowledge in the subject area being investigated so information gathered would be reliable.

***Questionnaire:*** this uses random sampling, which is a probability sampling technique. The reason for this strategy is that one of the objectives of the research is to find statistical findings to establish which of the failure criteria, causes and effects are more important; therefore, a sample was required that could represent the sample population.

However, because the research population is large and there is a very large geographical distance between them (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Bryan, 2012), the study used a simple sampling technique, which is within the probability sampling tradition.

## **4.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLING SELECTION**

In this research, three sets of stakeholders were selected to participate in the collation of the data – the general public, contractors, and project management practitioners. Contractors are stakeholders who are directly involved with the implementation of the projects. They will therefore be able to give first-hand information on why government projects fail in Ghana.

Like the contractors, Project management practitioners are also consulted in this research. Project experts possess the technical know-how on project management and can therefore provide expert opinion about the subject matter.

The general public are the beneficiaries of government projects and they concern themselves with the impact the project would have on them (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010); hence, they possess knowledge about how failure affects them. Further, the purpose of including them was to find out their perception and not necessarily their technical know-how on projects management implementation. Further details about the inclusion of the general public have been presented in chapter under *identification of key stakeholders*.

Specifically, the PMP and contractors were taken from the Ghana Business Directory (Project management services and contractors list) (Ghana Business Directory, 2014) and members of professional associations and institutions such as the Ghana Institute of Engineers, Ghana Association of Managers, Association of Building and Civil Engineering Contractors of Ghana and Chartered Institute of Project Management – Ghana. Companies that appeared in more than one list had only one representation. Further, after further auditing, all those companies on the Ghana Business Directory list which were not actively operating were eliminated. To determine this, the researcher checked their websites to find out all the necessary information about each one. The

researcher then called the companies that he doubted were operational. This was based on the researcher's knowledge as a native of the country and also as someone who has conducted similar research at Masters' degree level. After the audit, 722 were left and were used as the population size. Further, to improve reliability, only individuals who were working within companies were targeted. The reason is that individual members of the associations may not be practitioners and therefore may not be able to provide the needed information.

Yamane's 1967 formula was adapted to determine the representative sample size for the PMPs and Contractors. The researcher assumed a normal distribution in the responses of firms in relation to their operational activities in the country. Based on the formula, there were 722 registered companies ( $N = 722$ ). At an acceptable 95% level of confidence, there is a statistical  $z$  value of 2 ( $z = 2$ ) and with an error limit of 10%. Adapting Yamane's formula, the required sample for the contractors and PMPs is determined as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} = \frac{722}{1 + 722(0.01)^2} = \frac{722}{8.22}$$

$$n = \frac{722}{8.22} = 87$$

Where,

$n$  = required response

$e^2$  = limit of error

$N$  = sample size

This means that the lowest acceptable number of responses must be 87 at a 95% level of confidence with level of error at 10%. However, to strengthen the validity, the researcher distributed 300 questionnaires to the PMP and contractors.

As part of the administered survey, there were 159 responses from the individuals within the companies, which is above Yamane's required response threshold. As a result of the sample size exceeding Yamane's estimate, the researcher adopted the following

formula to determine the confidence level and limit of error for the actual responses received.

$$e^2 \frac{z^2 p(1-p)}{n1} - \frac{z^2 p(1-p)}{N} = \frac{2^2 0.22(0.78)}{159} - \frac{2^2 0.22(0.78)}{722}$$

$$e^2 = \frac{4(0.2)(0.78)}{159} - \frac{4(0.2)(0.78)}{722}$$

$$e^2 = 0.00392453 - 0.0009506925$$

$$e = \sqrt{0.002974}$$

$$e = 0.0545$$

$$e = 0.055 * 100 = 5.5$$

p = actual response as a percentage of population

N = population surveyed

e = error limit

n1 = actual response received

The results show that a 22% response rate of the total population of 722 at a 95% confidence level has an error limit of approximately 5.5%. In social science research, a 95% confidence level with an error limit of 10% is acceptable (Yin, 2009). Therefore, having a lower error margin of 5.5% increases the validity of the data.

On the other hand, the general public was selected using simple random sampling. For the sample size, due to the large population of Ghana, Yamane's formula could not be used and therefore quota sampling is applied here – thus, 200 samples (20 for each of the 10 regions in Ghana) were used. The researcher has resided in the country since childhood and has also conducted previous research in the country at Master's degree level. Further, it is practically and economically impossible to involve every member of the general public. Moreover, the use of 20 samples for each region was to ensure

regional balance and improve representation (Saunders, 2012), as it was assumed that people from different regions might have different perceptions about the subject matter. Moreover, this is a validating method (validating the data from the interview) and therefore the researcher assumed that this number is appropriate.

## **4.2 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

The data collection procedure is divided into two main stages – initial exploratory data collection in the form of semi-structured interviews with the general public, contractors and project management practitioners, and questionnaire survey. Based on the lists, 10 participants were selected for the interviews based on their knowledge and assumed ability to provide valuable information on project failure. Interviews were conducted from July to September 2013 at homes, offices and construction sites, and were all audio-recorded. All interviews were conducted by the researcher in English, the official language in Ghana (Edu-Buandoh & Otchere, 2012; World Factbook, 2015); however, respondents were given the chance to express themselves in their local language if they wished; nevertheless, none spoke in a local language.

Based on the literature review and interview information, a questionnaire was developed for the survey. Initial calls and emails were made to the respective companies and individuals. In total, 500 questionnaires were distributed to companies and individuals who were willing to participate in the research through emails and in person. Out of the 500 questionnaires sent out, 270 were returned and of these 265 were fully completed and good for analysis.

In this research, the questions in the questionnaire were designed based on the three different approaches advocated by Bourque and Clark (1994, as cited by Saunders et al., 2012). These are:

- (a) adoption of questions used in other questionnaires;

- (b) adaption of questions used in other questionnaires; and
- (c) developing your own questions

Each question shows where it was adopted/adapted from and those that were developed by the researcher. This can be seen in Appendix B.

This was achieved by employing the symbolic interactionism theory, bearing in mind that the respondents need to be able to understand the purposes and presumptions/knowledge of what the questions seek to find (Foddy, 2001). Symbolic interactionism holds the view that social actors are in a continual process of interpreting the social world around us in that we interpret the actions of others with whom we interact and this interpretation leads to adjustment of our own meanings and actions (Saunders et al. 2012).

According to Foddy (2001), in order to collect data that the researcher actually needs in a survey (valid data) – thus, quantitative and qualitative data, more especially, qualitative – four things need to be in place. First of all, the interviewer, which is often the researcher, needs to encode the questions by taking into account her or his own purposes, and the presumptions/knowledge about the respondent's presumptions/knowledge about her/himself (i.e. the interviewer). Secondly, the respondent should be able to decode the question, taking into account her/his own purpose and presumption/knowledge about her/himself (i.e. the respondent). Thirdly, the respondent should encode the answer taking into account her/his own presumptions/knowledge about the interviewer and perceptions of the interviewer's presumptions/knowledge about her/himself (i.e. the respondent). Lastly, the interviewer should decode answers taking into account her/his own presumptions/knowledge about her/himself (i.e. the interviewer). A diagram illustration of symbolic interactionism is provided in the figure below.

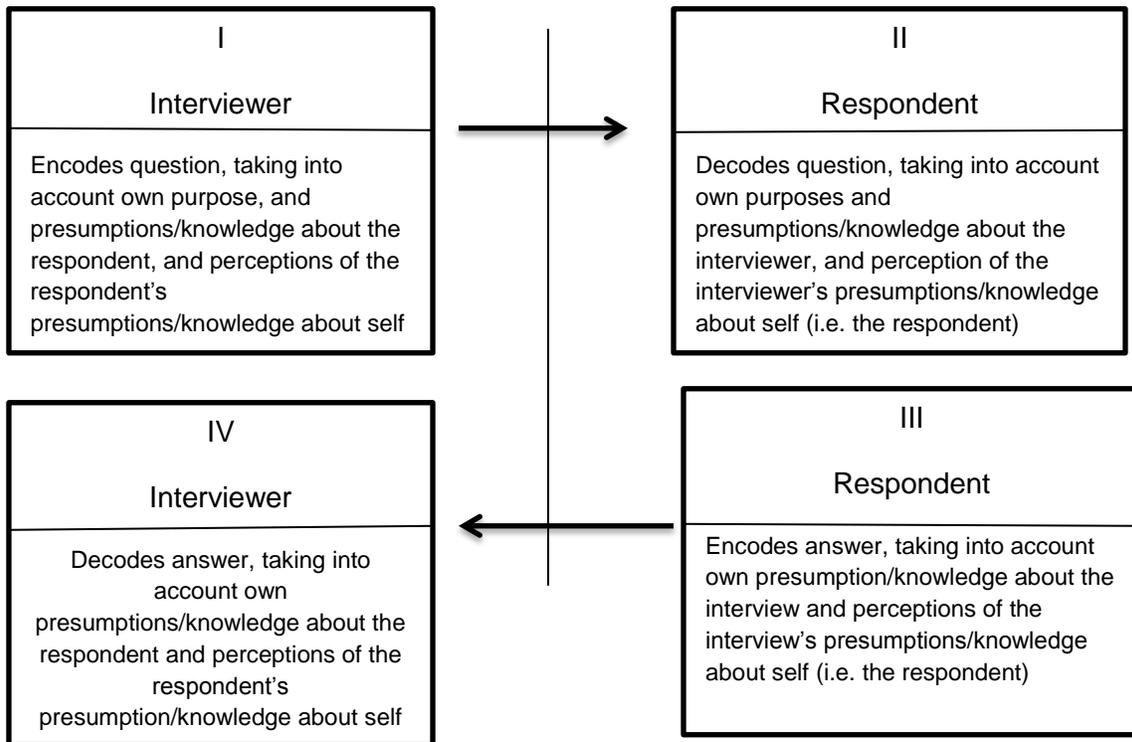


Figure 14 A model of the symbolic interactionist view of question-answer behaviour

Source: Foddy (2001, p.22)

### 4.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity and reliability, which often determine the robustness and the quality of the study (Saunders et al., 2012) are often confused as meaning the same. Even though the meanings overlap, there are distinctions among them. This section explains how validity and reliability of the data for the research were ensured.

### 4.3.1 Validity

Validity answers the question as to whether a research instrument such as a questionnaire or interview actually measures what it was intended to measure or whether its scores have meaning for a participant (Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Saunders et al., 2012). Saunders et al. (2012) call this measurement validity. Leedy and Omrod (2004, p.98) define research validity as “the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure”. Validity is dependent on accuracy and precision; accuracy is the degree to which bias is absent from a sample, and precision is measured by the standard error of estimate – a type of deviation measurement, where the smaller the standard error of estimate, the higher the precision of the sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2001).

Researchers often refer to questionnaire validity as content validity, criterion-related validity and construct validity (Bloomberg et al., 2008). “Content validity refers to the extent to which the measurement instrument questions in the questionnaire provides adequate coverage of the investigative questions” (Saunders et al., 2012, p.429). Saunders et al. argue that there are several ways in which this adequate coverage can be made. One is the use of literature review; the other is the use of a panel to ensure that the questions in the questionnaire are ‘essential’, ‘useful but not essential’ or ‘not necessary’. Criterion-related validity, which is also known as predictive validity, refers to the ability of the measures (questions) to make accurate predictions (Saunders et al., 2012). Lastly, construct validity is the extent to which measurement questions actually measure the presence of those constructs the researcher intended them to measure.

To ensure the research findings are valid, the researcher used the literature review as a guide. As discussed in the literature review, the reviewed literature is directly related to the research objectives and therefore using this as a guide helped obtain the necessary data from the respondents. This ensures that the research instruments being used are appropriate for this study and that the semi-structured interview and questionnaire questions reflect the topic under study (Saunders et al., 2012). The research instruments (questionnaires, interview questions) are reviewed by experts in the field, as Huck and Cormier (1996) and Saunders et al. (2012) advocate. Further, the study’s

data instruments have been adopted from previous studies, with minimal alterations made to meet the requirements of this research, as indicated in Appendix B (questionnaire).

#### **4.3.2 Reliability**

Reliability is the degree to which a result can repeat itself over time. In other words reliability refers to consistency (Saunders et al., 2012; Bryan, 2012). Joppe (as cited in Golafshani, 2003, p.1) defines reliability as: "...The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable". Reliability of a measurement instrument is the extent to which it yields consistent results when the characteristic being measured has not changed (Leedy & Omrod, 2004). The ultimate test of a sample design is how well it represents the characteristics of the population it was intended to represent (Cooper & Schindler, 2001). In other words, if a test can be repeated more than once and the results are the same, then that research result can be classed as reliable. For example, a reliable questionnaire is one that will give the same results or answers from the same sample over different periods.

To reduce bias so that the findings can be reliable, the study does not use specific projects or periods. In Africa, and Ghana in particular, people give views that are partisan, so using a particular government project will imply that a particular political party will be associated with the project. Therefore, people's opinions about government project failure are likely to reflect their political loyalties to the party who undertook the specific project. Successive general elections results over the years indicate that some regions are patriotic to certain political parties (Ghanaweb, 2015).

Moreover, both data collection were piloted before the full collection of data occurred. Saunders (2009, p.394) argues that "Prior to using your questionnaire to collect data it should be pilot tested...the purpose of the pilot test is to refine the questionnaire so that the respondents will have no problem answering the questions and there will be no

problem in recording the data". In other words, the questionnaire is pre-tested to establish that the questions are fully comprehensible and are understood by the respondents, in order to ensure the soundness and suitability of the research instruments (Sekaran, 2003).

Prior to the full interview, initial pilot interviews were conducted to ensure that the interview question guide was appropriate for the full interview. This consisted of three (3) participants (one from each category of participants). The pilot interview took place in June 2013. Secondly, prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, 15 questionnaires were piloted in June 2014. By pre-testing, the researcher followed the steps that Foddy prescribes must be followed in order to ensure the research questions' validity and reliability (Foddy, 1994). Moreover, this is also in conformance with Mitchell's (1996, as cited by Saunders et al, 2012) three common approaches to ensuring reliability of questions: tests re-test, internal consistency and alternative form.

Further, data from the pilot interviews were analysed to ascertain if there was a need to make any necessary amendments. After the analysis of the pilot interview, some questions were eliminated whilst others were added. In the questionnaire pilot, the analysis of the 15 questionnaires was made using Cronbach alpha. Cronbach's alpha allows the researcher to measure the reliability of different variables. It consists of estimates of how much variation in scores of different variables is attributable to chance or random errors (Selltiz et al., 1976). As a general rule, a coefficient greater than or equal to 0.7 is considered acceptable and a good indication of construct reliability (Nunnally, 1978). All the necessary amendments were made to ensure that the questionnaire is clear and understandable to respondents. The full analysis is presented in the next chapter.

#### **4.4 PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS**

The participants in this research were volunteers recruited by the researcher; they were informed of the purpose of the study through the invitation to participate letter and

verbal explanations. The researcher kept the highest standard of ethics at all times during engagement with the research participants and also conformed to Liverpool John Moores University's Ethical Policy.

As recommended by Cooper and Schindler (2001), the study was specially designed so that participants would not suffer deliberate physical harm, discomfort, mental distress, humiliation or loss of privacy. In order to safeguard against the above concerns, when contacting the study's participants, the researcher communicated the study's benefits, taking care not to exaggerate or understate them. In order to be fully knowledgeable and cognisant of ethical responsibilities and concerns related to this research effort, the researcher adhered to LJMU's relevant procedures, as documented in Appendices D and E.

## **4.5 DATA CLEANSING AND MANAGEMENT**

The data collected were cleansed by removing incomplete questionnaires and those that the researcher deemed not usable for analysis. The procedure used was that the researcher personally went through all data that were received to ensure that all parts of the questionnaire had been correctly filled in. Especially, prior to the analysis, the survey data were screened in an effort to separate biased inputs and/or any other inconsistencies contained in the collated data. After careful examination, numerous entries were removed as being biased or substantially incomplete. Even though the participants' understanding of the questions cannot wholly be determined, the researcher deemed it ethical to contain and/or control certain entries from the data set in order to minimise the impact of an ambiguous interpretation, as discussed earlier on in this chapter (under validity and reliability). Accordingly, a couple of survey respondent data sets were discarded during the data-cleansing procedure. Overall, the cleansing process was carried out in such a way that maximised the data present in the data set whilst minimising the potential errors in the sampling techniques used.

## **4.6 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE**

This section discusses the procedure that was used to analyse the data collected. This is in two parts – the first part discusses the procedure that was followed in analysing the semi-structured interview (qualitative analysis) and the second part relates to the questionnaire (quantitative analysis) procedure that was followed. Specifically, data collected from the semi-structured interview in the form of perceptions are analysed with the use of qualitative data analysis technique(s). On the other hand, data collected from the questionnaire in the form of scale, percentage, numbers and/or statistics are analysed using quantitative data analysis techniques.

### **4.6.1 Qualitative Analysis**

This sub-section discusses in detail the procedure that was followed in the analysis of the data collected from the semi-structured interview. The ultimate purpose is to demonstrate how the various themes were arrived at. Specifically, it discusses how the coding procedure was carried out to arrive at the various themes to generate the conceptual framework for this part of the study.

#### ***4.6.1.1 Transcribing Procedure***

All the interviews were audio-recorded and were transcribed after each interview. Each respondent was labelled and their profiles were clearly marked against their transcribed script. The various failure criteria, and causes and effects that were mentioned were highlighted in coloured fonts in Microsoft Word. The purpose of this was to help identify the key failure criteria, and causes and effects of project failure that were mentioned during the interviews.

#### ***4.6.1.2 Coding Procedure***

This followed the coding system suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008). The texts of

the semi-structured interviews were analysed with the use of words. This was achieved with the help of NVivo 10 software and Microsoft Word. The analytical methods used are Thematic analysis and Content analysis. This enables the researcher to take an inductive position where analysis is made using the theoretical framework created from the literature review as a guide.

This coding was performed both manually and via software. The manual coding was carried out with the use of a computer by highlighting the various themes that were raised by respondents. This was achieved by using Microsoft Word and NVivo 10. The transcribed data were coded based on the various performance criteria, and causes and effects that were mentioned.

First of all, all the performance criteria, and causes and effects mentioned by respondents were coded. Similar codes were put together to obtain other codes and subsequently put into main themes. These themes were analysed in order of how often they were mentioned. In addition, the causes under each theme were also analysed based on the number of respondents who mentioned that theme. This was based on two levels of codes: higher and lower. Higher-level codes were used to represent the main themes that explained the interpretation of the data (interpretivist tradition). However, the lower-level codes were used to further explain the higher-level ones. The lower- and upper-level codes shared common content and dimensions that would collectively fall under one theme. The various codes were further coded according to their similarity or similar meanings. The last stage was further coded into the main themes. A screenshot of the coding procedure using NVivo 10 is provided in Appendix C.

#### **4.6.2 Quantitative Analysis**

This involves the analysis of data collected in the form of scale, numbers and/or statistics with the use of the quantitative software package Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis is presented in the form of tables, graphs and percentages. This involves the use of deductive positions to make analysis.

This research was conducted using a sample of 265 respondents to assess the extent of failure, and the causes and effects of the Ghanaian government's project failure. Questionnaire variables on the Ghanaian government's project performance (failure criteria) were also measured using a five-point Likert scale (1-5), where 1=least achievement and 5=highest achievement. Likewise, the causes and effects of the Ghanaian government's project failure were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1-5), where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. Additionally, the most affected stakeholders of Ghana projects failure variables were assessed using a seven-point Likert scale (1-7), where 1= least affected and 7= most affected.

Statistical analyses performed comprised Descriptive analysis, Means, Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficients, and Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference in ranks. The main purpose of the choice of statistical analysis was to evaluate the most significant failure criteria, causes and effects of the Ghanaian government's project failure with a view to making appropriate recommendations to relevant stakeholders.

In most research projects, the first step in data analysis is the description of the data and sample population. The usefulness of this is to provide an initial investigation of the data and to provide insight into the research findings (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997). For the purpose of this research project, descriptive analysis was undertaken to provide respondents' profiles at a number of different levels – personal respondent profiles such as age, gender, region, role at work, work experience and sector of operations. This gave a comprehensive picture of the makeup of the data, allowing further analyses to be undertaken. The results of the descriptive analyses have been presented in chapter 5. Secondly, the purpose of the mean calculation was to find the average response of the participants. The purpose of the Spearman rank correlation was to establish that the ranks provided by the contractors, PMP and the general public were not due to chance, and therefore this test was to find out if there is a degree of agreement between ranks provided by the categories of respondents. Thus, in order to test the hypothesis in the study, Kruskal-Wallis test is employed (Kruskal & Wallis, 1952, as cited by Field, 2012). The purpose of the Kruskal-Wallis H test was to establish if the extent of agreement/disagreement across the three categories of the study's

participants was statistically significant. The Kruskal-Wallis H non-parametric test of difference between independent samples was used (Field, 2012). The non-parametric test means the distribution does not necessarily need to be normal before they can be applied.

Based on the provision of relevant responses to the research objectives, six variables were generated to address the issue of the extent of project failure in Ghanaian government projects. Secondly, 32 key variables identified as causes of failure in Ghanaian government projects were coded. Thirdly, the identified 26 possible effects of the failure were coded, and the most affected stakeholders were also coded; these were seven variable. After the coding, the various statistical testing needed (as mentioned above) for this research was performed in accordance with the research objectives.

## **4.7 SUMMARY**

This chapter has presented all the procedures that were followed in the collection and analysis of the data for this research by highlighting the two main methods that were used. Thus, it has explained how the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires were collected and analysed.

Moreover, the methodology and procedure followed in order to improve the research validity and reliability have been discussed. Further, how the data were managed and cleansed before the analysis has also been highlighted. The next chapter presents the results from the data collected from semi-structured interview and the questionnaire.

# CHAPTER 5

## PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

### 5.0 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present the results and analyses of the primary data collection that was undertaken as a part of this research project. Two data collection methods were used – semi-structured interview and questionnaire. The chapter is therefore divided into two main parts: presentation of data results and analysis from the semi-structured interviews, and presentation of data results and analysis from the questionnaires.

The findings from the data collection are presented based around the main objectives of the research study, which are: (1) to find out the extent of failure in Ghanaian government projects (2) to find out the main causes of Ghanaian government project failure, and their relative importance (influence); (3) to find out the effects of failed Ghanaian government projects on key stakeholders of such projects and their relative importance; and (4) to determine which of the key stakeholders are affected most when Ghanaian government projects fail.

### 5.1 INTERVIEW RESULTS

The aim of this sub-section is to explore the extent of project failure, and causes and effects of project failure in Ghanaian government projects with the use of semi-structured interviews. These exploratory data are then used together with the literature review to design a questionnaire for the study.

In the main, semi-structured interviews were conducted to seek the perceptions of project management practitioners, contractors and the general public about the subject matter. Specifically, this first data collection explores the extent of project failure, the main causes of Ghanaian government project failure and the subsequent negative

effects on key stakeholders of such failed projects. The ultimate purpose of this data collection was to validate the findings from the literature review and to explore further themes on the subject under investigation. Data from the literature review and semi-structured interview are then used as a guide to develop a questionnaire and hypothesis for the study. This sub-section therefore presents the results from the interviews.

### 5.1.1 Categories of Personnel Engaged

Below are the categories of personnel engaged for the interviews, numbers in each category and type(s) of engagement.

Table 8 Respondent Categories

<b>Respondent Categories</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Type of Engagement</b>
Project Management Practitioners	6	Semi-structured Interview
Contractors	2	Semi-structured Interview
General Public	2	Semi-structured Interview
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	

### 5.1.2 Respondent's Profile

To get the respondents' profiles, they were asked to introduce themselves. This captured their age, education, position, years of experience in current position, experience in project management, overall work experience, and the sector and industry in which they work. The main reason this information is collected is for the researcher to know the level of knowledge that respondents have in relation to the subject matter. This will help improve the validity and reliability of the data being collected. However, because this is the preliminary stage of the data collection, this part does not analyse the respondents' personal profiles in detail. The personal profiles of respondents will be analysed in detail at the second stage of the data analysis, which is

the questionnaire. An overview of the respondents' profiles is presented in the table below.

Table 9 Respondents' Profiles

Respondents	Age	Education	Years of Experience in Current Position	Work Experience In Project Management	Overall Work Experience	Industry	Sector
R1(Administrator)	33	Masters	5	8	8	Healthcare	Public
R2 (Consultant & Lecturer)	46	PhD/ Professional	15	15	21	General	Public & Private
R3 (Architect)	37	BA/PgD/ Professional	4	10	10	General	Public
R4 (Structural Engineer)	40	BA/ Professional	4	14	14	General	Public
R5 (Quantity Surveyor)	39	BA/ Professional	15	15	15	General	Public
R6 (Physical & Works Director)	55	Masters/ Professional	1	32	32	Education	Public
R7 (Finance & Administrative Director)	27	Masters	4	15	15	Construction	Public
R8 (Director)	45	A-Level	7	7	25	Construction	Public & private
R9 (Teacher & Business Woman)	38	Diploma	10	-	10	Education & Retail	Public & Private
R10 (Banker)	31	BA	5	-	7	Banking	Public

Below are the findings from the interviews with project management practitioners, contractors and the general public on the extent of failure, causes of Ghanaian government project failure and effects of that failure on key stakeholders. Steps that were followed to arrive at the various themes have been provided in the previous chapter; a screenshot of the NVivo analysis is also provided in Appendix C, as indicated in chapter four.

### **5.1.3 Ghanaian Government Project Failure**

The first objective of the research was to find out the extent of failure of Ghanaian government projects – thus, the extent of this failure using different success/failure criteria as presented in the adapted Square Route Framework (Atkinson, 1999) in the theoretical framework in Chapter two. This serves as a building block to appreciate what brings about the failure and the subsequent effects on key stakeholders. Therefore, the first question to interviewees was “how would is assess failure is Ghana government projects in terms of meeting the projected time, cost and deliverables; contribution to the sector in which the project is implemented; stakeholder satisfaction; and national development?”

In terms of the above criteria, all respondents agreed that Ghanaian government projects fail; however, the extent of failure differs for the various criteria and the interviewees’ perceptions on the degree of failure also differ. The next sub-sections present what interviewees perceive about the extent of failure in Ghanaian government projects using the above failure criteria.

#### **5.1.3.1 Time Criterion**

All the respondents were in agreement that Ghanaian government projects do not meet their projected timescales and that they have witnessed a lot of time overlap. In the words of R3, for instance, Ghanaian government projects “...hardly meet their time duration and most of them don’t meet their time duration if I can remember. It’s only about two or three that were finished within the stipulated time, and even these were projects funded by donor agencies. Projects which were directly funded by the government of Ghana hardly meet the time”.

However, respondents were not able to give specific ratings in terms of the failure percentage. Whilst some the respondents gave their perception of the failure rate (e.g. R1, R10), others (e.g., R2) did not attempt to rate it at all. For instance, R1 rated time

overruns at 90% by saying that *“looking at time, I can assure you that about 90% of government projects are unable to meet time”*. However, R2 said that *“it is not easy to rate, especially because of the dynamics of the times; it will be difficult to say 50% achieve that, 20% achieve – I may not be able to say so. But I can say that quite [the] majority of government projects at least are unable to meet [their] projected time objective”*. Many reasons were cited for why delays happen. These reasons are fully discussed in the next sub-section.

### **5.1.3.2 Cost Criterion**

In relation to cost or budget, all respondents agreed that there is deviation in most government projects and the deviation is mostly in terms of cost escalation. As with the time factor, most of the respondents (R2, R3, R4, R6, R8, R9, R10) were reluctant to rate cost in terms of percentage; however, they perceived that hardly any Ghanaian government projects meet this success criteria. Nonetheless, R1 did provide a rating, by saying that *“in terms of budget I can for sure tell you that about 60% are unable to meet the target budget”*. Moreover, R5 rated the degree of cost overruns at 35%. However, R5 was only able to speculate about this, not having any specific records to confirm this claim.

The most popular reason they all cited was due to delays in payments by government and government agencies responsible for payments, which meant that contractors have to wait and, in waiting, price fluctuations set in – hence, cost escalation. Another reason was the over-reliance on foreign donors and international financial agencies for funding of projects: what is called release of funding. The reasons for this are fully discussed in the next sub-section.

### **5.1.3.3 Deliverables Criterion**

Apart from R4 and R8, all of the respondents perceive that Ghanaian government projects sometimes do not meet the requirements. In fact those (R4 & R8) who were

silent on the subject put the three failure criteria (time, cost and requirements) together and said that Ghanaian government projects rarely meet these criteria.

Specifically, R1 said that, in the area of sanitation for instance, the required deliverables are not achieved in that *“sometimes, these projects do not meet the standard that they want; especially, women have special needs, so if these needs are not there for them, they don’t use it”*. Further, R1 said that, in relation to requirements or deliverables, *“about 45% do not meet it but the rest [do]”*. R8 and R7, who are both contractors, said that sometimes contractors produce shoddy work, though neither of them agreed that they had ever done so. However, they did say that their colleagues have sometimes produced shoddy work, and sometimes the projects do not work at all. In the area of construction, for instance, both R7 and R8 said that sometimes buildings collapse before the project is completed.

R9 perceived that, *“in terms of quality – the problem is because most of the projects are executed by foreigners and they don’t know our weather conditions, our culture and other things that are locally known to the citizens of Ghana, and therefore do the work anyhow.”*

#### **5.1.3.4 Stakeholder Satisfaction Criterion**

In relation to stakeholder satisfaction or benefits to the stakeholder, the respondents’ views were similar. All of them agreed that some of the projects benefited the stakeholders whilst others did not. The main reason cited for non-satisfaction was sitting projects in the wrong place or embarking on projects where they are not needed – due to lack of feasibility studies and inadequate consultation of the stakeholders. For instance, one respondent said *“if I should look at it from [an] ordinary man’s viewpoint, because Ghana is a developing country, and most of these projects are non-existent, then you may be tempted to say that stakeholders are 100% satisfied, but, from the technical point of view, you can say that about 60/70% are able to meet stakeholder satisfaction targets”* (R1).

R2 also said that *“most often, the stakeholders get the benefit and therefore become very satisfied with the product from the project but they don’t get it when they actually need it most.”* However, R3 perceived that the degree of benefit or satisfaction depends on the sector in which the project is being executed:

*“...about 40% [of projects] are unable to meet the expectation of the beneficiaries – for example, using market buildings, about 30% meet satisfaction and 70% [are] unable to meet expectations of users. In my municipality, a lot of market structures are not being used – but that is not only in my municipality; if you go to other municipalities, it’s the same. In the area of health, there are various hospitals, regional hospitals, district hospitals, teaching hospitals, small clinics called Chiefs’ Compounds. With this health infrastructure, we have the same problem of bad consultation. The location of these facilities is very key because various communities have various beliefs attached to them so if you are providing health facilities, and you don’t consult them, and you site it in a place which is against these beliefs, they hardly patronise [them]. We have put up quite a number of them but, even though all of them are being used, they are not [being used] to our expectations. In the area of sanitation, we provide toilet facilities but because of bad consultation and location, they don’t patronise them as expected.”*

### **5.1.3.5 Sector Contribution Criterion**

In terms of sector contribution, the response was relatively positive. The respondents agreed that Ghanaian government projects often contribute to the sector in which they are implemented. R2, for example, said that they *“contribute to the sectors, thus, the main reasons why they are made; but most often; it takes long time to get these benefits”*. R3 also said that *“our activities are geared towards several sectors, some are education, economic, sanitation ...; for the education [projects], they are able to meet the needs of the beneficiaries because people have realised the importance of education”* and as such these projects contribute to the enhancement of their educational needs.

The only negative response was that sometimes the projects are not needed or they are not implemented where they are needed, and therefore the expected contribution to that sector is not realised. In addition, if a project is abandoned, then it will fail to contribute to the sector. For instance, R9 perceived that sometimes the government will build a teacher's bungalow but they will site it in the wrong place and as such it may not be patronised as expected.

#### **5.1.3.6 National Development Criterion**

Most of the respondents did not talk much about this topic. The reason was that, once they had contributed to the respective sectors as discussed above in 5.2.5, they automatically contributed to national development. In the words of R6, for instance, "*this is the same as the contribution to [the] sector as I have already stated*". R2 also said that, once the projects have been completed, then they contribute to the development of the country. R1 specifically rated this contribution at 70%, leaving 30% as no contribution – due to the irrelevance of such projects. He cited political reasons for the existence of such irrelevant projects.

#### **5.1.4 Causes of Ghanaian Government Project Failure**

Respondents' answers to the second question concerning 'causes of Ghanaian government project failure' have been grouped into the following themes: leadership, management and administrative practices, resources, and external forces. This section analyses the main themes that emerged, in order of how often they were mentioned. In addition, the causes under each theme are also analysed based on the number of respondents who mentioned them. These themes were arrived at by a coding process as indicated in Chapter four.

#### 5.1.4.1 Leadership

**Lack of continuity:** All respondents said lack of continuity by project leaders (government leaders) affects the success of Ghanaian government projects. They all related this to politics. In the words of R10, for instance, *“the main reason for project failure is lack of continuity: when another government comes into power, it decides to abandon the whole project because it thinks it’s got a good one. This is because they also want to achieve their manifesto promise on projects”*. R8 also added that *“In Ghana, most of these failures, abandonment and delays are because of politics. If a new government comes to power, they don’t want to know anything about the former government’s projects”*.

**Corruption:** corruption was mentioned by all respondents. According to them, corruption has become part of Ghanaian government projects, and the act has become *“normal”* (R9). Some even said that *“it is an open secret.”* (R1, R5 & R9). According to the respondents, the reasons for corruption are many. One – the bureaucratic procedure involved in government project implementation leads to corrupt practices. For instance, they cite that, due to the numerous channels that government project contractors have to go through to obtain their payment, they end up doing a *“follow up”* and, in doing so, they end up making payments to government officials to *“speed up the payment”* process. In other words, the slow pace of the payment process and delays in payment compel contractors to pay bribes in return for quick payment. In addition, seven (R1, R3, R4, R5, R8, R9, R10) out of 10 respondents said that payment of 10% of the contract money by contractors to government officials has become the norm, and that it is extremely difficult or impossible for a contractor who decides not to pay to still win a contract. Further to this, there are *“unofficial middlemen”* (R9) between government officials and contractors during the award of contracts. These men take money from contractors and government officials to link them up to make a contract deal. One respondent said *“sometimes, contracts are awarded before the official bidding for the contract. If this corrupt act happens, government officials are unable to enforce quality of work and other work specifications”* (R9). Moreover, contracts are often given to family and political party members. This is because government officials

have to reward the party faithful with contracts and, by doing so, they can use the profits made from such projects to fund the party.

**Bureaucracy:** Bureaucracy accounts for almost all project delays and partly for most corrupt practices, according to many of the respondents (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7 & R9). Respondents also said that this bureaucratic process of getting projects executed was meant to bring about a fair and corrupt-free procedure; however, this has turned out to be the opposite. As one project management practitioner put it: *“as a civil servant, how can I explain at management meetings that I have paid Mr ‘A’ ... when the government has already paid him?”* (R1). Nevertheless, the same person said that *“some contractors are compelled to pay government officials to speed-up payment processes”*. To back up this opinion, all the respondents bar R10 (contractors included) said that bureaucratic procedures in government project implementation *“force the hand”* of contractors to pay bribes or use unofficial intermediaries (middlemen) to seek what they want. In their view, Ghanaian government projects go through a lot of steps and stages even before their actual commencement and, during the execution stages, each stage also has to go through a lot of inspections, and officials need to sign documents, which are normally hardcopies. In some situations, the absence of an officer means that the project in question has to come to a halt. Some interviewees (R2, R3, R4, & R5) even opined that sometimes this was because of politics – politics in the sense that, if a project was awarded by the previous government, the current government officials would want to stifle it so that they could use delays and non-completion as an excuse to re-award the project to their party members. One contractor (R8) cited that one project had been in place for over seven years and it had come to a halt because the government officials wanted to re-award it, based on non-completion, but before they could do that the current contractor had to sign documents proofing non-completion. However, because it was not his fault, he decided not to sign, which led to the project being abandoned.

Further, requirement of hardcopies of projects documents by leaders – respondents, bar the interviewees from the general public (R9 & R10), said that currently Ghanaian government projects still use hardcopies of project documents from parliament to the local level, where projects are implemented. This leads to delays and corrupt practices.

In the words of R2 *“Parliamentarians still require hard copies of every project funding agreement or document instead of electronic copies ... Process flow including parliamentary approvals, project designs and action plans creates too many delays”*. Nevertheless, respondents did not explain why the Ghanaian government still uses hardcopies of project documentation instead of electronic ones.

**Political interference:** According to all the interviewees, politics is perhaps the root cause of most Ghanaian government project failure. In the words of one contractor, *“everything in Ghana is now politics ... and when you wake up and listen to the radio stations, it’s all politics”* (R7). Many government projects are abandoned, come to halt or are delayed due to political reasons (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10). This is basically a leadership problem stemming from government officials. Political reasons stem from *“personal gains”* (R9, R10) and party gains, among others. As mentioned earlier, most government projects are discontinued because political parties that are in power fear that, if they continue with previous government projects, they may not win the following general election. Apart from that, individual politicians also think that they need to gain certain benefits once they are in power and therefore do not care about the well-being of the general public, but about their personal gains (R10). They therefore award contracts to contractors who are often their party faithful or friends and families or their partners. This eventually leads to corruption, hence, project failure. One respondent (R2) even said that frequent change in project management leadership is because of politics and that most often incompetent project leaders are chosen ahead of competent ones. One contractor said *“you need to lobby to get a contract”* (R8). Lack of continuity is also blamed on politics. Interviewees all shared the same perception: that there is a lack of continuity, which often results in project abandonment, basically because of politics. The reason is that the sitting government does not want to continue with the previous government’s projects. The fundamental reason is that citizens and the previous government will tag the project as *“belonging to the previous administration”* (R8) and therefore this could affect the incumbent government’s chances of winning the next general election. Respondents further said that projects are mostly physical structures that the general public can see and these are the things that can influence voters. A further question on ‘why’ revealed that most Ghanaians are illiterate and that

they do not understand issues such as GDP, micro- and macroeconomics, inflation and the like, so what they care about are the structures that they see. One very experienced project practitioner even perceived that: *“that is the reason why, when elections are close, a lot of projects are started, sod cut and projects commissioned in Ghana”* (R2). Therefore, continuing the previous government’s projects will mean that the current or sitting government is not doing *“anything”*. Respondents said that there are laws in the constitution that are against such practices, but, due to illiteracy on the part of the ordinary citizens, and their inability to understand issues about project execution in the public sector, governments over the years have been compelled to do the same. Thus, the ordinary citizens judge the performance of government on the basis of projects that they can witness.

Another dimension to this politics factor is politically-inspired projects rather than people- or community-inspired ones. Respondents believe that the main reason for lack of project patronage at both *project management* and *product* levels is when projects are inspired by government (politicians) instead of the community.

Lack of a feasibility study – respondents said that government officials often fail to carry out proper feasibility studies about where projects are needed. They fail to do so because of campaign promises. As a result, the government implements projects at certain places because politicians have promised to provide a specific number of projects and they have to implement such projects. Politicians therefore ‘dump’ projects on local communities. This was mentioned by all respondents.

Closely related to political policy is *starting more projects than the country can finance*: starting more projects than necessary at a time. All respondents agreed that this a fundamental reason for projects delays in Ghanaian government projects. Even though they cited many reasons for this problem, the main or root reason was associated with politics. Respondents perceived that the government often starts more projects than it can finance. The reason is that they fail to carry out proper budgeting for these projects before starting them. Respondents also perceived that the government makes unrealistic campaign promises about projects without knowing how they are going to obtain the funds. Therefore, they start such projects as soon as they achieve power. *“In*

*doing so, they rely on donor promises, so if donors fail them, the projects have to come to a halt or [be] abandoned altogether. The government starts more projects than it can finance. There is poor budgetary allocation for projects in the country” (R6).* Sometimes too, instead of finishing one project before starting another, a number of projects are started at the same time, for fear of other districts complaining about the government not carrying out projects in their area.

***Ineffective stakeholder participation:*** This has to do with the involvement of various stakeholders associated with Ghanaian government projects. However, the interviewees’ emphasis was more on the beneficiaries. Some respondents (R1, R2, and R7) said that, when a project is a community-inspired one, then stakeholder participation is normally strong. On the other hand, if it is a government-inspired one or one that is initiated from national, regional, district or municipal level, then stakeholder participation is weak. R2 went further to say that this is due to lack of or inadequate feasibility studies for projects based at the local level. Those respondents (R1, R2, and R7) who mentioned this reason were of the view that leaders of government projects fail to conduct proper feasibility studies and therefore the people in the local areas where the projects are being executed do not assume ownership of them. As a result, they sometimes pose a threat to the projects’ success, both at the management level and at the product level (thus resulting in failure to use the projects’ deliverables).

***Poor Planning:*** An interviewee (R6) said that there is poor planning on the part of government-appointed leaders who co-ordinate government projects. Poor planning happens at all parts or stages of the project life cycle. However, some interviewees perceived that, in some cases, the technical competence to plan properly is there but there is no money to effect such planning. The major reason that was linked to poor planning was allocation of funds to various government projects. That is, the government started to implement projects without properly planning how the funds were going to be distributed among them. One interviewee opined that *“I think generally it [is] because of poor planning ... that relates to the funding. Elsewhere you realise that, when projects are conceived, budgetary allocation is fixed, if you don’t have that budget allocation, no one even asks you to tender, but here the perception is that the money is*

*there, you go ahead and we will pay and, somewhere in between, the government with the financial institutions will get short of funding. And then everybody will be looking at the little funds that come through. The major problem is poor planning – poor planning is everywhere, in every project” (R6).*

Feasibility studies were also identified as being part of the poor planning. This is because, once there is a poor feasibility study, what the whole project is about might not be known before its initial planning is carried out, and therefore an incorrect plan might be drawn up. Moreover, respondents also linked planning to projects having the wrong project leaders or planners. They said that, in some projects, projects leaders are appointed on the basis of political patronage rather than competence. Apart from that, some assume the leadership position in a project by virtue of their position in the company or institution without having any formal knowledge or experience at all in project management (R6). Thus, these people plan without the necessary technical know-how.

***Lack of commitment by leaders:*** This is on the part of project leaders especially at the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). According to the practitioner (R2), who works as a consultant for Ghanaian government projects, most often MDAs officials are not fully dedicated to the projects and are not very interested in them once they have been paid. The practitioner also perceived that these MDAs officials are not “*incentivised*” to carry out their duties and that they do something because they are supposed to do it. As a result, the level of commitment that needs to be put into government project implementation is poor. If this happens, what “*you will see is that, you will go and the project document has been left on his table for months without being attended to ... you go to the ministries and sometimes the project co-ordinators are not serious about the projects they are managing*” (R2).

***Inability of MDAs to justify disbursements of projects funds:*** One reason cited by one respondent (R2, the project management practitioner) is inability of MDAs to justify why donor agencies should disburse projects funds. According to R2, “*donor agencies don’t normally give out the entire money for implementation of government projects but disburse it in bits. The disbursements are tied to project performance and progress.*

*However, in most cases, MDAs are unable to justify why donors should disburse such funds to projects because, often times, such projects are behind schedule or are not being used for what they were purported for.”* Sometimes, the government (MDAs) diverts project funds to other projects and therefore is unable to account for such funds in the name of the project in question. This often leads to project delays, hence, budget escalation. When this happens, the government has to look for money from somewhere to continue with the project to the level at which the donors would be willing to disburse money and, by the time this happens, price fluctuation might have set in.

#### **5.1.4.2 Management & Administration Practices**

**Corruption:** Corruption was mentioned by all respondents bar R6 (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7, R8, R9 & 10). According to them, corruption has become part of government projects and the act has become “*normal*” (R9). Some even argued that it is an open secret (R1, R4, R3, R8 & R9). They cited many reasons for corruption. One – the bureaucratic procedure involved with government project implementation leads to corrupt practices. For instance, they cited that, due to the numerous channels that government project contractors have to go through to get their payment, they end up doing a “*follow up*” and, in doing so; they end up making payments to government officials to “*speed up the payment*” (R8) process. In other words, due to the slow payment process and delays in payment, contractors are compelled to make payments to officials, which amount to corruption.

In addition, seven out of 10 respondents said that payment of 10% of the contract money by contractors to government officials has become the norm, and that it is extremely difficult or impossible if a contractor decides not to pay (R1, R3, R4, R5, R6, R8 & R9). Further to this, there are unofficial “*middlemen*” between government officials and contractors in the award of contracts (R9). These men take money from contractors and government officials to link them up to make a contract deal. One respondent (R8) even said that sometimes contracts are awarded before the official bidding for the contract commences. If this corrupt act happens, government officials are unable to

enforce quality of work and other work specifications. Moreover, contracts are often given to family and political party members (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9 & 10). The reason for this is that government officials have to reward the party faithful with contracts.

**Lack of supervision:** Supervision comes in two ways – via government consultants and through the companies carrying out the projects. Taking the former for instance, all respondents bar one member of the general public (thus, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8 & R9) were of the view that government consultants who are supposed to supervise government projects often fail to turn up as expected. This often delays the projects. If this happens, contractors are compelled to pay them money to come and inspect the projects, as failure to do so would stop the project from continuing. R1 and R9 said that they sometimes had to pay the officials' fuel costs for them to supervise the projects and that these payments are unofficial.

In contrast to government consultants' reluctance to supervise projects to ensure that they progress, contractors themselves face the challenge of supervision. One contractor (R8) said that there had been some circumstances where he had to stop work on a project because he was not available to supervise the workers, and he had previously had the negative experience of leaving projects in the hands of supervisors who failed to do the job properly, thereby costing him hugely. In most cases, this does not only delay projects but also produces a shoddy deliverable.

On the other hand, another interviewed contractor did not mention this supervision problem. This could be due to the size of the two companies, as the former is a small company whilst the latter is a very big company with over 300 workers.

**Bureaucracy:** Respondents said that documents and request forms were processed too slowly. Many felt that bureaucracy accounted for almost all project delays and partly for most corrupt practices (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7, R8 & R9). Nevertheless, R7 and R9 did not use the word 'bureaucracy' but their arguments implied it. For instance, in the words of R7 *"If there is a change of government, paperwork and documentation need to be re-visited and this delays the project as it takes a long time"*. Respondents also said

that this bureaucratic process of getting projects executed was meant to bring about fair and corrupt-free procedures; however, it tended to be the opposite. As one project management practitioner put it, *“as a civil servant, how can I explain at management meetings that I have paid Mr ‘A’ ... when the government has already paid him?”*. Nevertheless, the same person argued that *“some contractors are compelled to pay government officials to speed-up payment processes”* (R1). To back up this argument, all the respondents (contractors included) (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7, R8 & R9) who mentioned bureaucracy said that bureaucratic procedures in Ghanaian government project implementation force the hand of contractors to pay bribes or use unofficial middlemen to seek what they want.

In their arguments, Ghanaian government projects go through a lot of steps and stages even before their actual commencement, and during the execution stages. Each stage also has to go through a lot of inspections, and officials need to sign documents, which are normally hardcopies. In some situations, the absence of an officer means that the project in question has to come to a halt.

***Lack of capacity*** – This was explained by respondents to mean two things – skills or knowledge and material resources. However, those who meant both also added logistics. In other words, capacity is knowledge/skills and logistics on one hand and capacity could also mean only knowledge/skills alone on the other hand. Moreover, other interviewees only meant both knowledge/skills and material resources if they added the word ‘logistics’.

Respondents who argued about the knowledge part said that most government project leaders lack the knowledge or the requisite skills to carry out such projects (R1, R2, R3, R4, R7, R9 & R10). This happens mainly because of politics (R2, R10) or by virtue of unqualified people occupying certain management positions (R6). Project leaders, especially government officials, are appointed on a political basis rather than on their own merits, and that is not about competence but the political party to which a person belongs. Two of the general public interviewed (R9 & R10) opined that, sometimes, government officials appoint their own family members to lead projects when they are not qualified to do so. Moreover, one of the most experienced project management

practitioners interviewed (R2) opined that, apart from the political issues in appointment of project leaders in Ghanaian government projects, *“there is also lack of project management professionals in the country and that, most often, they put people with different a subject area in project leadership positions”*.

Those who argued from a material resources perspective are of the view that the government at times does not have all the necessary logistics in the form of machinery and other materials to carry out projects (R1, R7). One contractor said that most of their colleagues did not have all the appropriate equipment to carry out some government projects and sometimes they had to borrow from them (R7). Further, one member of the general public said that most often those contractors executing government projects had to borrow materials and/or machines from other countries or donor countries. Moreover, interviewee said that when this happens, and *“assuming that country is using the machines, they have to wait till they finish and that delays the project”* (R7).

**Poor Planning:** Some interviewees (R1, R3, R4, R5 & R6) said that poor planning happens at all parts or stages of the Ghanaian government project life cycle. Moreover, planning is linked to having the wrong project leaders or planners. Interviewees argued that, in most government projects, project leaders are appointed on the basis of political patronage rather than competence. According to R6, some assume leadership of projects by virtue of their position in the company or institution without any formal knowledge or experience at all in project management. Thus, these people plan without technical know-how. R6 cited that there had been instances where head teachers had assumed the leadership position for constructions projects in their schools, without having any idea about construction projects.

**Lack of communication:** Lack of communication was raised by some interviewees (R1, R2 & R3, R7 & R8); however, it was perceived or explained from different angles or areas. One – lack of communication among government ministries, department and agencies (MDAs). Respondent (R2) was of the views that, in Ghana, all government MDAs have their projects funds by the Ministry of Finance. Apart from that, some projects are inter-linked between and/or among MDAs, and as such the need to co-ordinate these MDAs to bring about successful projects execution are paramount.

However, there is often a lack of or improper communication among them and so projects do not run smoothly. The reason is that some of these MDAs officials are not *“committed, or to put it in the right way, are not dedicated to the projects”*. R2 cited, among other reasons, them not being *“incentivised”* to carry out their duties. Thus, there is no motivation on the part of the leadership at the MDAs to carry out projects.

The second angle opined by respondents (R1, R2 & R3) in relation to communication is lack of communication between MDAs or government and donor agencies if the projects are donor-funded. For instance, R3 said *“Sometimes, MDAs fail to communicate timely and appropriately to donor agencies on the progress of projects. This problem leads to unwillingness for donor agencies to release money for projects, especially funds that are supposed to be released in batches and on the basis of progress and performance.”*

Interviewees (contractors) (R7 & R8) argued that, sometimes, they were unable to finish projects on time and produced the wrong project requirements because of a lack of communication between the main contractor and the project team. One contractor cited that there have been some instances where he failed to communicate appropriately with the supervisor and that led to the production of wrong (shoddy) work, and *“we had to destroy the whole work and do it again”*. As a result, he said *“if I am not there to supervise, we don’t work”* (R8).

Moreover, communication was discussed from a stakeholder perspective, with particular reference to the general public. Respondents R1, R3, R4 and R7 opined that most projects fail to meet stakeholders’ (beneficiaries) satisfaction or provide benefits to them because of lack of communication between clients (government officials) and local community before their implementation. This is because some projects are carried out as campaign promises instead of community-engineered projects. Citing an example, one respondent (R1) narrated a situation where the government failed to find out why member of the local community were contracting a particular disease but assumed that, by constructing a water borehole, the disease would end. The project was successfully executed but the community failed to use the borehole because of their traditional belief in the usage of stream water.

**Poor design and scoping change:** Poor design and scoping was perceived from two angles by respondents – the whole project design and architectural design (R2, R3, & R4). The whole project design is about the project boundaries and the architectural design is about the architectural work of the project. According to respondents R2, R3, and R4, government officials and performing companies most often get the scope of government projects wrong from the on-set, and therefore have to make changes to scoping and design during the implementation of such projects. This leads to projects baseline deviations. Respondents also argued that, in some projects, it would be very difficult for project implementers to know the exact scope of the project in order to design it accordingly.

Another reason cited for this is that “*sometime when the project is being implemented, there are some agitations from [the] local community to force a change in scope of the project*” (R3). If this happens, performing companies have no option than to change the architectural design to suit the new scope, hence, cost, time and requirement escalation.

Two interviewees (R2, R3) also linked this problem to lack of capacity – capacity in the sense of qualified and skilled personnel for certain projects and area or sector of implementation. They also argued that, sometimes, government officials left projects to those who do not know anything about them. One cited that, in the educational sector for instance, management of infrastructure projects such as building of school blocks is left in the hands of head teachers who do not know anything about project management.

#### **5.1.4.3 Resources**

##### ***Finance – full funding; delays in counter-part funding and commitment fees; and delays in payments***

One key problem revealed related to finance. This can be grouped into three main areas – full funding of projects, delays in payment of counterpart/matching funding or government unable to pay such funding, and delays in payment to contractors.

For the first category, nine out of the 10 interviewees (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, & R9) perceived that this is due to the government starting more at a time than necessary. That is to say, the government starts more projects than the country can actually fund. However, this stems from political reasons. That is, politicians and/or political parties make campaign promises and write such projects in their manifestos. As a result, when they come to power, they are compelled to carry out such a number of projects within the promised dates. This leads to governments not making the necessary budgeting to ensure that they can finance such projects at once.

In relation to counterpart or matching funds and commitment fees, respondent R2 argued from two main perspectives – delays in honouring them and unavailability of funds. Counterpart funding is defined and explained simply as the funds that donor partners or agencies request from the government of Ghana before they release their part of the funds that they promised to donate to the country for such projects. In the words of R2, counterpart funding *“simply means that the donor will say I want to give you funds or I want to give you a loan or grant to carry out a project like [building a] road, but I want you to come up with a matching fund. An example is where they donor countries or agencies demand 10% of the funding money before they release their 90% of the funding money.”* The main rationale is for receiving countries to have some sense of ownership of the projects. The problem is that, in most cases, the government is either unable to come up with such money or there is a delay in payment. The government is unable to come up with the money because of the earlier-mentioned problem of it starting more projects than necessary at one time. This implies that, if most of these projects are donor-funded, it will require relatively huge sums of money from the government to pay these matching funds. For instance, if the government has started 10 major national projects under donor funding, and each one requires payment of about 10%, and each one is, say, Gh¢10m, it means the government has to pay out a total of Gh¢100m.

Secondly, the second reason is government delays in honouring these payments because of lack of communication between donor agencies and government agencies and among government agencies. Closely related to counterpart funding is what R2

calls commitment fees. Although similar to counterpart funding, this has to do with a sense of being committed to the projects. The cause of this is the same as for counterpart funding explained above.

Lastly, delays in payment of contractors. Unlike the commitment fees and counterpart funding which was raised by six interviewees – four project management practitioners and two contractors – this was raised by all 10 respondents in addition to the two initial interviewees for the pilot interview. Thus, it was a major concern for contractors. The reasons for this delay are many and each reason also has at least one fundamental reason. First of all is political – interviewees opined that, if a different political party comes into power, it is reluctant to pay contractors contracted by the previous government. Respondents perceived that the reason for this reluctance is that the government thinks that the contractors hired by the previous government are members of that party, and that paying them to continue with the project will help their opposition party. It will do this party in two ways – if the project is completed, it will be ‘tagged’ as the previous government’s project, hence, be seen as its achievement; and, two, profits accrued from completing the project could be used by contractors to help fund the opposition party. Secondly, bureaucratic procedures – obtaining payments from the government is a very bureaucratic procedure. That is to say, the steps involved in obtaining payments are long and cumbersome; contractors have to go through a number of government agencies and individuals before these monies are disbursed. This is due to the need for documentation and the question of who should be accountable for these payments. Closely related to bureaucratic procedure is what interviewees called centralisation. This was raised by all respondents bar R10. They argued that every payment has to go through the Ministry of Finance. Apart from that, every payment and everything about government projects, whether at the local or national level, is centred in the capital city – Accra. That is, the decision-making process lies in the headquarters and therefore, if there is a delay or problem at the headquarters or prominent people are absent, payments will be delayed. Lastly, unavailability of funds – sometimes the government might not have the necessary money to fund a project and, as mentioned above, if it is a donor-funded project, the government might need to pay counterpart funds and commitment fees. The question is, why start a project if you

are not sure of payment? The answer given was that the government has started more projects than it can finance. These lead contractors into corrupt practices. Respondents, bar the contractors, said that contractors are compelled to make payments to government officials who are supposed to disburse the funds to speed-up the payments. The reason was that *“if they don’t do it, they will end up paying more for whatever money they have borrowed from banks”* (R3) due to delays in the completion of the projects or *“they have collected materials from colleagues or shops”* that they have to pay back (R8). They also fear that there will be price fluctuations, but that, *“at the time the money will come, [the] government will not add anything to the original money”* (R8). Even though none of the interviewees confirmed their involvement in corrupt activities, they said that it is there and it normally happens between the government officials and contractors.

Moreover, respondents said that the government does not pay contractors upfront and that they need to pre-finance the projects and some of the relatively small companies or contractors are unable to get this money. They have to go for loans with collateral security.

***Lack of capacity/skills and knowledge of workers:*** This is fully analysed under *“management and administrative practices”*.

***Lack of material resources:*** These include equipment and machinery needed to execute Ghanaian government projects. Respondent R7 opined that some local contractors who are awarded government contracts do not have the requisite equipment to execute such projects and have to borrow it from colleagues. This hinders the progress of the projects as sometimes they have to wait for a very long time to get access to such machines and/or equipment.

They explained that sometimes they struggle to get the required materials such as gravel, granite and sand for carrying out projects. The reason cited for this is the traditional belief system. Contractors (R7 & R8) argued that, in some cases, they could identify land in the bush where they could obtain these materials but landowners, who are mostly traditional rulers, might not allow them to use such land because the land

belonged to their ancestors and is not meant to be used for anything. In the words of one contractor (R7), *“sometime you go to a community and the people there will tell you that ... our custom says we don’t want any equipment to touch the ground. Traditional belief you know, we don’t want equipment to touch the ground, we don’t work on Tuesdays, we don’t work on Fridays, and we don’t work on Wednesday. All throughout the week, three days nobody should go out”*.

#### **5.1.4.4 External Forces**

***Fluctuation of prices:*** In relation to price fluctuation, some respondents (R1, R6, R8 & R9) perceived that most of the materials used for projects in Ghana are imported from abroad and, as such, the government does not have control over the prices for them. This is basically due to two things – one, changes in exchange rate: two respondents (R1, R9) opined that this has to do with exchange rate in connection to international trade. They said that most of the resources being used for execution of projects in Ghana are imported and, as a result, if the cedi depreciates, it affects the prices.

Two, economic instability: one member of the general public (R9) opined that it is not only the dollar-cedi factor but also economic instability of the country leads to fluctuation of prices of goods and services, and this has a significant effect on project performance.

***Culture and belief systems:*** Respondents R3, R5, R7 and R8 opined that the belief system in Ghana can be blamed for the failure of government projects. In some cases, projects are not only delayed because of the belief system in an area but it also contributes to total project abandonment. This has to do with cultural heritage. One interviewee (R7) said that there had been some instances where they were forced to work only five days a week because the local people did not allow them to go to the project site to work on certain days because those days are observed as *“sacred”*. When this happens, they are forced to extend the project duration. Furthermore, sometimes they are not allowed to use certain sand or land for a project because it belongs to the community’s gods and ancestors.

Interviewees said that sometimes projects are not used after completion because the local people have an alternative product that has been handed down to them by their ancestors – even though that alternative might be causing harm to them.

Interviewees also argued that, in most cases, performing companies have to make *sacrifices* to appease the gods and this adds to project cost. One respondent said that sometimes prayers have to be offered before a project can commence and, if the person who is to perform this prayer is not available, they have to wait (R3). R3 further stated that there have been some instances where “*witches and wizards halt projects... and this is all over in the newspapers and radio stations*”.

**Natural disaster:** Respondents believe that Ghana is not well equipped with the necessary machinery to determine the future trends in the weather conditions (R1). This therefore leads to project delays, and abandonment of projects altogether due to natural events such as floods, heavy rain and hot temperatures. In some parts of the country, the weather can be very hot in some seasons and therefore worker productivity declines. If this happens, there are project delays.

According to the respondents, these natural events or disasters are sometimes associated with the traditional belief system. (R7) said that, in some areas, these events happen because the local people believe there are some “*gods who are angry with the projects being carried out and that such projects need to be stopped.*”

### **5.1.5 Effects of Project Failure on Key Stakeholders**

The third part of the interview questioned the respondents about their perceptions in relation to the effects of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders associated with such projects. Specifically, as the second main objective of this research is to find out about the effects of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders; this did not look at the general effects but was restricted to only the key stakeholders of such projects. The key stakeholders identified in this research, as

presented in Chapter two are: general public, government, financial institutions, consultants, local businesses, contractors and donor agencies.

Many reasons were given, however, they have been categorised into five main themes: economic, social, psychological, environmental and election results. These themes were arrived at using thematic and content analysis with the help of NVivo 10 software, as shown in Appendix C. The next sub-sections analyse the interviewees' responses regarding these themes in detail.

Like the causes, the effects are analysed in order of how often they were mentioned. In addition, the effects under each theme are also analysed based on the number of respondents who mentioned them.

#### **5.1.5 1 Economic**

**Cost escalation:** According to the respondents, the Ghanaian government incurs additional costs for project failure. Respondents R2, R5, R6, & R9) perceived that, if a project is delayed, more money has to be paid out. This can take the form of compensation, which, based on the interviewees' responses, falls into two categories. One – the government incurs more cost, as opined by R2, R6 and R9. Thus, the Ghanaian government would have to pay more for project failure, especially when a project was delayed at the initiation stage, due to price fluctuations. The second category relates to the contractors spending more money on projects, as opined by R2, R5 and R8. Contractors would have to pay more for project materials and sometimes, if they are using credit facilities such as bank loans or purchasing materials on instalment, then before they pay, more interest would have accumulated.

Moreover, if a project is abandoned, the money is lost to it for good. The final effect is that it affects the Ghanaian budget – increasing the budget deficit. According to respondents, if this happens, it has huge implications for ordinary Ghanaians, in the sense that there is less money to spend on other developmental areas.

**Rise of Unemployment:** Respondents perceived that unemployment increases when Ghanaian government projects fail. Respondents argued from different angles – from unskilled personnel in the country to termination of contracts. One – Respondents (R4 & R6) said that when government projects are meant to educate or train members of the general public or specific groups of citizens, failure will lead to the citizens being unable to seek employment because they may lack the requisite skills to undertake the required employment duties. For instance, R6 perceived that the effects of failed educational programmes and building projects are *“lack of spaces for, say, engineers to be trained; and there are number of multi-million projects being run by foreign nationals, and some of them come here and realise that some of the local competencies are not there, [so] they are forced to go elsewhere for expatriates to come and do it. Unemployment keeps rising because these people cannot fit into the system”*.

Two – respondents perceive that, when Ghanaian government projects fail, some workers are laid-off, and this has a huge effect on those workers as well as on the society as a whole. In the views of respondent (R8), people who are laid-off very often have families who depend on them, so the implication is that the livelihood of the entire family has come to an end. According to one member of the general public (R9), this could lead to a series of social vices in a society in which such people are unemployed. She explained that, sometimes, their children become school drop-outs and end up on the streets engaging in social vices such as armed robbery, drug-trafficking and forming gangs or what she termed *“area boys and girls or ghettos”*.

**Lack of capacity:** Closely related to unemployment is lack of capacity, which respondents interpreted as members of the general public’s lack of skills or knowledge. Nevertheless, this was linked to specific government projects – that is, government projects meant for skills empowerment or educational and training projects. For instance, R6 opined that *“Unemployment keeps rising because these people cannot fit into the system”* and that they do not have the requisite skills needed to undertake projects and other employment duties.

**Loss of worker hours:** Interviewees R2, R3, R4 and R9 opined that, if Ghanaian government projects fail, it sometimes leads to loss of worker hours. That is, hours that

are meant to be used to work are wasted in traffic and other areas, depending on the project. This is normally found in projects in construction and ICT projects, especially road construction in cities and between cities and towns. The respondents cited e-government services and other failed ICT projects as examples. R2 said that, in the case of e-government and other ICT projects, sometimes people have to queue for a long time because workers have to continue to use manual ways of executing their duties and this causes a lot of delays, hence, loss of worker hours. If projects such as healthcare projects fail, it also leads loss of worker hours, in that a lot of hours are used in attending hospitals to seek medical attention rather than being spent on productive activities.

This brings economic activities to a halt, thereby reducing the country's productivity. In the long-term, national development stagnates. The respondents cited stagnation as having a direct effect on the standard of living of the country's citizens.

***Bankruptcy and loss of capital by contractors:*** Contractors lose money through fluctuation and delays in payment or abandonment of government projects. In the words of R1, "*contractors lose money as a result of dollarisation of the cedi*". This reduces their profit margin and sometimes puts them out of business or they are classified by the suppliers as not being trustworthy (R8). This also makes them lose confidence in themselves. Sometimes, suppliers feel reluctant to supply contractors with project materials on credit for fear they may not be able to get their money back or will not be paid on time.

Business collapse, according to the respondents, can be put into two main areas – contractors' perspective and businesses around project sites. Nevertheless, it all depends on the type of project and the reason for the cause of the project failure and type of project failure. In relation to contractors, when the government delays payment or discontinues projects, contractors can go out of business. Sometimes, they stay out of business for some time, but at times, they lose their capital, hence, collapse of business altogether. According to the respondents, if this happens, the consequences are huge and numerous – stemming from problems for the family to the development of the country as a whole. One – contractors at times are taken to court and, if they are

unable to settle their payments, they are imprisoned. As a result of imprisonment, because the *“family (extended and nuclear) has been disgraced, they are compelled to sell their family properties to bail him/her out”* (R8). This has psychological effects on the entire family. Apart from that, the contractor cannot care for her/his family anymore and therefore the children might drop out of school. If this happens, the subsequent effects are many: child prostitution, armed robbery and *“area boys”* gang culture springs up.

In line with this, R9 echoed that, if the reason for the project failure is political, it can influence the contractor and/or the local community from which he/she hails and their voting pattern in the subsequent general elections. It can make the party in power unpopular in that community, especially if the company employs a lot of local people. As a result, unemployment may go up in the area and the country as a whole.

In relation to businesses around the projects, due to environmental pollution such as noise, dust, smoke and the like, businesses inevitably lose customers and are therefore compelled to move somewhere else or face the prospect of going out of business altogether. Like the major contractors, the effects are numerous and the same.

***Stagnation of economic development:*** The long-run effect of project failure is stagnation of economic development. Respondents R2, R4 and R9 perceived that if these projects fail, it has a long-term effect of economic stagnation and this has a significant effect on the standard of living of the citizens. In the words of R4, *“project failure brings about economic hardship on citizens”*.

***Sub-standard infrastructure:*** R8 perceived that, if the government fails to pay contractors on time, sometimes they are compelled to perform *“shoddy work”* or what R2 called *“sub-standard infrastructure”*. The long-term consequence is that such projects spoil earlier its projected life span and it is the citizens who have to suffer as a result.

***Discourages investment:*** In the words of respondent R2, *“government project failure discourages investments, more especially foreign investors”*. However, the respondent

linked this to specific government projects. In the area of electricity, for instance, the respondent perceived that if government projects fail, foreign investors are driven away as they would need electricity before they can operate effectively and efficiently. There are many long-term consequences of a lack of investment, as the interviewees opined. However, the respondent summed it up by saying that it brings about stagnation of economic development in the country, which eventually affects the ordinary citizens in the country.

**Relocation of services:** Another effect mentioned by respondents is relocation of services lines such as telephone lines, electricity, and water pipes. The subsequent effects of this are enormous, according to respondent R2. For example, when these service lines are being relocated with the intention of bringing them back after the completion of a project, if there are delays to or total abandonment of the project, no one in the locality is able access these services, which hence affects people's day-to-day activities. The respondent added that it also *"makes life difficult for local people as they have to travel all the way to another suburb to access these amenities. Because they don't have access to these facilities, life in their homes becomes more difficult. Sometimes, their electrical gadgets are destroyed without [them] being compensated"* (R2).

According to R2, this further leads to armed robbery and other social vices. The reason being that, if there are no electricity or telephone lines, criminals are able to operate without being caught, simple because there is no light for them to be visible to onlookers and no telephone with which to call the police and report the crime.

#### **5.1.5.2 Social**

**Accidents & Death:** Respondents associated death mostly with healthcare (R1, R2, R3, R4) and construction projects (R2, R7, R8). In their view, when healthcare projects are unsuccessful, this leads to deaths of ordinary Ghanaians.

On the other hand, when construction projects fail, they can also result in death. The reason being that sometimes abandoned construction projects are death traps – as there may be holes, wires, and other debris left unattended to. Members of the general public may fall into a hole and die. Apart from that, the people living in or near a construction site, especially road construction sites, inhale dust and, if the project overruns for a very long time, this results not only in diseases but ultimately death. Moreover, if projects to improve the conditions of a road are delayed, motor/car accidents will increase, hence, resulting in more deaths.

***Denial of citizens' basic rights:*** Interviewees R1 and R4 said that, when Ghanaian government projects fail, those often affected the most are the citizens and the effects include denial of their fundamental right to a basic life, right to education, and right to live. For instance, interviewees said that it is the fundamental right for all children to have basic education. This is also enshrined in the constitution of Ghana. Thus, if Ghanaian government projects such as education (building of schools or provision of services) for children of school-going age fail, it is these children who are being denied their basic right to education and a good life.

Apart from this, it also breeds the next generation of citizens who have no hope of making it in life, hence, creating the next generation of “*vagabonds and armed robbers*” (R5). This is because there will be a number of school drop-outs (R10). Children who are denied these rights as a result of Ghanaian government project failure also tend to give birth at an early age and become “*irresponsible fathers and mothers*”(R5) and therefore they have no hope in life. Two respondents even attributed life success in Ghana to the “*sort of parents you have ... and that teenage pregnancy is associated with vagabonds who smoke weed and those engaged in armed robbery and prostitution*” (R4 & R5) in the society. According to them, this is cyclical in nature and may continue forever.

According to respondents, this effect cuts across most Ghanaian government projects – in that it is not only children’s human rights that are denied but all citizens’ rights. However, the emphasis was more on children, according to the respondents. The long-

term effect is what R9 termed “*stagnation of social development*” of the country or its citizens.

***Armed Robbery and Theft:*** Respondents R2, R4 and R5 associated an increase in armed robbery and theft with Ghanaian government project failure. However, they restricted it to specific projects such as construction projects –building of schools, roads, dams, toilets and the like.

In their view, for instance, if there is a road construction project, there is an increase in road traffic and therefore cars move extremely slowly and this creates “*inconvenience to motorists*” (R2). If this happens, armed robbers and thieves are able to “*high jack you and take whatever you have.*”(R2). Through this, some lose their life and their livelihood. They also argue that criminals can use abandoned construction project sites such as schools and hospitals as their hiding place and the “*area boys*” can even use these places to engage in social and criminal vices such as rape.

***Abandonment of homes and Loss of properties:*** Sometimes, when projects are being implemented, people lose their homes and other properties to these projects. In some cases, they leave their homes and relocate with the view of returning after project completion. However, if such a project is abandoned halfway through completion, they are unable to come back. Interviewee R9 said that “*these people are not normally compensated by [the] government because their homes are not being pulled down or destroyed and therefore [they] could stay in them or could return after project completion*”. This sometime results in demonstrations, hence, loss of worker hours by the demonstrators. Accordingly, they argue that these demonstrations also make the government unpopular.

***Pollution:*** Closely related to death is pollution. Pollution comes in the form of noise, dust and air (R2, R9 & R10), and is associated with construction projects. When projects are delayed or abandoned, permanent pollution is left in the project environs. This creates diseases and/or sickness, hence, death. As a result of this, “*it also creates [a great] burden on the healthcare facilities in the country, as sick people would seek*

*medical attention*” (R9). The ultimate effect, according to R9, is depletion of the ozone layer.

Respondents R2, R9 and R10 perceived that, when Ghanaian government projects fail, most of them have huge health hazards; nevertheless, this is dependent on the type of project. Like pollution, these health hazards were directly linked to construction projects. However, the level of severity is dependent on the type of project failure. If it is project delay, it might be less severe, but if its abandonment, then it leaves long-term health hazards in the local community.

### 5.1.5.3 Political

***Influence on election results:*** As already stated, one of the major reasons for winning or losing general elections in the country is project performance (R2, R6, R7, R8 & R10). They opined that one of the major issues that influence general elections in the country is projects. In the words of one project management practitioner: *“ordinary Ghanaians don’t know what GDP, micro or macroeconomic, economic indicators, inflation, fiscal and monetary policies and those issues are ... what they know is physical infrastructures”* (R2). This implies that government project failure can have significant effects on the various parties in the country – the party in power and the opposition parties. In other words, if the party in power fails to successfully implement projects, it can lose general elections. If a government project fails, *“it is not going to be palatable for the government”* (R6). R2 further opined that project failure *“influences election results; that is why, when elections are close, [the] government starts a lot of projects and commissions a lot”*.

One practitioner (R2) estimated that project implementation had an approximately 50% effect on whether a political party would win or lose an election. This accounts for why, when elections are due, a lot of projects are commissioned and others started. Another contractor (R8) estimated the effect of projects on election performance to be 35%.

***Bad image for government:*** Respondents R2, R7 and R10 perceived that Ghanaian government project failure gave the sitting government and party a very bad image. If

these projects fail, the citizens feel betrayed by the sitting government and the nation as a whole and therefore speak against the government, hence, making the government unpopular. Thus, failure to successfully implement projects gives the government and party in power a very bad image. It will also be seen as the government is not good at running the country. *“In fact, I will say projects, especially infrastructure projects, are the main yardstick to measure government performance”* (R2).

#### **5.1.5.4 Psychological**

***Imprisonment as a result of loan default:*** As discussed earlier in this section, when contractors default on loans borrowed from banks, they sometimes end up in prison and, if family members are unable to settle the debt, they remain there until they have served their sentence. They also end up losing respect in the local society. This, according to R9m can have a permanent psychological effect on the victims and their family.

Moreover, two respondents (R2 & R9) perceived that, when projects are being implemented, people are enthusiastic about them and about the prospect of doing business alongside them. They therefore apply for loans to start such businesses and, if the project fails to commence after initiation or is abandoned halfway through implementation, victims would have long-term psychological mark on their minds.

## **5.2 PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS**

The results of data analysed for the pilot study are shown below. The ultimate purpose of the pilot was to improve on the questionnaire’s validity and reliability.

### **A. Validity Analysis**

Data instruments used in this study have been adopted from previous studies with minimal alterations made to meet the requirements of this research.

## B. Reliability Analysis

### Observation:

Cronbach's alpha allows us to measure the reliability of different variables. It consists of estimates of how much variation in scores of different variables is attributable to chance or random errors (Selltitz et al, 1976). As a general rule, a coefficient greater than or equal to 0.7 is considered acceptable and a good indication of construct reliability (Nunnally, 1978). However, values lower than 0.7 may be acceptable for exploratory research.

Cronbach's alpha for the six-item Ghanaian government project performance goals is **0.66**. This Cronbach's alpha will increase to 0.746 if either "Cost" or "Contribution to where the project is being implemented" is eliminated from the revised measurement scale. Cronbach's alpha for the 29-item causes of Ghanaian government project failure is **0.695**. This Cronbach's alpha will increase to 0.774 if "Procurement processes" is eliminated from the revised measurement scale (partly due to the fact that stakeholders have accepted the Public Procurement Law (Act 663, 2003)).

However, Cronbach's alpha for the 26-item "Effects of Ghanaian government project failure" is negative, which violates the reliability model. This is probably due to the huge variations in the opinions of the 15 respondents. The result is therefore inconclusive and as such a bigger sample is required.

Based on the observations from the pilot, the following recommendations were considered before the full questionnaires were carried out.

### Key recommendations made:

1. Delete the “don’t know” element in the scale items for “Ghanaian Government Project Performance”, Causes and Effects of Ghanaian Government Project Performance scale items for two reasons:
  - a. “Don’t know” may confuse respondents since it enlarges the 5-point Likert scale
  - b. “Neutral” in the Likert scale also serves the purpose of “not sure” or “don’t know”
2. Add “donor agencies” to the list of stakeholders in part D question 2

After considering the recommendations, a revised questionnaire was used to collect data. The results from the full questionnaire data collection are presented in the next section.

### **5.3 FULL QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS**

This section presents the results of data analysed from questionnaires administered in the field. Questionnaire variables on the failure criteria, causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1-5), where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. Additionally, the effects of project failure on key stakeholders were assessed using a seven-point scale (1-7), where 1= least affected and 7= most affected.

Statistical analyses performed included Descriptive, Means, Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficients, and Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference in ranks. The main purpose of the choice of statistical analysis was to evaluate the most significant failure criteria, and causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure with a view to making appropriate recommendations to relevant stakeholders.

### 5.3.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### 5.3.1.1 RESPONSE RATE

At the end of the data collection period, 265 completed questionnaires were received out of the 500 distributed, representing an overall response rate of 53%. The completed and usable questionnaires were from contractors (78), PMP (81) and the general public (106), with the PMP having the highest response rate of 54%, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Percentage of questionnaire distribution and their responses

Description	Contractors and PMP		General public	Total
Questionnaires distributed	300		200	500
	Contractors	PMP		
Number of respondents	78	81	106	265
Percentage of responses	53		53	53

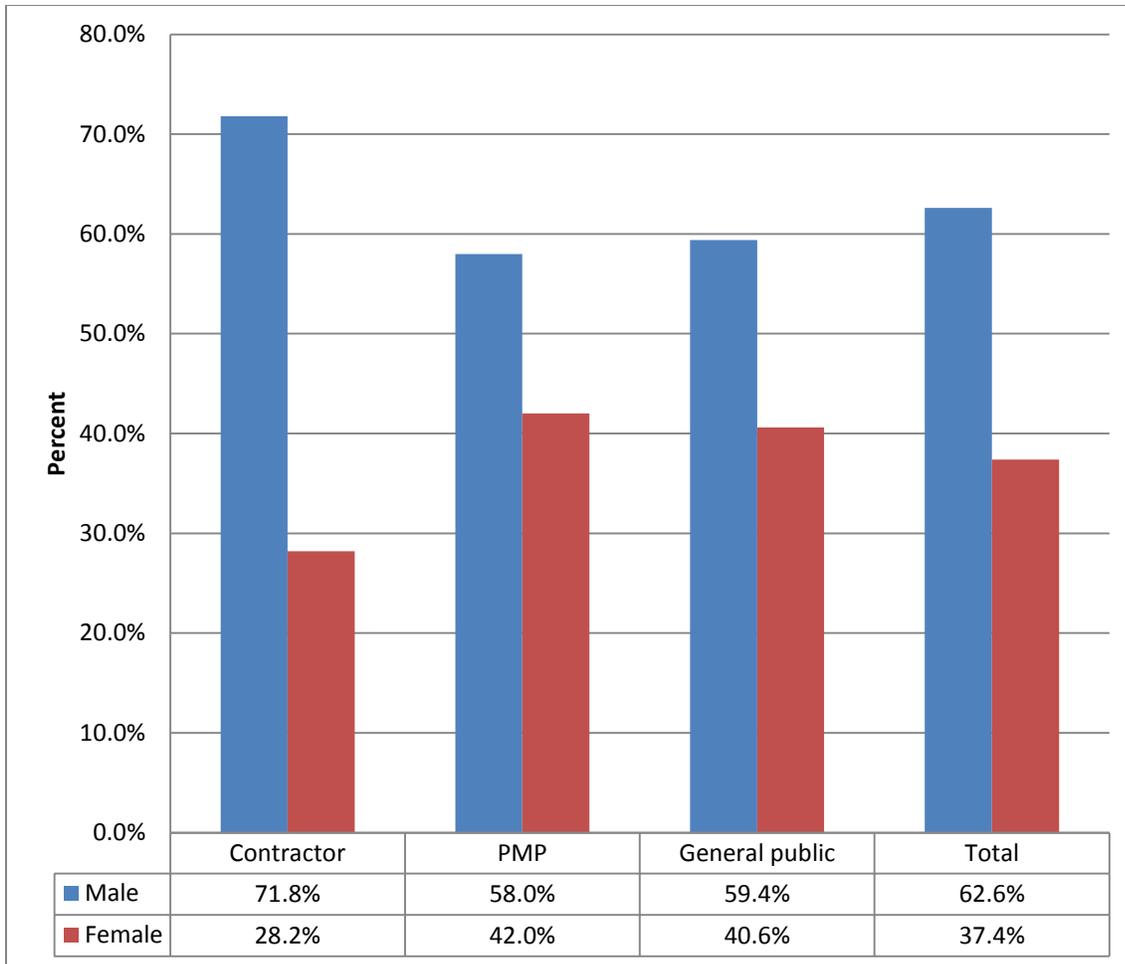
### 5.3.2 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

#### 5.3.2.1 Personal Information of Respondents

##### Gender of respondents

The majority of the respondents were males, 166 (62.6%), and the rest were females. Male respondents dominated the total number of respondents mainly because of the contractors category, which is a profession dominated by males in Ghana. Figure 15 shows that the ratio of males to females among contractors is about 7:3.

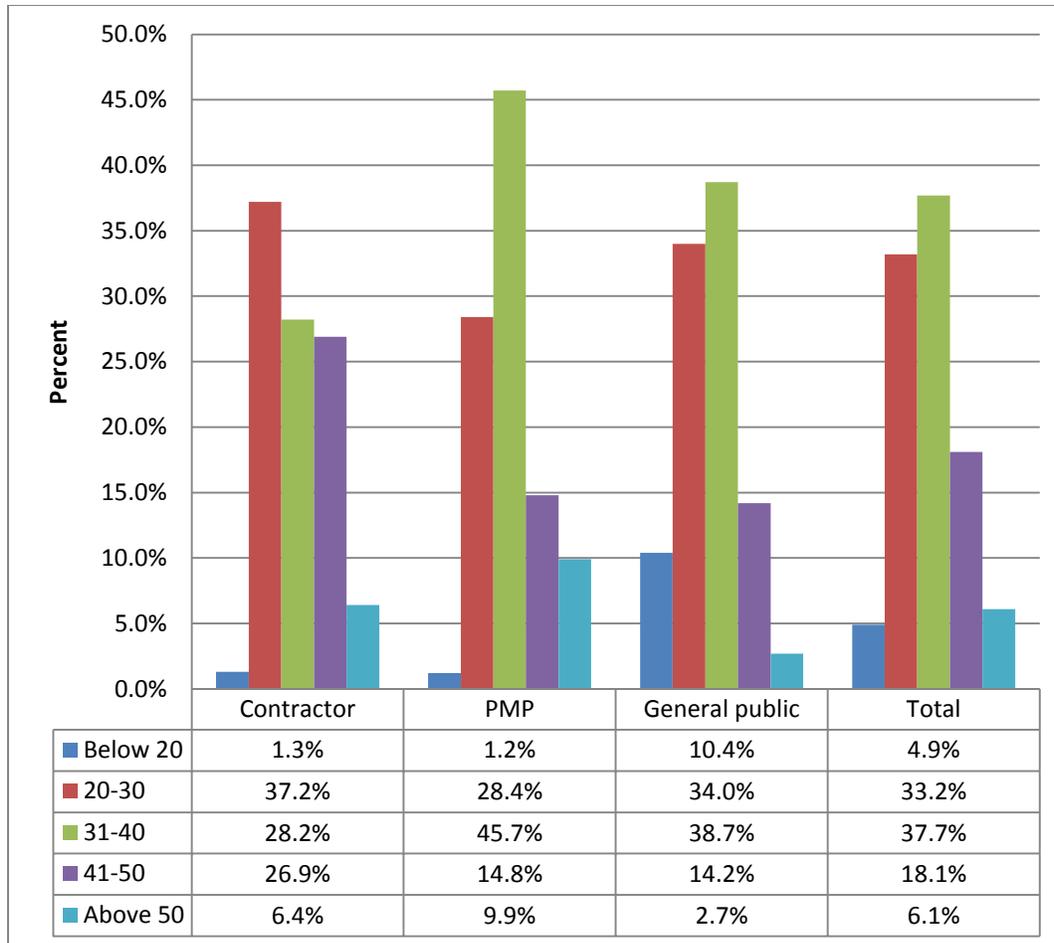
Figure 15 Gender of respondents with regard to stakeholders



### Age group of respondents

Out of the 265 respondents, 13 were below 20 years of age, 88 were between 20 and 30 years, 100 were between 31 and 40 years, 48 were between 41 and 50 years, and 16 were above 50 years of age. Contractors had the highest percentage of respondents above 40 years (33.3%) when compared with PMP (24.7%) and the general public (16.9%). Figure 16 gives further details.

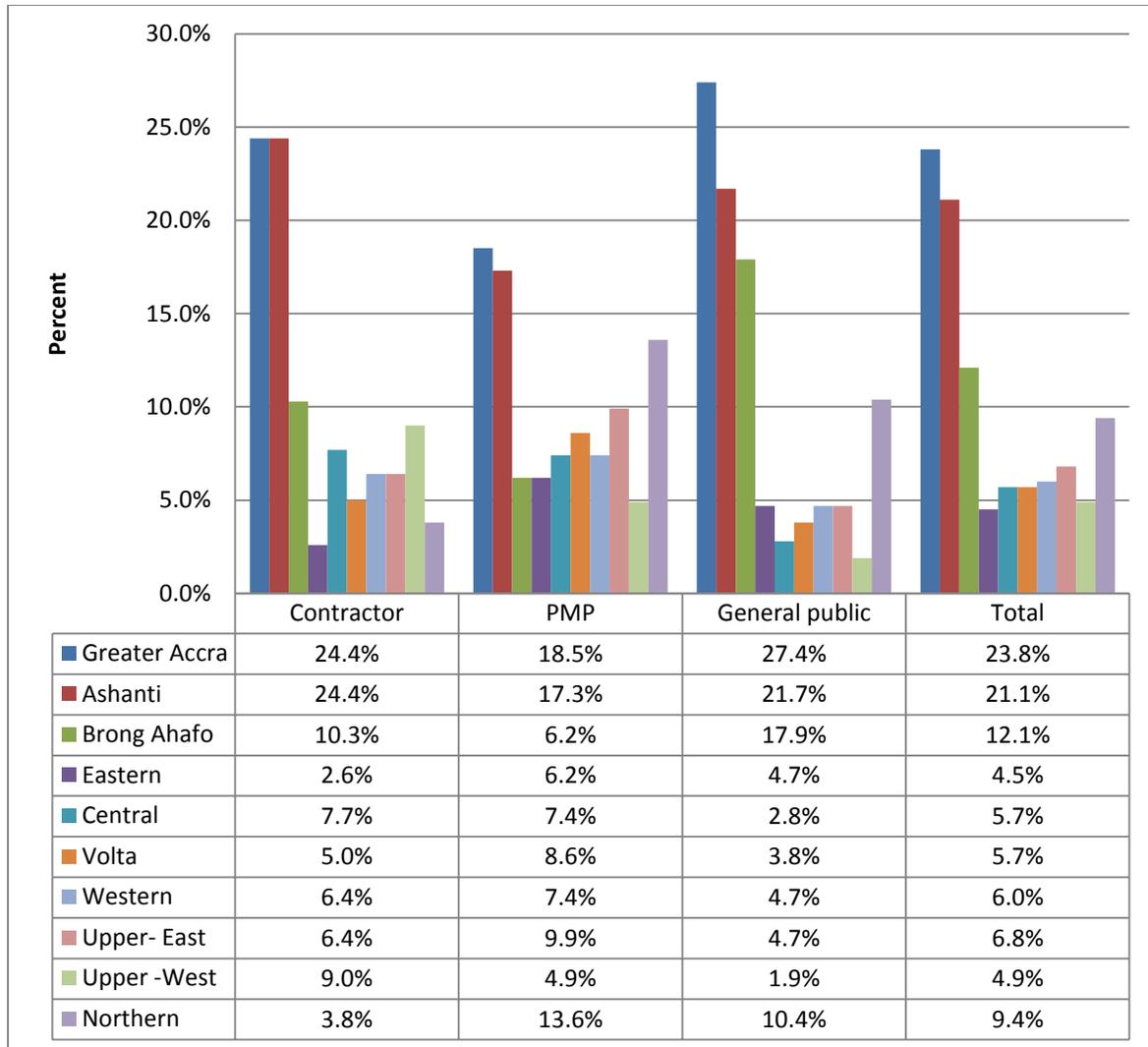
Figure 16 Age group of respondents



### Regional location of respondents

Out of the 265 respondents, the majority (63) were from the Greater Accra Region. This is followed by Ashanti (56), Brong-Ahafo (32), Northern (25), Upper East (18), Western (16), Central (15), Volta (15), Upper West (13) and Eastern (12) respectively. Similarly, the majority of respondents for each stakeholder category, contractor, PMP and general public, were from the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions, the two most populous regions in Ghana. Figure 17 gives further details.

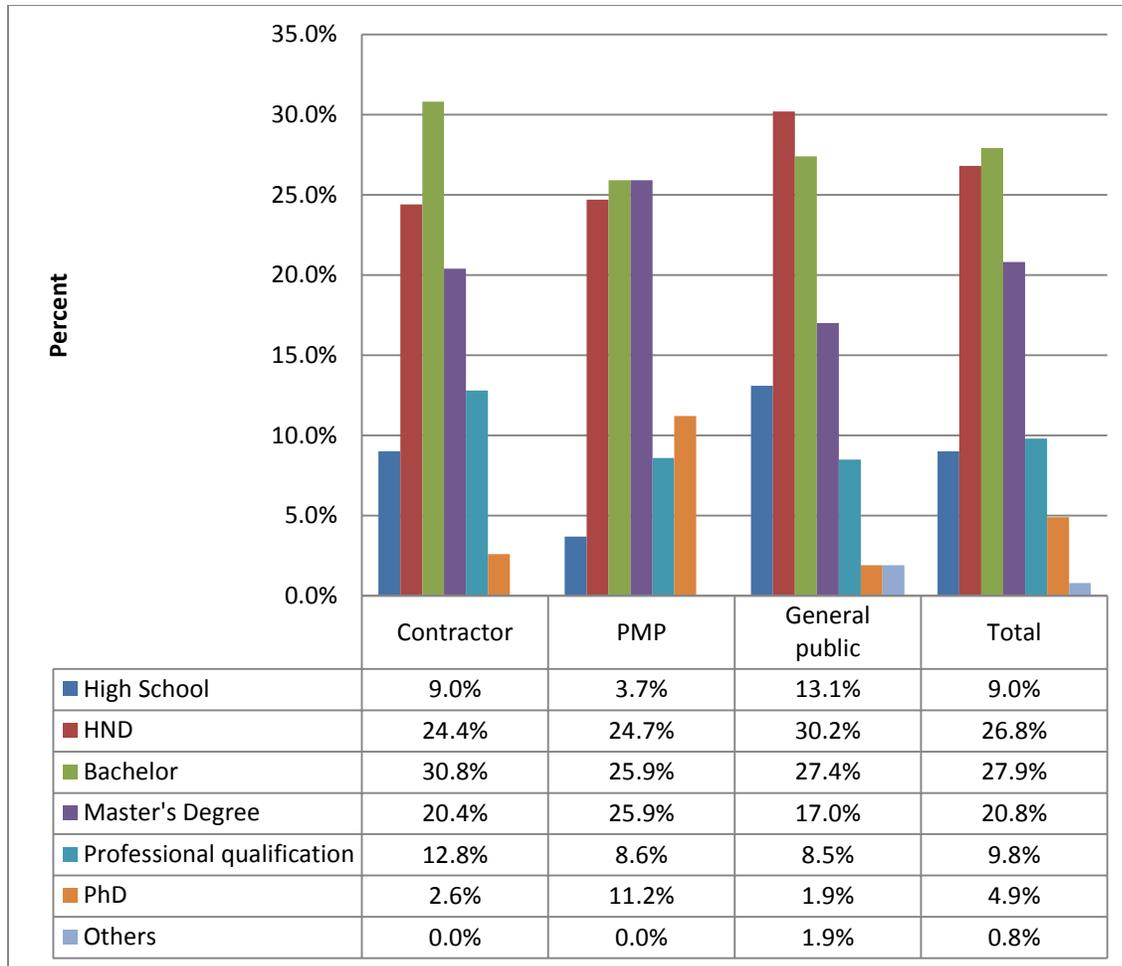
Figure 17 Regional location of respondents



**Educational level of respondents**

Out of the 265 respondents, 24 had a High School education, 71 had a HND, 74 had a Bachelor’s Degree, 55 had a Master’s Degree, 26 had Professional Education, 13 had a PhD and two had another form of education. PMP had the highest percentage of PhD holders (11.2%) when compared with contractors (2.6%) and the general public (1.9%). Figure 18 gives further details.

Figure 18 Educational level of respondents

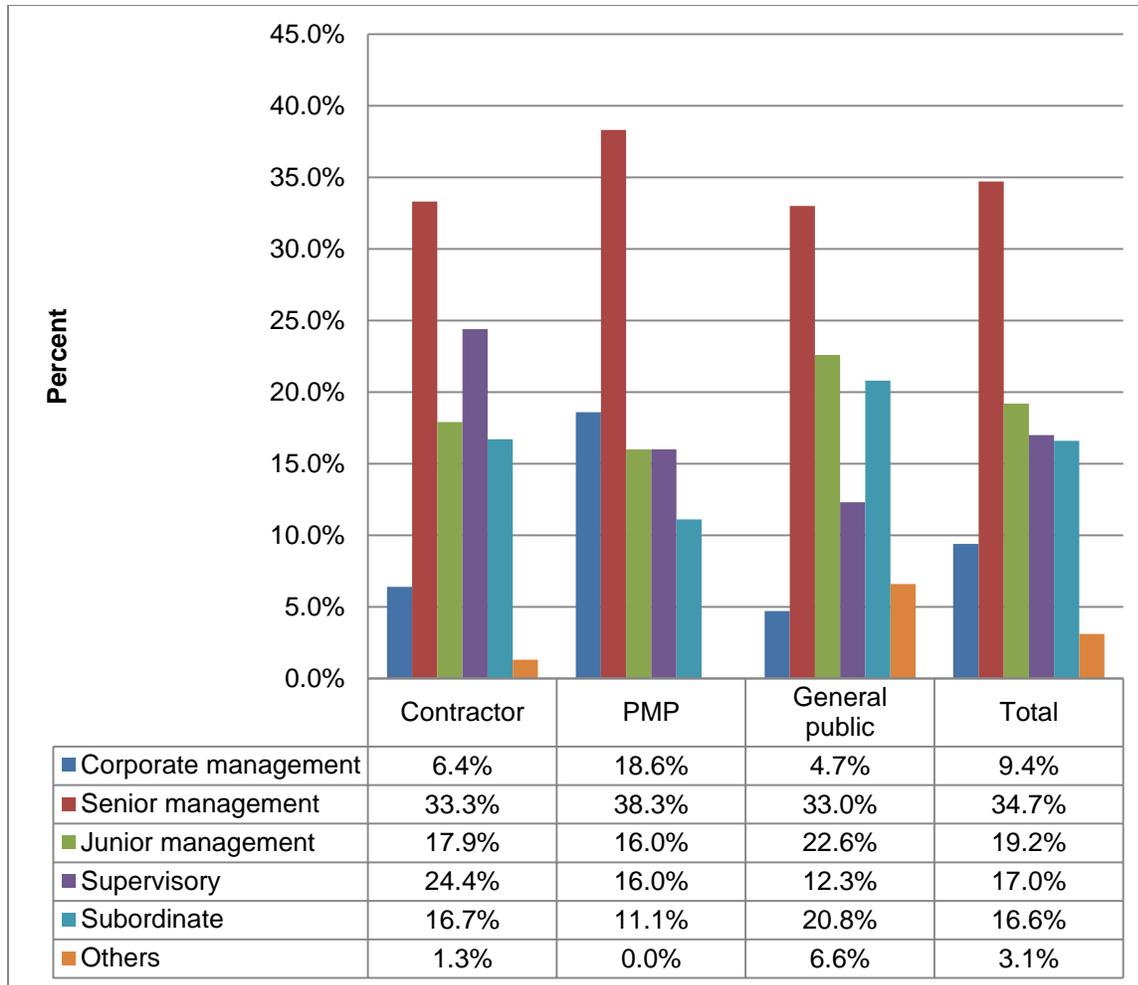


### 5.3.2.2 Professional Information of Respondents

#### Position of respondents

Out of the 265 respondents, 25 were corporate managers, 92 were senior managers, 51 were junior managers, 45 were supervisors, 44 were subordinates and eight were temporary staff. PMP had the highest percentage of corporate managers (18.6%) when compared with contractors (6.4%) and the general public (4.7%). Figure 19 gives further details.

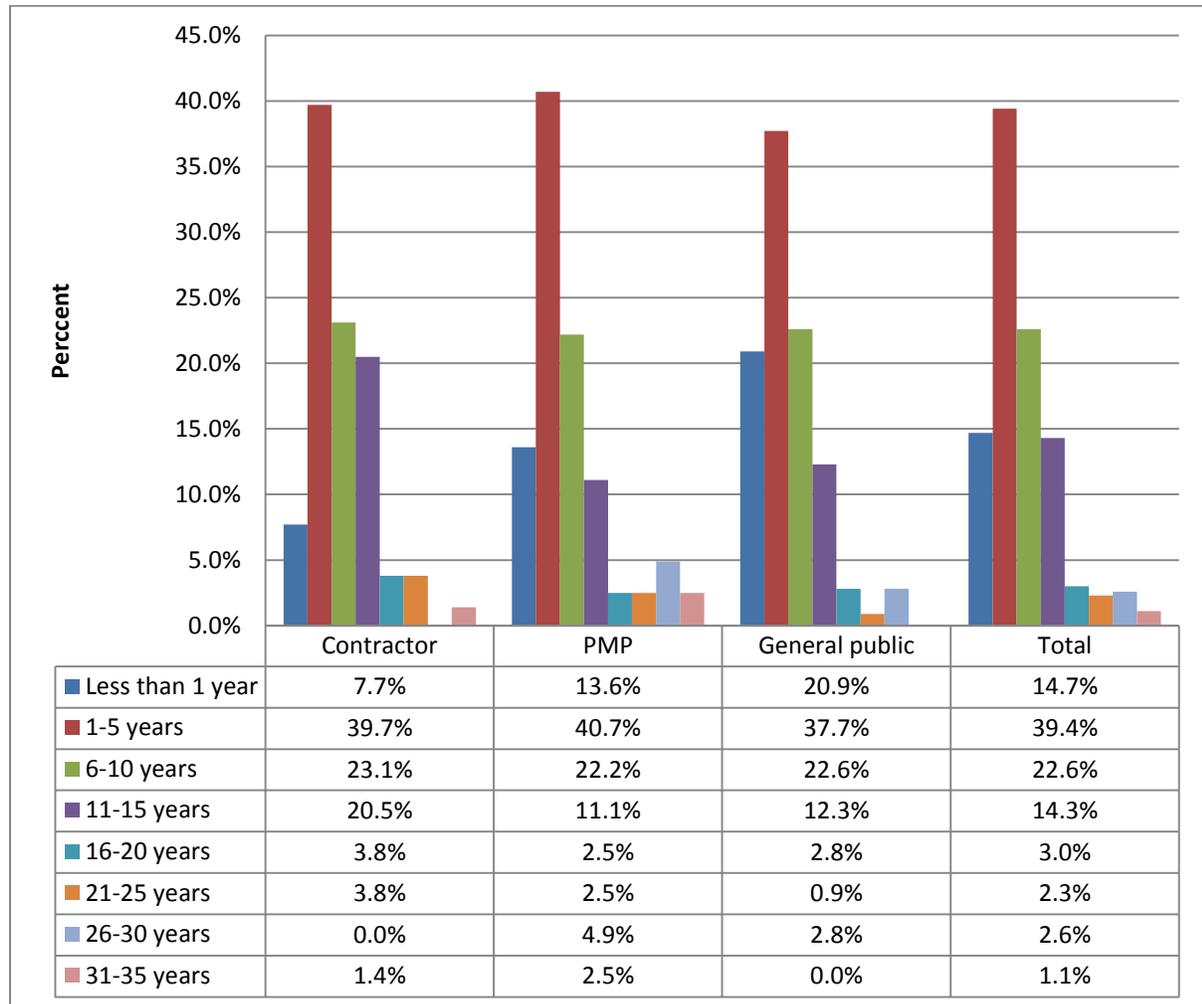
Figure 19 Position of respondents with regard to stakeholders



### Years of experience in current position

Out of the 265 respondents, 39 had less than one year's experience in their current position, 104 had between one and 5 years' experience, 60 had between six and 10 years' experience, 38 had between 11 and 15 years' experience, eight had between 16 and 20 years' experience, six had between 21 and 25 years' experience, seven had between 26 and 30 years' experience, and the remaining three had between 31 and 35 years' experience in their current positions. PMP had the highest percentage of respondents with over 20 years of experience in their current positions (9.9%) when compared with contractors (5.2%) and the general public (3.7%). Figure 20 gives further details.

Figure 20 Years of experience in current position

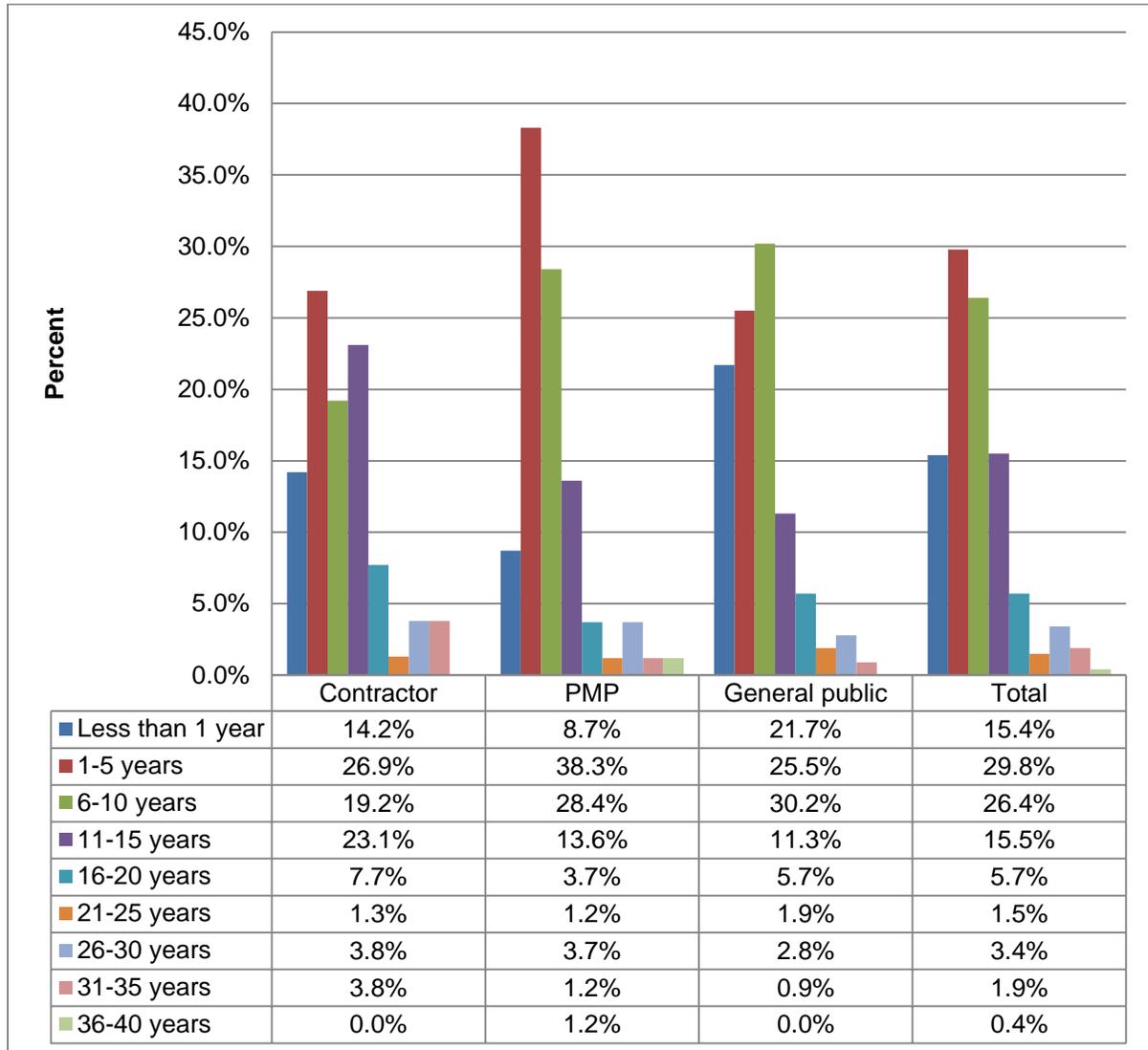


### Years of experience in general

Out of the 265 respondents, 41 had less than one year's experience in general, 79 had between one and 5 years' experience, 70 had between six and 10 years' experience, 41 had between 11 and 15 years' experience, 15 had between 16 and 20 years' experience, four had between 21 and 25 years' experience, nine had between 26 and 30 years' experience, five had between 31 and 35 years' experience and the remaining respondent had between 36 and 40 years' experience in general. Contractors had the highest percentage of respondents with over 20 years of experience in general (8.9%)

when compared with PMP (7.3%) and the general public (5.6%). Figure 21 gives further details.

Figure 21 Years of experience in general

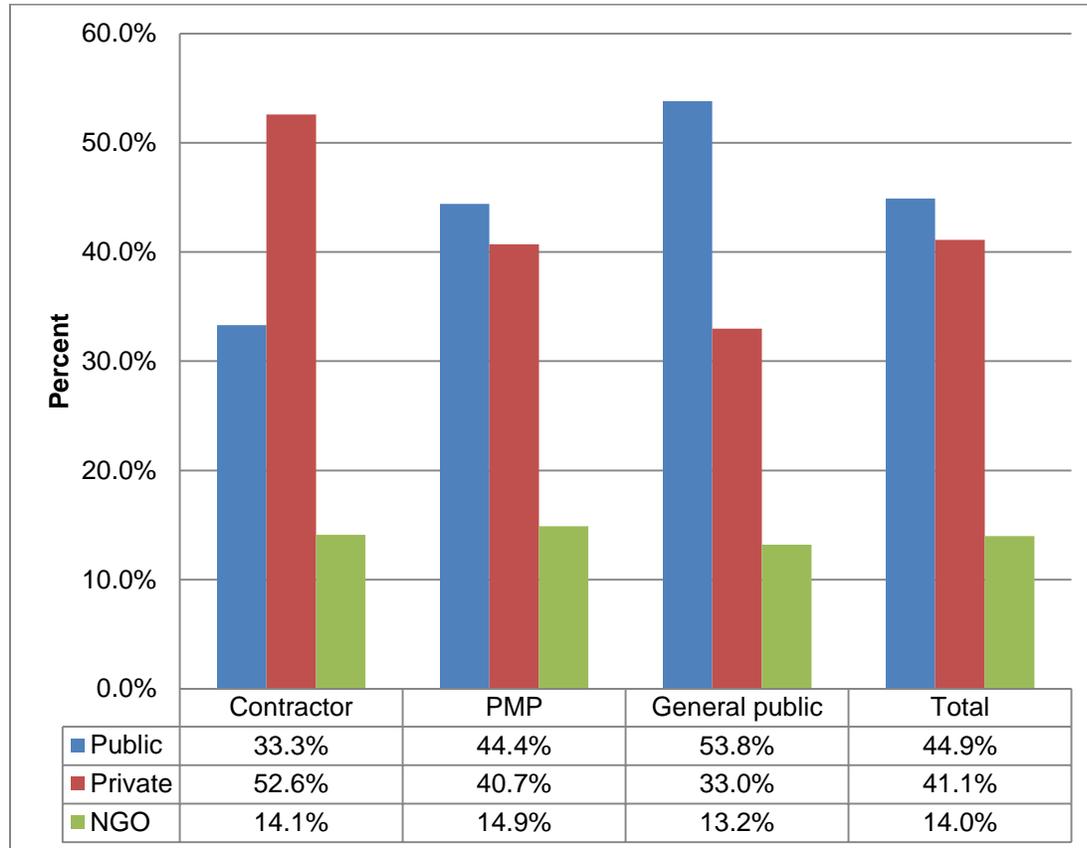


### Sector of respondents

Out of the 265 respondents, 119 were from the public sector, 109 were from the private sector and the rest (37) were from non-governmental organisations (NGO). Whereas the majority of the contractors (52.6%) were from the private sector, the majority of the

PMP (44.4%) and general public (53.8%) respondents were from the public sector. Figure 22 gives further details.

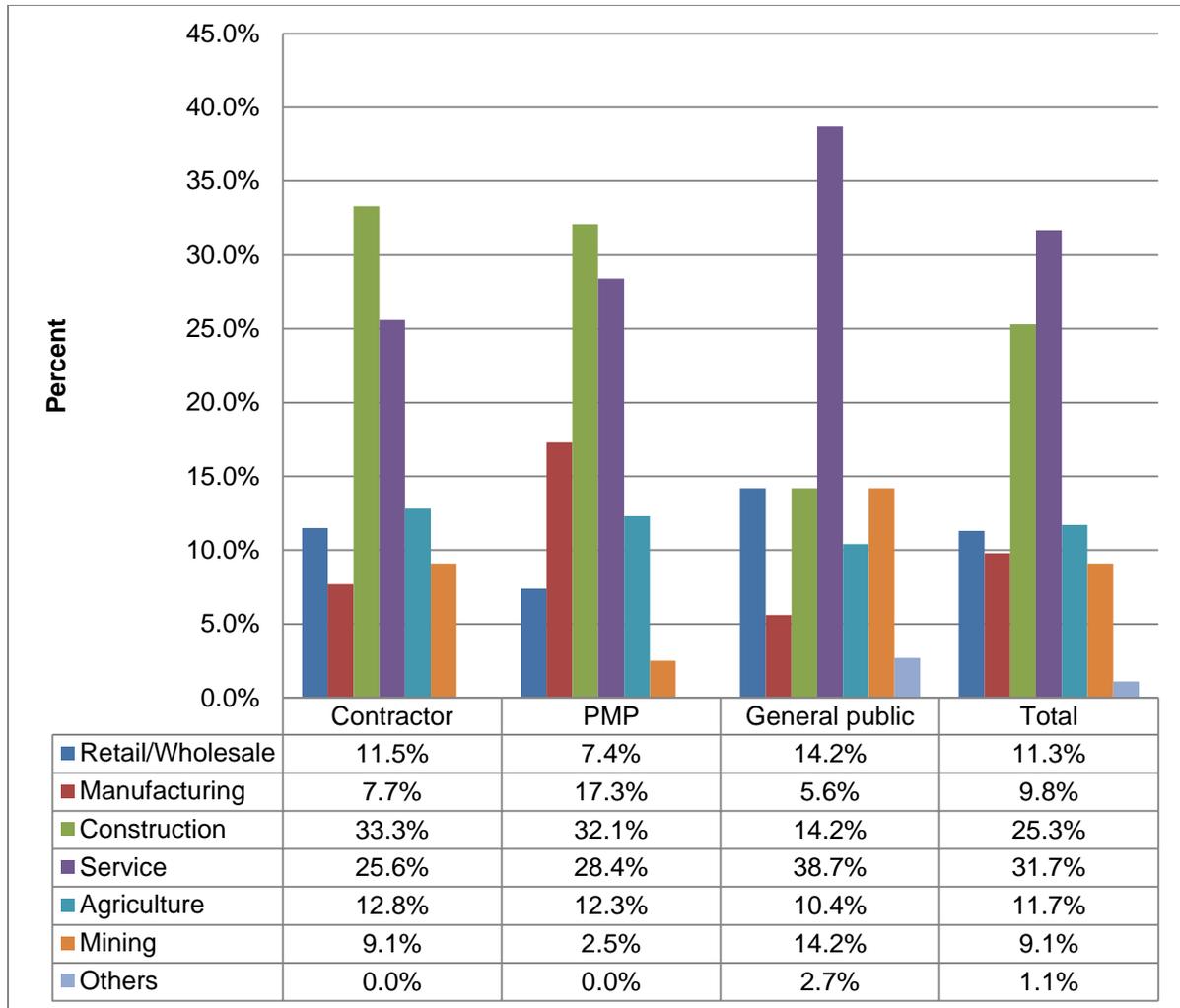
Figure 22 Sector of respondents



### Industry of respondents

Out of the 265 respondents, 30 were involved in the retail/wholesale business, 26 were involved in the manufacturing business, 67 were involved in the construction business, 84 were in the services industry, 31 were involved in agriculture, 24 were in mining and three were in other industries including teaching and fishing. Whereas the majority of the contractors (33.3%) and PMP (32.1%) were involved in the construction business, the majority of respondents from the general public (38.7%) were in the services industry. Figure 23 gives further details.

Figure 23 Industry of respondents with regard to stakeholders



### 5.3.3 Ghanaian Government Project Failure

This section presents the rankings provided by respondents on the performance of Ghanaian government projects with regard to cost, time, deliverables, stakeholder satisfaction, contribution to where project is being implemented and national development. The ratings were provided using a five-point Likert scale, where 1= Least Achievement and 5= Highest Achievement.

Means were calculated for the three main stakeholder categories who responded – contractors, PMP and the general public. Table 11 presents the mean ratings and related ranks in order of importance.

Table 11 Ghanaian Government Project Failure (Mean ranking and related Ranks)

Factors in order of importance	Contractor		PMP		General Public		Overall Mean	Overall Rank
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
Contribution to where the project is being implemented	2.782	1	2.988	1	2.528	3	2.743	1
National development	2.590	3	2.963	2	2.576	1	2.698	2
Stakeholder satisfaction	2.564	4	2.914	3	2.547	2	2.664	3
Deliverables	2.564	4	2.753	4	2.368	4	2.543	4
Cost	2.731	2	2.432	6	2.293	5	2.464	5
Time	2.500	6	2.457	5	2.283	6	2.400	6

The overall ranking showed that the highest achievement of Ghanaian government projects is in the aspect of contribution to where the project is being implemented. This is followed by national development, stakeholder satisfaction, and deliverables, cost and time respectively. This indicates that, in terms of the six criteria used to measure Ghanaian government project failure, achieving projected time is the worst; this is followed closely by cost or budgeted cost, then deliverables, national development and then contribution to knowledge. Figure 24 provides a diagram illustrating the degree of failure using various failure criteria.

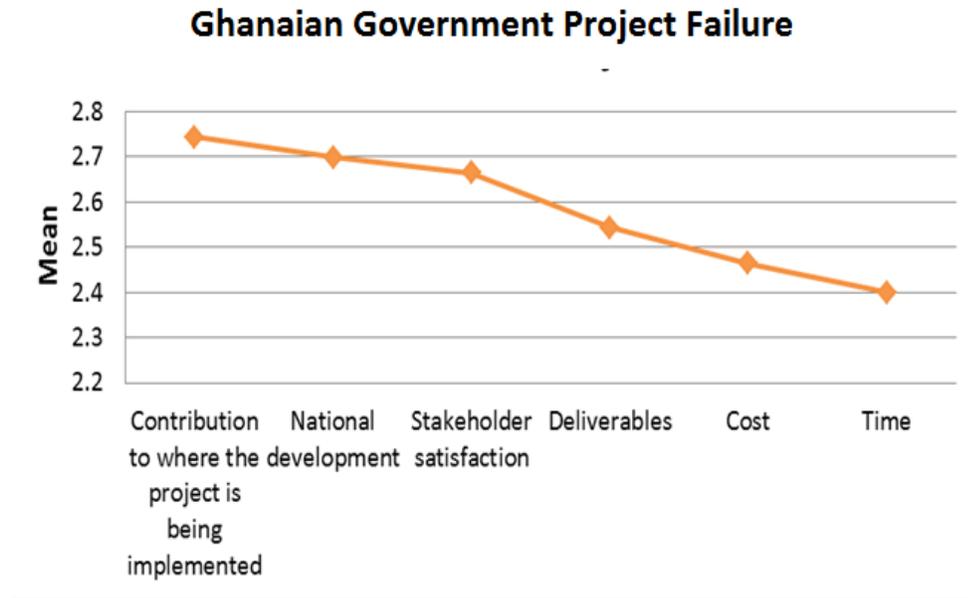


Figure 24 Line graph for Ghanaian government project failure

From Figure 24, it is clear that meeting projected time is the criterion where government projects perform worst – representing a mean average of 2.40. This is followed by cost – representing a mean average of 2.46. The next is deliverables, with a mean average of 2.54. The fourth is stakeholder satisfaction, with a mean average of 2.66. The fifth is national development with a mean average of 2.69; and, lastly, contribution to the sector in which the project is implemented.

This indicates that the worst performance is in the traditional project baseline, otherwise known as the *iron triangle*. This is followed by the stakeholders' satisfaction – which is after the deliverables or the product phase. The national development and sector contribution come last respectively.

### 5.3.4 Causes of Ghanaian Government Project Failure

To address the second objective of this research, thus, causes of Ghanaian government project failure and their relative importance, mean ratings and related ranks are used.

#### 5.3.4.1 Ranking the causes of project failure

This sub-section presents the ranking provided by respondents on the causes of Ghanaian government project failure. The respondents provided the rankings for each of the 32 possible causes of Ghanaian government project failure outlined in the questionnaire using a five-point Likert Scale, where 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree.

Means were calculated for the three main stakeholder categories who responded – contractors, PMP and the general public. Table 12 presents the mean ratings and related ranks in order of importance.

Table 12 Causes of Ghanaian Government Project Failure (Mean ranking and related ranks)

Factors in order of importance	Contractor		PMP		General Public		Overall Mean	Overall Rank
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
Monitoring	3.628	6	3.741	1	3.868	1	3.7585	1
Corruption	3.705	3	3.630	3	3.849	2	3.7396	2
Political interference	3.808	1	3.654	2	3.670	6	3.7057	3
Change in government	3.731	2	3.605	4	3.755	3	3.7019	4
Bureaucracy	3.628	6	3.531	11	3.623	7	3.5962	5
Fluctuation of prices	3.603	9	3.506	13	3.604	8	3.5736	6
Lack of continuity	3.615	8	3.593	6	3.519	12	3.5698	7
Planning	3.577	10	3.580	7	3.500	15	3.548	8
Delays in payment	3.526	15	3.568	9	3.547	10	3.5472	9
Release of funds	3.551	12	3.605	4	3.500	15	3.546	10
Change in project leadership	3.462	20	3.407	16	3.708	4	3.5434	11

Management practices	3.705	3	3.395	17	3.509	13	3.533	12
Procurement processes	3.423	24	3.444	14	3.679	5	3.5321	13
Project funding	3.487	18	3.580	7	3.509	13	3.5245	14
Commitment to project	3.359	27	3.543	10	3.557	9	3.4943	15
Selection of project managers	3.346	28	3.531	11	3.547	10	3.483	16
Project team formation	3.500	16	3.370	18	3.453	17	3.4415	17
Project management techniques	3.436	23	3.432	15	3.396	19	3.4189	18
Feasibility studies	3.449	22	3.259	25	3.434	18	3.3849	19
Communication	3.641	5	3.062	31	3.387	20	3.3623	20
Supervision	3.577	10	3.284	22	3.264	25	3.361	21
Scope change	3.539	14	3.321	19	3.255	26	3.3585	22
Capacity	3.500	16	3.296	21	3.293	23	3.3547	23
Task definition	3.462	20	3.272	23	3.340	21	3.354	24
Definition of specification	3.551	12	3.259	25	3.245	27	3.3396	25
Requirement	3.423	24	3.185	27	3.311	22	3.3057	26
Regulations	3.474	19	3.161	29	3.283	24	3.3019	27
Culture and belief systems	3.410	26	3.309	20	3.198	29	3.2943	28
User involvement	3.141	32	3.272	23	3.245	27	3.2226	29
Labour	3.282	30	3.173	28	3.094	31	3.1736	30
Pressure groups (media, NGOs, political activities, etc.)	3.333	29	2.803	32	3.104	30	3.0792	31
Natural disaster	3.256	31	3.136	30	2.830	32	3.0491	32

The contractors ranked political interference as the most influential cause of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by change in government, corruption, management practices and communication respectively.

PMP ranked poor monitoring as the most influential cause of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by political interference, corruption, change in government and delays in respectively.

The general public also ranked poor monitoring as the biggest cause of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by corruption, change in government, change in project leadership and poor procurement processes respectively.

This indicates that PMP and the general public rank monitoring as the most influential cause of Ghanaian government project failure, followed by corruption and change in government. However, the contractors ranked their top three as political interference, change in government and corruption. Therefore, contractors ranked government-related issues as more influential compared to PMP and the general public, who both ranked government and management-related issues as the most influential factors.

The top 10 overall rankings for the causes in order of importance (influence) are as follows: Monitoring, Corruption, Political interference, Change in government, Bureaucracy, Lack of continuity, Fluctuation of prices, Planning, Delays in payments and Release of funds.

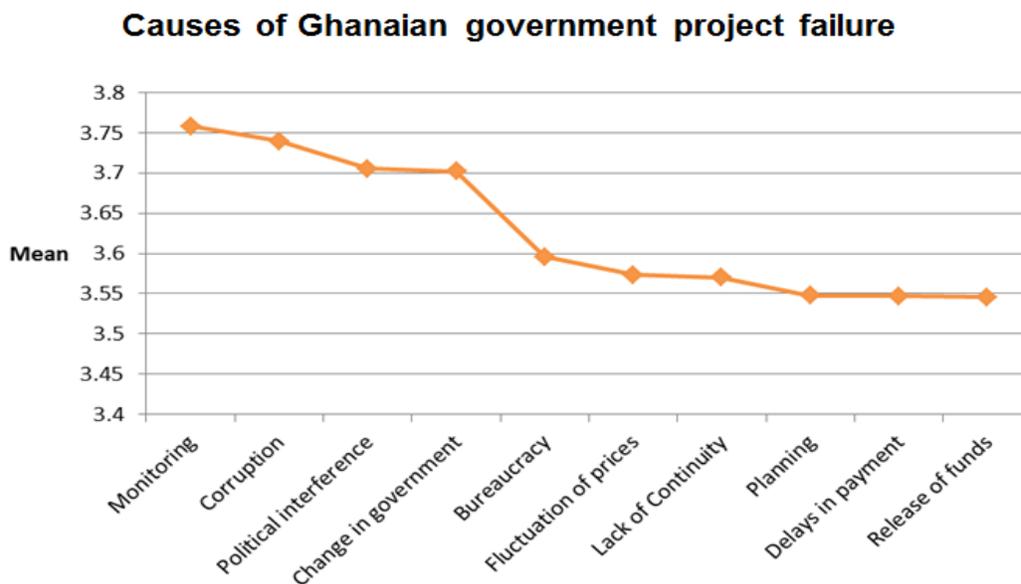


Figure 25 Top 10 causes of Ghanaian government project failure

Figure 25 indicates that, overall, contractors, PMP and the general public perceive monitoring as the most influential cause of Ghanaian government project failure as the mean average is 3.75. This is followed closely by corruption, with a mean average of 3.73. The third most influential cause, using mean respondent mean, is political interference with an average mean of 3.70. Change in government comes fourth,

representing a mean average of 3.70; next is bureaucracy, representing 3.59. Fluctuation of prices comes sixth with 3.57; followed by lack of continuity -3.56; planning -3.54; delays in payments -3.54; and release of funds -3.54 respectively.

From the mean average, it is clear that leadership- and government-related causes are dominant in the first top 10 causes of Ghanaian government project failure. Moreover, external forces such as media, pressure groups and belief systems come at the bottom of the list, whilst management and administrative practices and resources are found in the middle. These groupings are presented in the next sub-section.

#### **5.3.4.2 Groupings of Causes Rankings**

The 32 factors identified as possible causes of Ghanaian government project failure were classified into four groups, namely, leadership, management and administration practices, resources and external forces. These groupings are based on the themes arrived at the interview analysis. The average of each of the individual causes within a group and related rank was calculated and is presented in Table 13.

Table 13 Mean Ranking and Ranks of Causes of Group of Factors

Factors	Contractor		PMP		General Public		Overall Mean	Overall Rank
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>								
Change in project leadership	3.462		3.407		3.708		3.543	
Commitment to project	3.359		3.543		3.557		3.494	
Requirement	3.423		3.185		3.311		3.306	
Definition of specification	3.551		3.259		3.245		3.340	
Scope change	3.539		3.321		3.255		3.359	
Feasibility studies	3.449		3.259		3.434		3.385	
Release of funds	3.526		3.568		3.547		3.547	
Lack of continuity	3.615		3.593		3.519		3.570	

Political interference	3.808		3.654		3.670		3.706	
Change in government	3.731		3.605		3.755		3.702	
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3.546</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.440</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.500</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.495</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION PRACTICES</b>								
Planning	3.577		3.580		3.500		3.548	
Monitoring	3.628		3.741		3.868		3.759	
Selection of project managers	3.346		3.531		3.547		3.483	
Project team formation	3.500		3.370		3.453		3.442	
Task definition	3.462		3.272		3.340		3.354	
User involvement	3.141		3.272		3.245		3.223	
Project management techniques	3.436		3.432		3.396		3.419	
Procurement processes	3.423		3.444		3.679		3.532	
Communication	3.641		3.062		3.387		3.362	
Management practices	3.705		3.395		3.509		3.533	
Supervision	3.577		3.284		3.264		3.361	
Bureaucracy	3.628		3.531		3.623		3.596	
Corruption	3.705		3.630		3.849		3.740	
Regulations	3.474		3.161		3.283		3.302	
Delays in payment	3.551		3.605		3.500		3.546	
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3.520</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.421</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.496</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.480</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>RESOURCES</b>								
Project funding	3.487		3.580		3.509		3.525	
Labour	3.282		3.173		3.094		3.174	
Capacity	3.500		3.296		3.293		3.355	
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3.423</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.350</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.299</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.351</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>EXTERNAL FORCES</b>								
Pressure groups (media, NGOs, political activities, etc.)	3.333		2.803		3.104		3.079	
Natural disaster	3.256		3.136		2.830		3.049	
Culture and belief systems	3.410		3.309		3.198		3.294	
Fluctuation of prices	3.603		3.506		3.604		3.574	

<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3.401</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.188</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.184</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.249</b>	<b>4</b>
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In the group ranking analysis, contractors, PMP and the general public unanimously agreed that leadership is the biggest cause of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by management and administration practices, resources and external forces respectively. This is presented in the bar chart below in Figure 26.

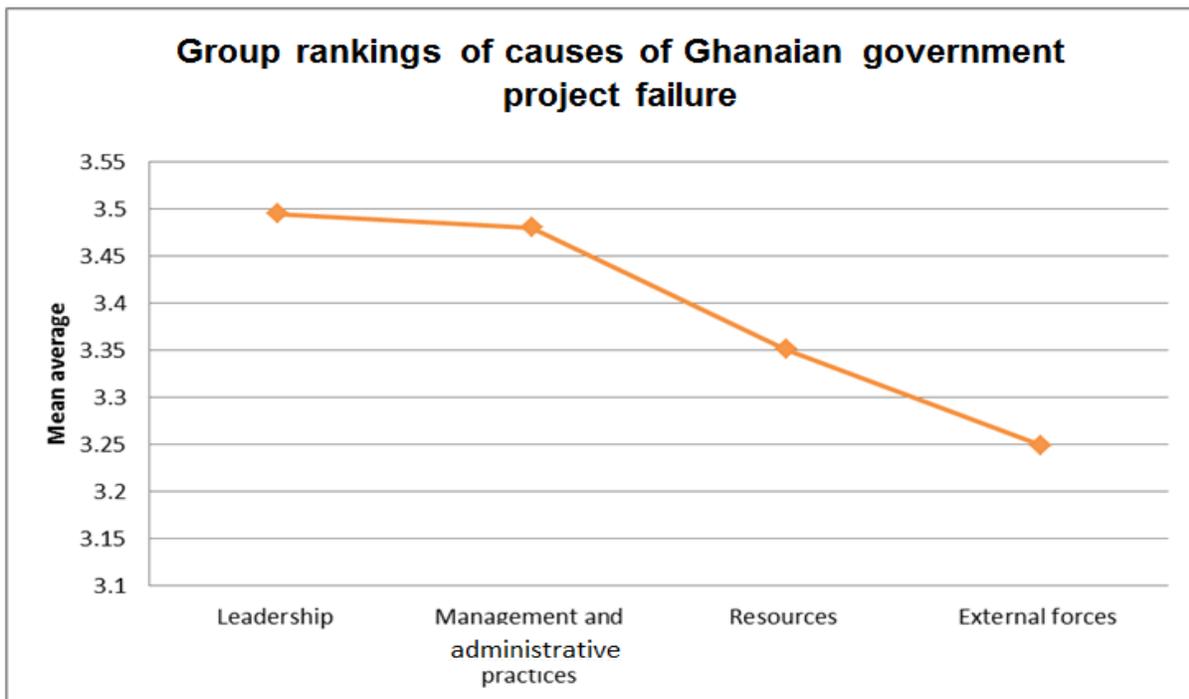


Figure 26 Group rankings of causes of Ghanaian government project failure

From the graph above, it is clear that leadership is number one, averaging a mean of 3.49. This is followed by management and administrative practices – representing 3.48. There is a steep slope to the next one, which is resources, meaning the average mean comes down drastically, representing 3.35. The external forces come last – representing 3.24. This indicates that leadership, and management and administrative practices are more important (influential) than resources in Ghanaian government project failure. However, external forces are not very influential in comparative terms.

### 5.3.4.3 Spearman Rank Correlation Analysis

It is important to establish that the ranks provided by the contractors, PMP and the general public were not due to chance or some form of bias but represent the true causes of Ghanaian government project failure.

To do so, a Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to determine the degree of agreement between the ranks provided by the three main stakeholders. The test is a non-parametric test, which means the distribution does not necessarily need to be normal before distribution can be applied. Table 14 presents the results of the pairwise rank correlation coefficients for causes of project failure.

Table 14 Rank Correlations between Contractors, PMP and General Public for causes of project failure

		Contractor	PMP	General Public
Contractor	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.539**	.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001	.001
	N	32	32	32
Spearman's rho PMP	Correlation Coefficient	.539**	1.000	.818**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.	.000
	N	32	32	32
General Public	Correlation Coefficient	.546**	.818**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.
	N	32	32	32

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Significant positive correlation coefficients of 0.539, 0.546 and 0.818 were obtained for contractors and PMP, contractors and general public, and PMP and general public respectively. All three coefficients are strong and positive, which shows a high degree of agreement between the rankings of the three stakeholders.

#### **5.3.4.4 Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference (Causes)**

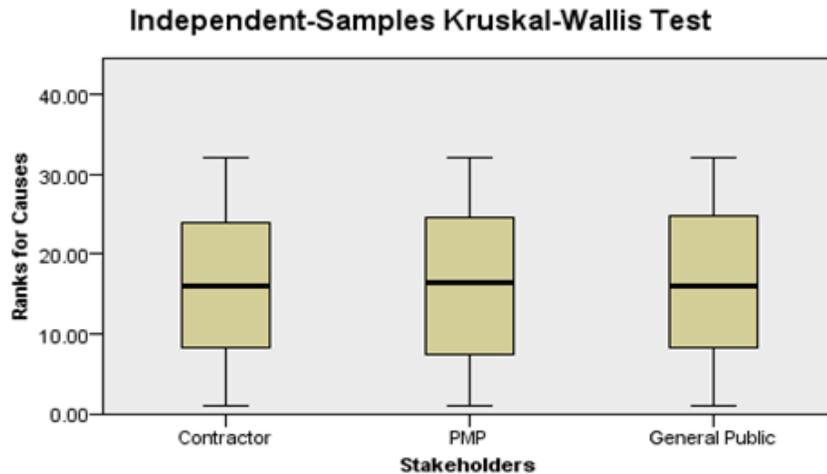
It is important to establish if the extent of agreement/disagreement across the three stakeholder categories is statistically significant. To do so, the Kruskal-Wallis H non-parametric test of difference between independent samples was used. The hypothesis to be tested is:

*Null Hypothesis =  $H_0$  = there is a high degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important factors that causes of Ghanaian government projects failure*

*Alternate Hypothesis= $H_1$  = there is a low degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important factors that causes of Ghanaian government projects failure*

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test and associated significance level are shown in Figure 27 below. The test revealed that there is no significance difference in the rankings provided by the three stakeholder categories ( $p>0.05$ ) for the causes of Ghanaian government project failure. This means there is a high degree of agreement among all three stakeholders on these causes. In other words, the rankings across the three stakeholder categories are the same; hence, the null hypothesis is retained (accepted).

Figure 27 Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference in rankings for causes of project failure



<b>Total N</b>	96
<b>Test Statistic</b>	.002
<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	2
<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)</b>	.999

1. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.
2. Multiple comparisons are not performed because the overall test does not show significant differences across samples.

## 5.4.5 Effects of Ghanaian Government Project Failure on Key Stakeholders

### 5.4.5.1 Ranking the effects of project failure

This sub-section presents the rankings provided by respondents on the effects of Ghanaian government project failure. The respondents provided the rankings for each of the 26 possible effects outlined in the questionnaire using a five-point Likert Scale, where 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree.

Means were calculated for the three main stakeholder categories who responded – contractors, PMP and the general public. Table 15 presents the mean ranking and related ranks in order of importance.

Table 15 Effects of Ghanaian Government Project Failure (Mean rankings and related Ranks)

Factors in order of importance	Contractor		PMP		General Public		Overall	Overall
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
It slows down economic growth	3.821	6	3.914	1	3.887	1	3.876	1
Loss of revenue by state	3.885	3	3.778	3	3.764	5	3.804	2
Unemployment	3.962	2	3.605	11	3.783	3	3.781	3
Bad image for government	3.846	4	3.704	8	3.726	7	3.755	4
Collapse of local businesses	3.705	12	3.765	4	3.783	3	3.754	5
Cost escalation	4.000	1	3.753	5	3.547	16	3.743	6
Government sector underdevelopment	3.846	4	3.728	6	3.623	10	3.721	7
Loss of foreign AID/Grants	3.744	11	3.728	6	3.698	8	3.720	8
Discourages investment	3.539	18	3.803	2	3.755	6	3.706	9
Stricter donor regulations	3.808	7	3.642	10	3.585	11	3.668	10
Loss of election	3.539	18	3.605	11	3.793	2	3.660	11
Financial institutions lose confidence in the state	3.769	9	3.568	15	3.585	11	3.634	12
Loss of revenue by the citizens	3.641	14	3.519	18	3.698	8	3.626	13
Lack of capacity	3.692	13	3.556	16	3.585	11	3.608	14
Sub-standard infrastructure	3.641	14	3.605	11	3.538	17	3.589	15
It slow down citizens' human empowerment	3.782	8	3.593	14	3.425	21	3.581	16
Loss of worker hours	3.628	16	3.704	8	3.453	18	3.580	17
Pollution	3.756	10	3.469	20	3.415	22	3.532	18
Armed robbery and theft	3.500	23	3.469	20	3.566	14	3.517	19
Relocation of services	3.487	24	3.482	19	3.443	19	3.468	20
Denial of citizens' basic rights	3.513	21	3.420	22	3.434	20	3.453	21
Loss of properties	3.513	21	3.420	22	3.359	23	3.423	22
Emotional stress on citizens	3.564	17	3.531	17	3.226	25	3.419	23
Accidents and Deaths	3.333	26	3.222	25	3.566	14	3.393	24
Imprisonment	3.474	25	3.284	24	3.283	24	3.340	25
Abandonment of homes	3.539	18	3.161	26	3.170	26	3.276	26

The contractors ranked cost escalation as the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by unemployment, loss of revenue by the state, government sector underdevelopment and bad image for the government respectively.

PMP ranked slowdown of economic growth as the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by discouraging investment, loss of revenue by state, collapse of local businesses and cost escalation respectively.

The general public also ranked slowdown of economic growth as the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by loss of election, collapse of local business, unemployment and loss of revenue by state respectively.

The top ten overall rankings for the effects in the order of importance are as follows: It slows down economic growth, Loss of revenue by state, Unemployment, Bad image for the government, Collapse of local businesses, Cost escalation, Government sector underdevelopment, Loss foreign AID/Grants, Discourages investment and Stricter donor regulations.

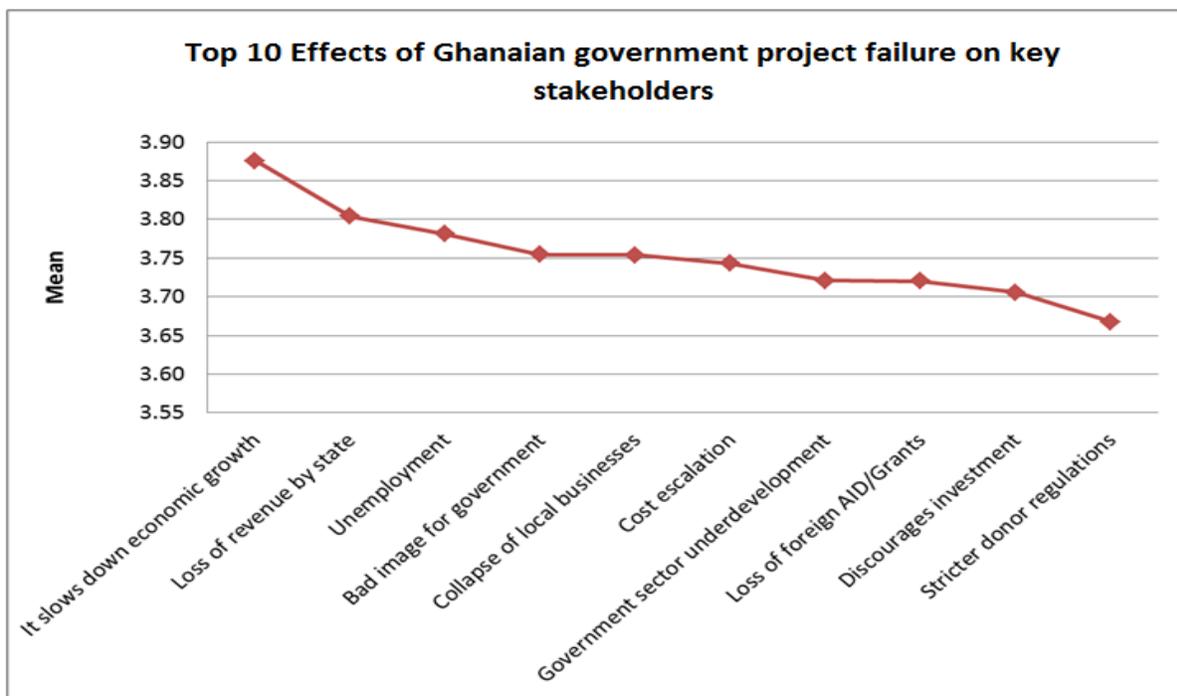


Figure 28 Top 10 Effects of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders

#### 5.4.5.2 Groupings of the Effects

The 26 factors identified as possible effects of Ghanaian government project failure were classified into four groups – namely, economic, social, political and psychological. The average of each of the individual causes within a group and related rank was calculated and is presented in Table 16.

Table 16 Mean Rankings and Ranks of Effects of Group of Factors

Factors	Contractor		PMP		General Public		Overall Mean	Overall Rank
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
<b>ECONOMIC</b>								
Loss of revenue by state	3.885		3.778		3.764		3.804	
Government sector underdevelopment	3.846		3.728		3.623		3.721	
Collapse of local businesses	3.705		3.765		3.783		3.754	
It slows down economic growth	3.821		3.914		3.887		3.876	
Loss of foreign AID/Grants	3.744		3.728		3.698		3.720	
Financial institutions lose confidence in the state	3.769		3.568		3.585		3.634	
Unemployment	3.962		3.605		3.783		3.781	
Loss of revenue by the citizens	3.641		3.519		3.698		3.626	
Cost escalation	4.000		3.753		3.547		3.743	
Loss of worker hours	3.628		3.704		3.453		3.580	
Discourages investment	3.539		3.803		3.755		3.706	
Loss of properties	3.513		3.420		3.359		3.423	
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3.754</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.690</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.661</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.697</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>SOCIAL</b>								
It slow down citizens' human empowerment	3.782		3.593		3.425		3.581	
Stricter donor regulations	3.808		3.642		3.585		3.668	
Lack of capacity	3.692		3.556		3.585		3.608	
Sub-standard infrastructure	3.641		3.605		3.538		3.589	

Relocation of services	3.487		3.482		3.443		3.468	
Accidents and Deaths	3.333		3.222		3.566		3.393	
Denial of citizens' basic rights	3.513		3.420		3.434		3.453	
Armed robbery and theft	3.500		3.469		3.566		3.517	
Abandonment of homes	3.539		3.161		3.170		3.276	
Pollution	3.756		3.469		3.415		3.532	
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3.605</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.462</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.473</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.508</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>POLITICAL</b>								
Loss of election	3.539		3.605		3.793		3.660	
Bad image for government	3.846		3.704		3.726		3.755	
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3.692</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.654</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.759</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.708</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b>								
Emotional stress on citizens	3.564		3.531		3.226		3.419	
Imprisonment	3.474		3.284		3.283		3.340	
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3.519</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.407</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.255</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.379</b>	<b>4</b>

In the group ranking analysis, contractors and PMP unanimously agreed that economic effect is the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by political, social and psychological effects respectively. The general public was, however, of the opinion that political effect is the biggest effect, followed by economic, social and psychological effects respectively.

#### **5.4.5.3 Spearman Rank Correlation Analysis**

It is important to establish that the ranks provided by the contractors, PMP and the general public were not due to chance or some form of bias but represent the true effects of Ghanaian government project failure.

To do so, a Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to determine the degree of agreement between the ranks provided by the three main stakeholders. Table 17 presents the results of the pairwise rank correlation coefficients for effects of project failure.

Table 17 Rank Correlations between Contractors, PMP and General Public for effects of project failure

			Contractor	PMP	General Public
Contractor	Correlation Coefficient		1.000	.677**	.461*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.	.000	.018
	N		26	26	26
Spearman's rho PMP	Correlation Coefficient		.677**	1.000	.714**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.	.000
	N		26	26	26
General Public	Correlation Coefficient		.461*	.714**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.018	.000	.
	N		26	26	26

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Significant positive correlation coefficients of 0.677, 0.461 and 0.714 were obtained for contractors and PMP, contractors and general public, and PMP and general public respectively. All three coefficients are strong and positive, which shows a high degree of agreement between the rankings of the three stakeholders.

#### 5.4.5.4 Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference (Effects)

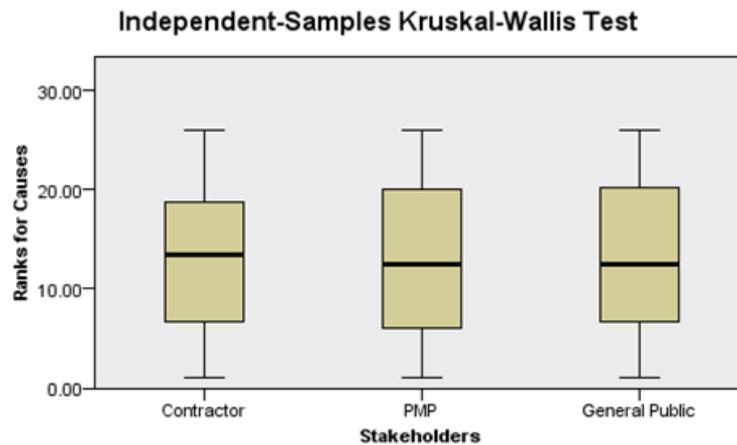
It is important to establish if the extent of agreement/disagreement across the three stakeholder categories is statistically significant. To do so the Kruskal-Wallis H non-parametric test of difference between independent samples was used. The hypothesis to test is:

*Null Hypothesis =  $H_0$  = there is a high degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important effects of Ghanaian government projects failure*

*Alternate Hypothesis= $H_1$  = there is a low degree of agreement among the study's participants on the most important effects of Ghanaian government projects failure*

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test and associated significance level are shown in Figure 29. The test revealed that there is no significant difference in the rankings provided by the three stakeholder categories ( $p > 0.05$ ) for the effects of Ghanaian government project failure. This means there is a high degree of agreement among all three stakeholders on these effects. In other words, the rankings across the three stakeholder categories are the same; hence, the null hypothesis is retained (accepted).

Figure 29: Kruskal-Wallis H test of difference in rankings for effects of project failure



<b>Total N</b>	78
<b>Test Statistic</b>	.000
<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	2
<b>Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)</b>	1.000

1. The test statistic is adjusted for ties.
2. Multiple comparisons are not performed because the overall test does not show significant differences across samples.

## 5.4.6 The Key Stakeholders Most Affected by Ghanaian Government Project Failure

### 5.4.6.1 Ranking the effects of project failure on key stakeholders

This section presents the rankings provided by respondents on the effects of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders. To address the last objective of this study, thus, the most affected key stakeholders of Ghanaian government project failure, the respondents provided rankings on the effect on each of the seven stakeholders outlined in the questionnaire using a seven-point Likert scale, where 1= Least Affected and 7= Most Affected.

Means were calculated for the three main stakeholder categories who responded – contractors, PMP and the general public. Table 18 presents the mean ratings and related ranks in order of importance.

Table 18 Effects of Ghanaian government Project Failure on Stakeholders (Mean Rankings and related Ranks)

Factors in order of importance	Contractor		PMP		General Public		Overall Mean	Overall Rank
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
Citizens/general public	4.282	1	4.432	1	4.415	1	4.381	1
Government	3.500	3	3.630	2	4.123	2	3.789	2
Contractors	4.039	2	3.506	6	3.670	3	3.728	3
Local business	3.474	4	3.630	2	3.283	6	3.445	4
Financial institutions	3.244	5	3.580	5	3.387	4	3.404	5
Consultants	3.180	6	3.605	4	3.377	5	3.389	6
Donor agencies	3.064	7	3.222	7	2.783	7	3.000	7

In the individual rankings, all three sets of participants unanimously ranked the general public as number one out of the key stakeholders who are affected the most when Ghanaian government projects fail. However, the government was ranked second by the PMP and the general public but was ranked third by the contractors. It is also clear that all categories of participants ranked donor agencies as the least affected key stakeholder when Ghanaian government projects fail. Contractors were ranked second, sixth and third respectively. Moreover, local businesses were ranked fourth, second and sixth respectively. Further, the financial institutions were ranked fifth by PMP and contractors and fourth by the general public. Consultants were ranked sixth, fourth and fifth respectively.

The overall ranking showed that the most affected stakeholder in Ghanaian government project failure is the citizens/general public. This is followed by government, contractors, local businesses, financial institutions, consultants, and donor agencies respectively.

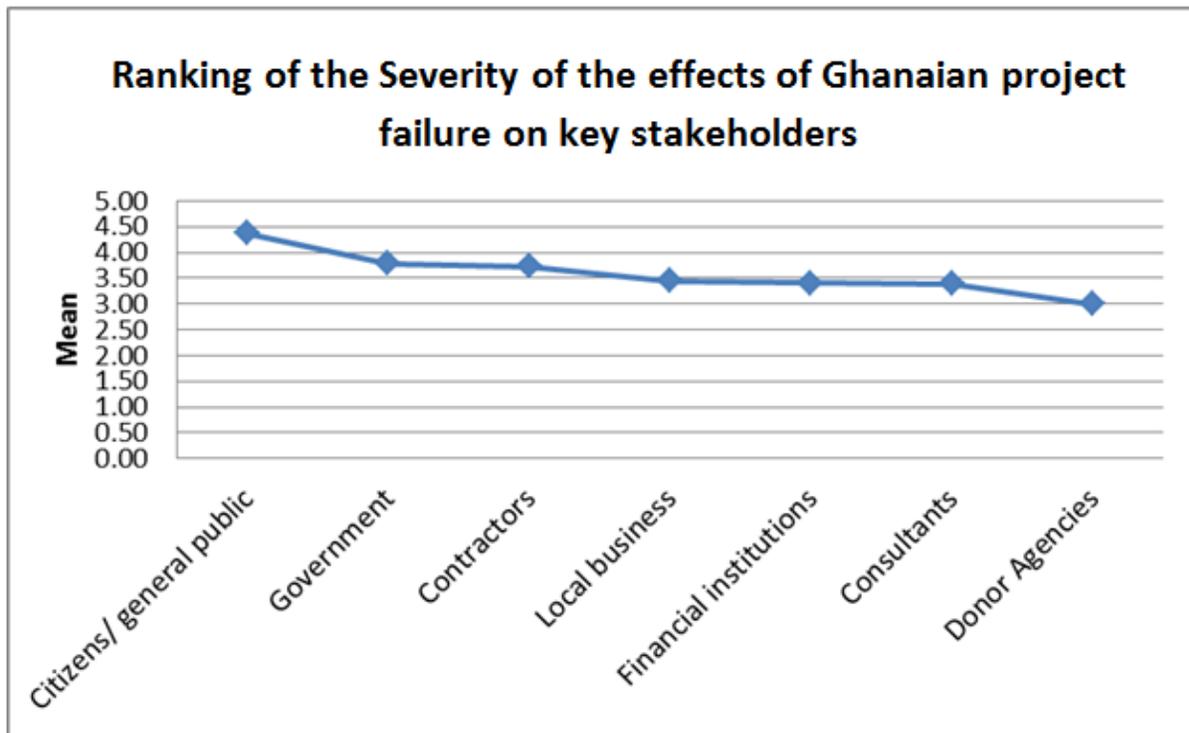


Figure 30 Ranking of the Severity of the effects of Ghanaian project failure on key stakeholders

It is clear from the figure above that citizens are the group of key stakeholders who are affected the most when Ghanaian government projects fail – representing a mean average of 4.38. This is followed by the government – representing a mean average of 3.78. This is followed closely by the contractors, with an average mean of 3.72. Local businesses come fourth, with an average mean of 3.44. Financial institutions come fifth, with an average mean of 3.40. This is followed by consultants, with an average mean of 3.39. The last is donor agencies, with an average mean of 3.00.

## 5.5 SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter has presented the study's results, based on responses from participants' data collection instruments, and has outlined the statistical analysis of the data. Results of the statistical analysis have also been presented. The next chapter

discusses these findings in details by linking the findings to prior literature reviewed in chapter two to make meanings to the study's findings.

# CHAPTER 6

## DISCUSSIONS

### 6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the results of the study by linking them to the literature reviewed in Chapter two. The purpose is to assess the study's results and prior literature on the subject under study. This will help to make contributions to the academic field, and will also help come out with valid contributions, conclusions and recommendations for policy makers of Ghanaian government projects, with the possibility of being applicable in other developing countries.

The aim of the study was to find out from contractors, project management practitioners and the general public their perception about the extent of failure, and causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure. The findings indicated that these projects fail on all the failure criteria; however, the extent of failure differed from criterion to criterion. Secondly, the study identified 32 factors that cause Ghana government projects to fail; however, the study's participants agreed that the factors are of varying importance (influence). The first 10 most influential factors are: monitoring, corruption, political interference, change in government, bureaucracy, fluctuation of prices, lack of continuity, planning, delays in payment, and release of funds. The study further found that factors such as monitoring and leadership relate to cultural and political factors rather than management ones as espoused in previous literature.

In relation to the effects, the study identified 26 effects of Ghanaian government project failure; however, these effects have different levels of importance. The first 10 effects are: it slows down economic growth, loss of revenue by state, unemployment, cost escalation, bad image for government, collapse of local businesses, government sector underdevelopment, loss of foreign aid/grants, discourages investment, and stricter donor regulations. These findings are unique, as previous studies have concentrated on effects in relation to project completion; whilst this research's effects relate to key

stakeholders associated with Ghanaian government projects. Further, the study revealed that these effects are inter-related. Moreover, the most affected stakeholders in order of importance are: citizens/general public, government, contractors, local businesses, financial institutions, consultants, and donor agencies. The next sections discuss these findings in detail.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows: 6.1 discusses the demographic information of the respondents – this will include age, gender, occupation, sector, and number of years at work. Section 6.2 discusses Ghanaian government project failure, whilst 6.3 discusses causes of Ghanaian government project failure. Sections 6.3 and 6.4 discuss effects of Ghanaian government project failure and the degree of severity on the various key stakeholders associated with such projects, respectively. The final section summarises the chapter by highlighting the salient points discussed within it.

## **6.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

This section discusses the demographic characteristics of the participants. The purpose is to paint a picture about the level of knowledge that participants have about the subject under investigation. This will show the quality of the data, hence, improve reliability and validity of the data collected.

### **6.1.1 Gender**

The majority of the respondents were males, 166 (62.6%), and the rest were females. Male respondents dominated the total number of respondents mainly because of the number of contractors and project management practitioners, professions traditionally dominated by males (Goudreau, 2010; Doldor et al., 2012; Hilpern, 2014; Hashimoto et al., 2015). In Ghana, there are more men in professional jobs than women (Ghana Statistical Services (GSS), 2010; Ghana Population Census, 2010). Hofstede's (1983) masculinity relates to gender roles are clearly evidence – thus, men are supposed to be assertive, thorough and focused on material success, whilst women are supposed to be

modest, tender, and concerned with quality of life. This is what pertains in Ghana, where women are supposed to be the most caring, tender and more concerned with family life than material things (Awumbila & Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2008; Wong, 2006, 2014). This accounts for male dominance in the contractor and project management practitioner professions.

### **6.1.2 Age Group**

It was found that the majority of the respondents were in the 31 to 40 age bracket, followed by 20 and 30, as indicated in the profiles of both the interviewees and questionnaire respondents shown table 9 and Figure 16 respectively. This finding suggests that most of the respondents are in the working age group, and therefore the implication is that they were in a position to provide reliable data. It was further found that the highest percentage of respondents who were over 40 years was in the contractors group. Indeed, this finding is not misleading. Contractors are often people who are well established in society. In other words, wealthy and well-placed people in society, as their job requires huge capital outlay and a good reputation.

### **6.1.3 Regional Differences**

It was found that the majority of the respondents were from the Greater Accra Region. This is followed by Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Northern, Upper East, Western, Central, Volta, Upper West and Eastern respectively, as evident in Figure 17 in Chapter 5. Similarly, in each stakeholder category, the majority of the respondents were from the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions, the two most populous regions in Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), 2010). Not only are these two regions the most populous, they are also the two regions with the highest level of commercial activities. The Greater Accra region is the national capital and the seat of the government, whilst Ashanti are more central in the country, with most of the commercial activities revolving around them (GSS, 2010). This result suggests that the results are not skewed, they reflect the population sizes by the various regions (see GSS, 2010). Thus, from the membership

lists used for the study population, Greater Accra and Ashanti regions had the largest number of members. Therefore, the suggestion is that the regional representation is not skewed.

#### **6.1.4 Education**

The study found that the highest academic qualification of the majority of the respondents was either a Diploma or a Bachelor's degree, with only a few people with doctorates or High School education or other form of education. Project management is purpose-driven and people with Diplomas and Bachelor's degrees are readily available in organisations to perform such tasks (Amponsah, 2010). The results indicate that it takes at least some level of academic education to manage projects.

Moreover, there are fewer professionals in the country with doctorates; this is echoed by the Ministry of Education which has claimed that statistics show that the lecturer to student ratio in the country is widening due to lack of qualified lecturers – of which a doctorate is the minimum requirement (Opoku-Agyemang, 2015). Diploma or Bachelor's degree is now the average minimum qualification that most organisations look for in the Ghanaian market. The PM field requires a certain level of sophistication and this requires some level of academic qualifications (Amponsah, 2010). In Ghana, people with a doctorate tend to be more in the academic or political field than in industry (Amponsah, 2010).

#### **6.1.5 Position at work**

It was revealed that the majority of the respondents were senior managers followed by junior managers, as indicated in Figure 19. This shows that, in Ghana, project management practitioners and contractors are often at the top of the management ladder. This is a clear reflection of the sample population. Bar the general public, the other two categories of participants (PMP and contractors) often occupied higher management levels.

It was further found that PMP had the highest percentage of corporate managers. In Ghana and many other countries, PMP are often at the top level of management, as compared to contractors and members of the general public.

#### **6.1.6 Year of experience in current position**

The study revealed that the majority of participants had between one and five years of experience, followed by six to 10 years. This indicates that the participants have a lot of experience in their current role. However, there were only three respondents in the 31 to 35 years of experience category. This is not surprising, as most Ghanaians rarely work for longer. Per the national laws on the pension and education system, many people work for fewer than 35 years (SSNIT, 2015). The educational system in Ghana is such that degree and Higher National Diploma (HND) students start their education at the age of 21, although this has changed to 19 in recent years (Ghanaweb, 2015). However, per the participants' age groups, as indicated above, the old degree-going age is applicable as people affected by the change to 19 are not in employment yet.

Again, the PMP had the highest number respondents with over 20 years of experience, followed by contractors. This suggests that contractors are often old and rich people in society; moreover, this is due to the fact that the respondents with the highest level of educational degrees such as doctorates were PMP. This finding suggests that, in Ghana, education and work experience are normally linked, especially for people with doctorate degrees.

#### **6.1.7 Years of experience at work in general**

With regard to overall work experience, the pattern is the same as for current experience. The only significant difference is that those with over 20 years of experience were contractors, followed by PMP. However, this is normal as contractors are often older people with a great deal of experience.

### **6.1.8 Sector**

It was observed that the majority of the respondents were from both the public sector and the private sector, with few NGOs, as shown in Figure 22. The interviews revealed that, in Ghana, project management is often managed by both the government sector and the private sector. Thus, it does not matter whether it is a government project or not, both public and private sectors are involved. The contractors and project management companies often manage both government and private sector projects. Rarely do the NGOs manage projects directly in the country.

It was further found that the majority of the contractors and project management practitioners were from the private sector, whereas the majority of the general public respondents were from the public sector. As earlier indicated, project management, especially in the construction sector, is dominated by private companies and they execute both government and private sector projects. The interviews revealed that those in the public sector are mainly project leaders or those working at the municipal and district assemblies, of which most are not practitioners but politicians.

### **6.1.9 Industry**

It was found that the majority of the respondents were in the service industry, followed by construction. It was further found that the majority of the contractors and PMP were involved in the construction business, whilst the majority of respondents from the general public were in the service industry. The Ghanaian professional sector has been dominated by the service industry, even though the majority of the workforce is in the agricultural sector.

This finding therefore supports earlier studies conducted by Eichengreen (1994), Eichengreen (1996) and Eichengreen and Vazquez (1999) which indicated that projects and project management are very crucial in every developing country as records indicate that developed economies all over the world have had a major infrastructural development, which means massive projects, at any point in time in their developmental history. Similarly, Pinto (2013, pg.643) found that “project-based work has become a

critical component of global industrial activity". This further confirms earlier research, such as that by Alic (2008), which concluded that, during the developmental era of USA after World War II, the US government had to invest in massive projects in order to accomplish its developmental agenda. Ghana is a developing country and as such construction projects are eminent and dominant (see Ghana Budget, 2012, 2015).

## **6.2 GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE**

This section seeks to find out the extent of project failure in Ghanaian government projects using different project success/failure criteria: time, cost and deliverables; contribution to the sector in which the project is implemented; stakeholder satisfaction; and national development. Thus, the extent of project failure in Ghanaian government projects is found using an adapted square root framework proposed by Atkinson (1999).

In relation to the above criteria, all respondents agreed that Ghanaian government projects fail; however, the extent of failure differs from criterion to criterion. Moreover, in the statistical analysis, the overall rankings, as shown in Table 11 in Chapter 5 showed that the worst criterion is meeting the set time, which is followed by cost, deliverables, stakeholder satisfaction, national development and sector contribution respectively. The next sub-section discusses in detail the extent of failure in these failure criteria.

### **1. Time**

All the respondents were in agreement that Ghanaian government projects do not meet their projected timescales and that they have witnessed a lot of time overlap. Thus, rarely do Ghanaian government projects achieve their anticipated time duration. Some rated time duration failure at 90% whilst others rated it at 50%. This suggests that there is no consensus on the extent of failure in terms of not meeting the stipulated time duration. In the statistical analysis, time was ranked as the number one criterion in causes of Ghanaian government project failure.

This finding is in agreement with earlier researchers such as Sambasivan and Soon (2007), Sweis et al. (2008), Kaliba et al. (2009), Ahsan and Gunawan (2010), Kaliba et al. (2009) and Liu et al. (2011), which have concluded that schedule deviation is common in project management in developing countries. However, these previous studies were conducted in specific industries and/or specific projects (cases), whilst this study looks at government projects in general.

## **2. Cost**

In relation to cost, all respondents agreed that there is deviation in most government projects and the deviation is mostly cost escalation. As with time, most of the respondents were reluctant to rate cost in terms of percentage; however, they perceived that Ghanaian government projects hardly ever meet this success/failure criterion. Nonetheless' then it must be 'at only 35% failure'. If that's not what you mean, then 'Some respondents rated it at 35% failure. This was ranked number five 5, as shown in Table 11 – thus, it is the second worst performing criterion in Ghanaian government project failure.

This finding supports a prior study conducted by Cheng (2014) into construction projects, which asserted that cost overrun is a common problem in the industry. Further, Kaliba et al. (2009), Ahsan and Gunawan (2010), and Aziz (2013) have all found cost deviation in projects in developing countries. Similarly, Pinto (2014) has asserted that cost deviation in project management has become a norm in organisations. Based on these prior studies' findings, it can be said that this finding is not surprising. The difference between prior studies and this research is that they were conducted only in a specific industry whilst this study is looking at government projects in general, and therefore this finding can be applied to different industries within the government sector. Moreover, cost escalation can be viewed from a government perspective from the findings of this research. In other words, this research finding provides a unique dimension to the project management literature – thus, from a government projects perspective.

### **3. Deliverables**

It was found that some Ghanaian government projects do not meet deliverables or requirements. This problem was ranked fourth. The study revealed that shoddy work is often produced in some circumstances, especially in projects that are directly awarded by Ghanaian government officials. Thus, the quantity and quality of the deliverables are sometimes compromised due to corruption or failure to follow the right procedure. It was found that, due to lack of supervision by government consultants and regulatory bodies such as quality control officers, hence, contractors end up using the wrong products when carrying out projects. The study revealed that this is often found in the construction sector, where the performing organisations have to take samples of their materials for testing, but they often fail to do so. Further, the study found that consultants are unable to supervise and monitor project standardisation and this result in substandard work.

### **4. Stakeholder satisfaction**

In relation to stakeholder satisfaction or benefits to the stakeholder, all respondents perceived that Ghanaian government projects partly meet stakeholders' satisfaction and partly do not; and this was ranked third by the questionnaire participants. The consensus was that some of the projects benefited the stakeholders whilst others did not. Further, the study revealed that the satisfaction level ranges from 30-70%. The interviewees cited implementing projects at the wrong places or where they are not needed. They further perceived that sometimes the deliverables are sub-standard, and therefore they are unable to be used and so people become dissatisfied with the products of such projects. In addition, lack of community involvement was cited as a factor, as a result of projects being 'dumped' on them; that is, there is a lack of feasibility studies by political leaders or government officials, as analysed in the previous chapter.

This finding confirms Ahonen and Savolainen's (2010) study, which concluded that, in one project, some stakeholders might be satisfied whilst others might not – depending

on who is measuring satisfaction and the criteria being used to measure the project's performance. Even though Ahonen and Savolainen's research studied ID projects, there is some degree of similarity with this study, as both are related to government projects; Ahonen and Savolainen (2010) concentrated on specific government projects whilst this study focuses on government projects in general. Further, both studies are in developing countries. Similarly, Lyytinen and Hirschheim (1988), Agarwal and Rathod (2006), Procaccino and Verner (2006), Ika (2009) and Carvalho (2014) have all concluded that different stakeholders might have different opinions on the success and/or failure of a project. Therefore, this finding is not surprising, as prior studies have proven that stakeholders often do not agree on their level of satisfaction.

### **5. National development**

Most of the respondents did not talk much about this topic. This was because, once they had contributed to the discussion of the respective sectors, as discussed in subsection 6.2.6; they had automatically contributed to national development. For example, some interviewees argued that, once the projects have been completed, then they have contributed to the development of the country. It was found that about 70% of Ghanaian government projects contribute to national development, leaving 30% as non-contributory – this is due to the irrelevance of such projects. Further, it was revealed that the reason for this irrelevance is directly linked to politics. As analysed in Chapter 5, most politicians make campaign promises and then they have to fulfil such promises, even if the projects to which they relate are not needed for national development.

### **6. Sector contribution**

In terms of sector contribution, the response was relatively positive. This was ranked first by respondents. The respondents agreed that Ghanaian government projects often contribute to the sector in which they are implemented. It was found that this is the case because that is the main reason why they are implemented. The only negative issue was that, sometimes, the projects are not needed or they are not implemented where

they are needed, and therefore the expected contributions to that sector are not realised. In addition, if a project is abandoned, then it will fail to contribute to the sector.

### **6.3 CAUSES OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE**

The study found that there are 32 possible causes of Ghanaian government project failure, as indicated in Table 12, in chapter 5. These are: monitoring, corruption, political interference, change in government, bureaucracy, fluctuation of prices, lack of continuity, planning, delays in payment, release of funds, change in project leadership, management practices, procurement processes, project funding, commitment to project, selection of project managers, project team formation, project management techniques, feasibility studies, communication, supervision, scope change, capacity, task definition, definition of specification, requirement, regulations, culture and belief systems, user involvement, labour, pressure groups (media, NGOs, political activities, etc.), and natural disaster.

Nevertheless, the study's participants (Contractors, PMP and General Public) agreed that their degree of importance (influence) differs. Even though the interview analysis clearly showed that some of these causes were mentioned more times than others, as indicated in the interview analysis in the previous chapter, it was not possible to establish which ones were more important. In order to do this, the causes were ranked, as indicated in Table 12 in the previous chapter. Despite differences in the rankings given the three categories of participants, a hypothetical testing of the degree of agreement in their ranking indicated that there is a high degree of agreement among them.

In all, the respondents agreed that the top 10 most influential factors that cause Ghanaian government projects to fail, in descending order, are: lack of monitoring, corruption, political interference, change in government, bureaucracy, lack of continuity,

fluctuation of prices, inadequate planning, delays in payment, and slow release of funds. These factors are discussed in detail in the next sub-sections, in descending order.

### **1. Monitoring**

It was revealed that, in Ghana, public workers and executioners of public projects are not as committed to the work as their private counterparts, and they therefore fail to monitor government projects accordingly. Many reasons were cited for this lack of monitoring; for instance, as indicated in the interview analysis in the previous chapter, it was revealed that there are unauthorised middlemen who liaise with the government officials and contractors. This leads to payment of 10% of the contract sum to the officials and the middlemen, and therefore, consultants; who are government officials are unable to monitor the contractors accordingly. Further, the findings indicated that monitoring was directly linked to political leadership rather than to the technocrats who execute the projects. The interviewees perceived that the lack of monitoring was not only as a result of corruption but also due to a lack of 'political will' (political leadership) to monitor projects; this is because projects are being executed by party patrons who are sometimes not qualified contractors. This finding can be directly linked to the definition of corruption by Transparency International (TI) (2008) and the World Bank (2013): the abuse of public office for private gain.

However, for monitoring to be the number one most influential factor might be surprising to many researchers, although this should not be the case as this study focuses only on the government sector. There is also a cultural dimension to the reasons why public sector projects suffer from monitoring in the country. This attitude was inherited from the colonial period, where the public sector was perceived to be the white person's work (white masters) and, because it was the white person's work, it could be carried out haphazardly (Amponsah, 2010). This also confirms a common statement in Ghana which is interpreted as "*we hold government's work, we don't carry it on our head*", which literally means do not give your 100 per cent to the government's work, after all, it not your property (Amponsah, 2010). This perception has been in existence since the

colonial period, where the public sector was perceived as '*belonging*' to white people, and therefore there is a belief that there is no need to be committed to such work (Amponsah, 2010).

The cultural dimension of this finding is supported by earlier studies which concluded that management is perpetually affected by socio-cultural settings (Hofstede, 1983; Hogberg & Adamsson, 1983); hence, Ghanaian government project management is no exception. Earlier studies in project management also confirm this finding (Heeks, 2002; Saad et al., 2002; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Alsakini et al., 2004; Maube et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012). Nonetheless, these prior studies' cultural findings have been discussed in the light of project management models, practices and frameworks, whilst this study's cultural focus takes a different dimension: attitude towards government work in the country as a result of colonial rule.

## **2. Corruption**

The study revealed that the high level of paperwork and the bureaucratic procedures in Ghana's procurement process means that there is the potential for contractors to engage in corrupt practices to get their contracts through. Thus, there are a lot of bureaucratic processes that performing organisations and/or contractors need to go through before, during and after project implementation, and therefore, in most cases, they have to 'pay their way through'. Further, the use of unofficial middlemen, as indicated in the previous chapter, shows that paying of unauthorised money or payment in kind amounts to corruption. The finding further revealed that an unofficial payment of 10% of project funds to government officials has become an acceptable norm in the awarding of Ghanaian government projects. Many interviewees suggested that winning a Ghanaian government project contract bid on merits is rare, especially in relation to locally funded projects.

In addition, the ranking showed that corruption is the second overall most influential factor for Ghanaian government project failure, as shown in Table 12 in the previous chapter. It was ranked as 3, 2, and 2 by contractors, project management and general

public respectively. In fact, corruption has become a hot topic in Ghana in recent years (OccupyGhana, 2014; Imani, 2015; Bawumia, 2015; Addo, 2015); therefore, this research result confirms the public opinion about it. This is also congruent with the Transparency International and other media reports about the corruption index in Ghana (TI, 2008; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012).

The previous literature on corruption in the country has pre-dominantly been reports, lectures and media reports (TI, 2008; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012, OccupyGhana, 2014; Imani, 2015; Bawumia, 2015; Addo, 2015), and therefore this finding adds an academic dimension to the literature.

### **3. Political Interference**

Political interference was ranked by contractors, project management practitioners and general public as 1, 2 and 3 respectively, as shown in Table 12 in Chapter five. The study found that almost everything in the public sector is now political – particularly in relation to partisan politics. Further, it revealed that this is a major problem in the country and that securing of Ghanaian government projects on merit is rare, especially if the project is a relatively small and/or local level one. Participants perceived that political leaders involved in project designation believe that awarding a contract to contractors without being sure of the party to which they belong, implies that they are virtually strengthening the opposition party. This perception is premised on the assumption that these contractors finance their political party and as such, by giving them such contracts, the profits earned would be used to fund their respective parties, and therefore it is politically wise to give contracts to party patrons. It was further found that there is an assumption that contracts are given to contractors as a ‘reward’ for their hard work in helping the party to come to power. Ghanaian government projects are initiated and executed by the government, even though they may be funded by other donor agencies (Ghana Budget, 2012, 2015; Bawumia, 2015); however, it was revealed that politicians do not allow the technocrats to execute such projects. In fact, the findings indicated that the leaders of Ghanaian government projects and most of the so-

called technocrats executing such projects are political appointees. In Ghana, the constitution allows the president to appoint over a quarter of public sector workers, including all local government heads and directors (Ghana Constitution, 1992).

The study found that sometimes companies are specifically set up by political parties and their allies to execute specific government projects. Accordingly, the project executors might not necessarily possess the requisite technical experience and/or knowledge to carry out such projects, and therefore they are unable to execute them to the right standards. This suggests that, once the projects are awarded based on political patronage, political interference becomes eminent.

This result confirms the Annual Auditor General reports (AGR, 2014, 2015) that sometimes some of the companies have stopped trading, and therefore it is very difficult to track them down to retrieve the monies that the country might have lost through fraud or the inability to execute the paid-for projects. Thus, some of the companies cease to exist after executing government projects. The reports, together with the Public Account Committee (PAC), have stressed that some of these companies are highly political and therefore it is extremely difficult for the government to have the 'political will to retrieve the monies or prosecute the culprits (PAC, 2015). The reluctance of the government to make public the World Cup 2014 commission's report supports this claim on how political the country has become (Dzamefe, 2014).

This result further confirms speculations in the country that projects are awarded on political party patronage. In fact, it has become a norm in media programmes that the incumbent party in government always defends every government project even if it is a total failure, as Heeks (2002, 2005, 2006) put it, while the opposition do otherwise (e.g. Asempa FM, 2015; Oman FM, 2015). Further, approval for major government projects in the country has always had a political dimension (e.g. NHIS, 2003; Kwame Nkrumah Interchange, 2014). Opposition parties have always opposed such projects, whilst the incumbent government supports them, and therefore parliamentarians are not acting independently in the implementation process of Ghanaian government projects. This provides a unique contribution to the subject area, as previous literature relates to

industry reports and therefore there is no academic literature, and therefore this study provides a contribution in the Ghanaian context.

#### **4. *Change in Government***

The result indicated that a change in government in Ghana leads to halting and/or abandoning projects. In the interviews, all of the interviewees agreed with this, and it was stated to be because such projects will not be credited to the party that assumes power. It was revealed that governments over the years have been more interested in winning the next general election rather than serving the interests of the nation, and therefore each government intends to support its 'own' projects. As a result, participants perceived that this accounted for why a lot of commissioning and 'cutting of sod' for government projects takes place in election years.

In addition, the study found that citizens in the country judge the government's performance based on its ability to successfully complete projects. This has compelled successive governments over the years to embark on their 'own' projects after coming into power. Moreover, it was found that projects are often halted because politicians want to terminate the existing contracts and re-award them to party members as soon as they come into power. This is often a difficult process, as it involves a lot of legal procedures. The interview findings suggest that sometimes the contractor whose contract is being terminated feels cheated because s/he does not 'belong' to the party in power. The aggrieved person often sues the government, and the court outcomes have resulted in what is popularly known as 'gargantuan' (huge) government debt payments (Bawumia, 2014).

This is a unique finding to the project management literature, as previous literature has not been devoted to the subject. Again, this finding provides a country-specific context for the finding. In addition, there is currently no academic literature to support it.

## **5. Bureaucracy**

As indicated in the previous chapter, under interview analysis, the study revealed that Ghanaian government project procurement processes and activities follow a lot of bureaucratic processes. A lot of stages are required before contracts can be awarded. Interviewees perceived that bureaucracy accounts for almost all project delays and partly for most corrupt practices. They were of the view that the bureaucratic process of getting projects executed was meant to bring about fair and corrupt-free procedures; however, in reality, this has tended to be the opposite. To backup this opinion, all the participants revealed that bureaucratic procedures in government project implementation 'forces the hand' of contractors to pay bribes or use unofficial middlemen to seek what they want. In their view, Ghanaian government projects go through a lot of steps and stages, even before their actual commencement; and, during the execution stages, each stage also has to go through a lot of inspections, and officials need to sign documents, which are normally hardcopies. In some situations; the absence of an official means that the project in question has to come to a halt. Nevertheless, the respondents attributed this to politics – politics in the sense that if a project was awarded by the previous government, the current government officials would want to stifle it, so they would use delays and non-completion as an excuse to re-award it to their party members.

Furthermore, it was revealed that, even in this day and age, parliament still requires hardcopies of project documents rather than electronic ones. This often leads to corruption as contractors try to get their paperwork through as quickly as possible. In an attempt to do so, they are compelled to pay bribes and are engaged in other corrupt practices. Nevertheless, respondents did not state why the Ghanaian government still uses hardcopies of project documentation instead of electronic ones. In addition, the study revealed that consultants who have to certify projects would have to go through a lot of processes to do so, and this leads to delays in the completion of projects, hence, cost escalation.

This finding supports the earlier work of Killick (2008) about the Ghanaian political-economic system. Killick (2008) argues that the Ghanaian institutional system is full of

institutional bottlenecks. Similarly, Amoako and Lyon (2014) concluded in their research on Small and Medium Entrepreneur (SMEs) in Ghana that an institutional bottleneck hinders small- and medium-scale enterprises' exporting activities. Even though these prior studies have espoused bureaucracy as a major problem in the country, it has not been discussed in the context of project management, and therefore this is a unique finding which contributes to the project management literature within the local context.

### **6. *Lack of Continuity***

Closely related to change in government is lack of continuity. The study revealed that most government projects are halted halfway through their completion due to funding, price fluctuation, change in government, or the project no longer being needed. It was found that sometimes change in project leadership leads to project abandonment. Thus, because Ghanaian government project leadership is often based on political appointments, as discussed above under *political interference*, any change in leadership as a result of a change in government implies that it is difficult to maintain the continuity of a project.

Although prior studies have discussed this leadership issue, it was leadership in relation to management, but this study looks at leadership in relation to political leadership. For example, Hwang and Ng (2013) have asserted in their study that project leadership is crucial in the successful implementation of project management, but they discussed this in relation to management leadership.

### **7. *Fluctuation of Prices***

The study revealed that most of the products used in the execution of Ghanaian government projects are imported from other countries, which implies that, if the dollar to cedi exchange rates increases, the prices of materials will also increase. This implies that economic success that will lead to stabilisation of the local currency is crucial to the implementation of any Ghanaian government projects. However, more often, the cedi is

not stable due to the economic uncertainty in the country, as revealed in Chapter one (World Bank, 2015).

Nonetheless, the Ghanaian economy has not been stable over the years and this affects the prices of products. In 2011, the economy was growing at a rate of 13% (Economic Watch, 2011, World Bank, 2012) but this had reduced to 3.8% in the 2015 budget (Ghana budget, 2015). In fact, in 2014 alone, the exchange rate, and thus the Ghana cedi to dollar, was raised from \$1 to \$2.8 – 3.8 (Bank of Ghana, 2015). It was the most depreciated currency in the world (Bawomia, 2015). This finding suggests that price fluctuation is a major problem that causes Ghanaian government projects to fail. It also suggests that estimating project spending in the country is very difficult.

The study conducted by Fugar and Agyakwah-Baah (2010) supports this finding; it ranked fluctuation of prices as the eighth most important factor. However, Fugar and Agyakwah-Baah's research was conducted within just the construction industry in Ghana, whilst this study is within the public sector as a whole.

## **8. Planning**

It was found that planning of Ghanaian government projects is poor. As revealed by earlier researchers (Odeh & Battaineh, 2002; Assaf & AL-Hejji, 2006), Ghanaian government projects are not well planned, and this eventually leads to project failure. As indicated in section 5.3.1, the interviewees perceived that there is poor planning on the part of government-appointed leaders who co-ordinate government projects. They specifically traced poor planning to all parts or stages of the project life cycle. However, some perceived that, in some cases, the technical competence to plan properly is there but there is no money to effect such planning, due to inadequate planning on the part of the leadership (political/government officials). The major factor linked to poor planning is allocation of funds to various government projects – that is, the government starts to implement projects without properly planning how the country is going to distribute funds among them.

This agrees with the research on Nigeria's construction project failure (Odeyinka & Yusif, 1997), which indicated that ineffective planning accounts for most project failure. Similarly, this finding agrees with a study conducted in 2011 on the Iranian construction industry (Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011), which found that planning is a major reason for Iranian construction project failure. This finding also confirms a study conducted by Pinto (2013) which specifically traces the root cause of project failure to the poor initial planning phases of such projects.

However, this poor planning is not in relation to the executors (technocrats) of projects or the performing organisations, as espoused by Odeyinka and Yusif (1997), Odeh and Battaineh (2002), Assaf and AL-Hejji (2006), Pourrastam and Ismail (2011) and Pinto (2013); it relates to poor planning on behalf of the government. Thus, the government and/or government officials often fail to plan projects accordingly. This is because most of the projects are politically motivated, and therefore proper planning of how the project is going to be executed from start till finish is not carried out before project commencement. In fact, all interviewees perceived that Ghanaian government projects are not well planned in advance due to the political nature of the projects and the fact that most of the leaders and executors of such projects are political appointments rather than being made on the basis of having technical know-how. In this case, people with relatively low skills knowledge about projects are given the job of planning the projects. The study further revealed that sometime these leaders barely have the slightest knowledge about project management and, in particular, planning – sometimes, they are in an entirely different sector and/or industry altogether.

Prior studies were conducted within specific industries (Odeyinka & Yusif, 1997; Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011; Pinto, 2013), whilst this study centres on government projects in general. In addition, these prior studies were conducted using technocrats as the only participants but this study also has solicited the views of the general public as well. This provides a different dimension to the project management literature.

### **9. Delays in Payment**

Payment delays have to do with the local level – that is, between the government agencies and the contractors who execute the projects. It was revealed that delays in the distribution of the funds and how they are distributed among the various projects' contractors is a big problem in Ghana, as this can take several weeks, months and sometimes years. This, according to the participants, is due to many bureaucratic procedures that have to be followed. Paperwork and the layers of personnel who have to sign before the funds are paid are cumbersome. In some cases, there is no money for contractors due to the starting of too many projects at a time.

This finding is similar to the studies of Frimpong et al. (2003) and Fugar and Agyakwah-Baah (2010) – although theirs are more important than this study. Delays in payment being part of the first 10 factors is not surprising as prior studies have identified a similar problem in the country, as indicated in Frimpong et al. (2003) and Fugar and Agyakwah-Baah (2010). Nevertheless, being ninth in the ranking is somewhat surprising as these previous studies have ranked delays in payment among the first five factors. The discrepancy could be linked to the differences in the sectors where the studies were carried out. Earlier studies have conducted research into a specific industry – all in the construction industry – whilst this study is looking at the government sector in general. Further, this suggests that other factors are more important than delays in payments in causing failure in Ghanaian government projects.

Moreover, even though prior studies such as Frimpong et al. (2003) and Fugar and Agyakwah-Baah (2010) have identified delays in payment as one of the most important factors for causing projects to fail in Ghana, their studies were conducted in one industry, construction, whilst this study is conducted within the government sector. Moreover, their studies did not identify the reasons behind these delays. This study has found that one of the fundamental reasons for such delays is starting more projects than the country can actually fund. This adds a unique dimension to the literature.

### **10. Release of Funds**

The tenth one, which is release of funds, relates to funds that come directly from the funding agency and/or donor countries. The study found that, in most cases, donor agencies and partner countries is reluctant to release the money to the Ghanaian government or the various government agencies responsible for the implementation of a project. Like Sambasian and Soon's (2007) research, this study identified that getting funds released from donor partners and agencies is very difficult. It was revealed that, in Ghana and many other developing countries, donor agencies expect the government to meet certain conditions before funds are released, hence, delays are caused, and inflation and price fluctuations set in, which push up the costs.

Another revelation was that the problem of donors and foreign countries' unwillingness to release funds was due to three issues – counterpart funding, commitment fees, and failure of previous projects. Counterpart funding means that the government would have to contribute part of the funding money and, until this money is available, these agencies will not release their part of the funding money. Commitment fee, on the other hand, is money that the government needs to commit to a project before the donor agencies release their part. This is to commit the government to the project. The fundamental cause of this is that the Ghanaian government is unable to provide its part of the funds for the project because it often starts more projects than the country can actually fund. Lastly, donor agencies are sometimes unwilling to release money for a project because earlier projects might have failed or the on-going projects are not achieving their agreed-on targets, and therefore they may not release the rest of the funds until the project has reached its expected target.

Over-reliance on funding (which is a resource) is in agreement with Pfeffer and Salackcik's (1978) Resource Dependency Theory, as cited in Hillman et al. (2009), which argues that external resources provided to an organisation affects the organisation's behaviour and, as such, the activities of the organisation are influenced by external environmental forces. In addition, this finding is supported by prior studies

that concluded that resources are crucial for project implementation and as such without any resources or without adequate resources; projects are bound to fail (Krigsman, 2006; Perkins, 2006; Ruuska & Teigland, 2009). This finding is also in agreement with research conducted by Fabian and Amir (2011), which concluded that the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline project was abandoned due to the World Bank's withdrawal of the project's funding.

In developing countries such as Ghana, over-reliance on external sources of resources (especially funding) for developmental projects is very high (see Fabian & Amir, 2011; World Bank, 2012, Ghana Budget, 2015). The implication is that the need for governments and government agencies and/or performing organisations to develop skills necessary to win support from external donors is crucial for project management. Nevertheless, being tenth in the ranking is somewhat surprising as reports have shown that most of the Ghanaian government projects depend on foreign funding. The difference could be, perhaps, the context in which the studies were conducted. Prior studies were conducted within specific projects (cases) (Krigsman, 2006; Ruuska & Teigland, 2009; Fabian & Amir, 2011), whilst this study is more generic within the government sector projects.

### **6.3.2 Group Rankings**

In addition to the individual factor rankings, the 32 factors identified as possible causes of Ghanaian government project failure were classified into four groups, namely: leadership, management and administration practices, resources, and external forces. These themes were arrived at through the interview analysis, as indicated in Chapter five, Table 13.

The index of each of the four groups was calculated as the average mean of the individual causes within the group. In the group ranking analysis, contractors, PMP and the general public unanimously agreed that poor leadership is the biggest cause of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by management and

administration practices, resources, and external forces respectively; as shown in Table 13 in Chapter five. The next sub-sections discuss these groups.

### **1. Leadership**

The findings indicate that leadership is more important (influential) than management and administrative practices, resources, and external forces in Ghanaian government project failure. This is also in line with the individual rankings as the first 10 of them included three of the leadership factors. In the main, as indicated in the previous chapter under both interview and questionnaire data analysis, 10 out of the 32 factors was classified under leadership. Specifically, the following were classified under leadership: change in project leadership, commitment to project, requirement, definition of specification, scope change, feasibility studies, release of funds, lack of continuity, political interference and change in government.

The study revealed that change in project leadership in the form of government appointees as a result of a change in government or in the top hierarchy of the local government leads to project delays and sometimes project cancellation (total abandonment). Interestingly, interviewees were of the view that, in most cases, the project leadership is not totally committed to certain projects, especially projects from which they will not gain any money directly. Project requirements and definition of a project in the form of the product (deliverables) are often changed halfway through a project, and this sometimes causes project failure. Further, scope change was cited by interviewees as a major factor that causes Ghanaian government project failure. They are of the view that sometimes the scope of a project changes before, during and after its implementation. Interviewees were also of the view that politicians often fail to conduct appropriate feasibility studies into the need for projects within a local area. Release of funds, lack of continuity, political interference and change in government were all part of the leadership factor, and these have been discussed in detail in the preceding sub-sections.

These individual findings are not surprising as most project management research that has studied causes of project failure has identified most of them (see. Assaf & AL-Hejji, 2006; Kaliba et al., 2009; Ahonen & Savolainen, 2010; Liu et al., 2011; Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011; Pinto, 2013; Zhang, 2013). Moreover, this finding is echoed in the work of Hwang and Ng (2013), which argued that a competent project manager is vital to project success, and therefore having a good project leader is vital to a project's performance. However, these leadership problems are in relation to political and/or government official leadership rather than technocrats who executes the actual projects as contractors or project management practitioners, as espoused by Hwang and Ng (2013) in their study.

## ***2. Management and administrative practices***

Management and administrative practices came second. This area is concerned with the executors of Ghanaian government projects. They are directly involved in the implementation process and therefore their input can determine the project's performance. The study revealed a number of management and administrative issues that cause Ghanaian government projects to fail and they are: planning, monitoring, selection of project managers, project team formation, task definition, user involvement, project management techniques, procurement processes, communication, management practices, supervision, bureaucracy, corruption, regulations, and delays in payment.

These findings are not surprising, in that prior literature has identified them (see Thamhain, 2004; Close, 2006; Raymond & Bergeron, 2008; Weijermars, 2009; Wong et al., 2009; Ahonen & Savolainen, 2010; Wi & Jung, 2010; Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011; Pinto, 2013). Nonetheless, most of these failure factors were linked directly to political leadership. For instance, interviewees traced planning, bureaucracy, corruption, and delays in payments to issues with political leadership.

In Ghana, project management knowledge is poor (Moderator's Report, 2007), and therefore this result supports many concerns raised by various stakeholders of

Ghanaian government project implementation. For instance, this result is supported by the assertions made by the Ghana Institute of Public Administration (GIMPA) moderator (Moderator's Report, 2007), who asserted that project management knowledge in the country is very low, even among tertiary institutional lecturers.

Similarly, the World Bank Report in 2007 indicated that the Ghana National Insurance Scheme (NHIS) was suffering from administrative lapses because of lack of knowledge on the part of the administrators (World Bank Press Release, 2007). In fact, project management as a discipline was not known as an academic field in Ghana until recent years, and therefore project management professionals were drawn from other disciplines, which perhaps account for why management and administrative practice causes are dominant in causing Ghanaian government projects to fail. Until 2006, Ghana had no single tertiary institution offering project management as a course of study. The maiden one started in the Ghana Institute of Public Administration (GIMPA), a private institution which introduced an undergraduate degree in Operations and Project Management (Moderator's Report, 2007).

The implication of this finding is that management and administrative practices in relation to project management are poor and therefore, within the country in general, practitioners lack the requisite knowledge to carry out project management. Therefore, given that the study is conducted within the public sector and most of the project managers are political appointees who may not be project managers in reality, as indicated in Chapter five and the preceding sections of this chapter, then this will definitely affect project management performance. This finding also provides a different dimension to the project management literature in the area of management and administrative practices by espousing management and administrative practices beyond executors (management) to political management and administrators. In other words, this study has gone beyond the management perspective to add a political leadership perspective.

### **3. Resources**

The third one is resources – the study revealed that Ghana relies heavily on resources from other donor agencies and countries and this means that it is virtually impossible for the country to execute projects using only tax-payers' money. This result is echoed in various media and government reports on the level of borrowing in the area of projects (GNA, 2012; Daily Guide, 2012; Bawumia, 2015). Nonetheless, although in Ghana a lot of projects are fighting for the same resources, this was not the most important group because, if there are resources and the leadership and management lack the requisite skills and political will to execute the projects, then the projects will not be successful.

This confirms the assertions of Perkins (2006), who attributes the root cause of project failure to 'knowledge': either project managers do not have the requisite knowledge, or they do have it but fail to apply it appropriately. In this sense, no matter the availability of other material resources, the leadership and management skills and knowledge are more important for successful project execution.

Pfeffer and Salackcik's (1978) Resource Dependency Theory is evidenced here. The Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) holds the view that external resources in an organisation affects the behaviour that organisation and as such its activities are influenced by external environmental forces (Hillman et al., 2009); and, in this case, the Ghanaian government could be equated to an organisation. In addition, this finding is supported by prior studies that concluded that resources are crucial for project implementation and as such without resources or with inadequate ones; projects are bound to fail (Krigsman, 2006; Perkins, 2006; Ruuska & Teigland, 2009). The implication is that the Ghanaian government needs to manage local resources as well as devise strategies to liaise with donor agencies in order to amass enough resources to carry out projects; otherwise, the government projects are bound to fail.

### **4. External forces**

The project managers, general public and contractors all agreed that external forces such as religious beliefs, culture, natural disasters and related issues also influence

Ghanaian government project failure. However, this was not highly ranked among the categories of study participants. For example, bad weather conditions are natural events which cannot be controlled by the parties involved in the execution of projects. The finding suggests that these are not very important as compared to other categories; nevertheless, it needs to be considered.

In Ghana, the effect of inclement weather on projects may not be significant but it needs to be taken into account (Fugar & Agyakwah-Baah, 2010). Ghana has two main weather patterns – dry season and wet season (World Factbook, 2015, Ghanaweb, 2015). In the dry season, an unfavourable site condition as a result of heat is a major factor that causes delays (Fugar & Agyakwah-Baah, 2010). During the rainy season, construction work may be disrupted, especially outdoor activities (Fugar & Agyakwah-Baah, 2010). During the rainy season, temperatures range from 21°C to 32°C and the humidity is relatively high (World Factbook, 2015, Ghanaweb, 2015). The rest of the year is hot and dry with temperatures reaching 38°C. The high temperatures and high humidity, ranging from 25 to 80%, definitely affect the efficiency of project workers, especially in construction and outdoor projects, as a result of the dullness of their senses, poor coordination and discomfort due to body heat. This supports prior studies in the construction sector in Ghana by Frimpong et al. (2003) and Fugar and Agyakwah-Baah (2010).

Cultural and/or belief system was also perceived as being able to cause project failure in the country, especially failure in the form of delay and its subsequent effects. However, the interviewees did not view this as a major problem as compared to other causes such as funding, political interference, corruption, etc., as sacrifices are often made to appease the gods. Although previous literature has identified culture as a factor that causes projects to fail in developing countries (Heeks, 2002; Saad et al., 2002; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Alsakini et al., 2004; Maube et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012), all these works have discussed culture in relation to management practices, models and frameworks. However, this study has identified a different angle to the debate by espousing culture in them of belief system rather than management.

Natural disasters were not felt to be a major problem in relation to Ghanaian government project implementation. As analysed in the previous chapter, the study's participants perceived that, although natural disasters are bound to happen and project executors cannot do anything about them, they rarely occur, hence, they have a lower negative impact on project implementation.

## **6.4 EFFECTS OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE ON KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

The study found that there are numerous possible effects of Ghanaian government project failure. In all, 26 effects were identified, and they are: it slows down economic growth, loss of revenue by state, unemployment, bad image for government, collapse of local businesses, cost escalation, government sector underdevelopment, loss of foreign aid/grants, discourages investment, stricter donor regulations, loss of election, financial institutions lose confidence in the state, loss of revenue by the citizens, lack of capacity, sub-standard infrastructure, it slow down citizens' human empowerment, loss of worker hours, pollution, armed robbery and theft, relocation of services, denial of citizens' basic rights, loss of properties, emotional stress on citizens, accidents and deaths, imprisonment, and abandonment of homes. However, from the interviewees' point of view and based on the analysis, it is clear that, whilst some of the effects are associated with specific projects and/or industries, some cut across all government projects. In addition, the study revealed that some of these effects are direct whilst others are indirect. Furthermore, some of the effects are inter-related – thus, they are related and cannot be separated from one another. This is fully discussed under the effects in this sub-section by highlighting these links.

Nonetheless, the study's participants (Contractors, PMP and General Public) agreed that the degree of importance (influence) of the effects differs. In order to identify the most important effects, all the possible effects were ranked as shown in Table 15 in

Chapter five. Accordingly, the contractors ranked cost escalation as the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by unemployment, loss of revenue by the state, government sector underdevelopment and bad image for the government respectively. PMP ranked slowdown of economic growth as the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by discouraging investment, loss of revenue by state, collapse of local businesses and cost escalation respectively. The general public also ranked slowdown of economic growth as the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by loss of election, collapse of local business, unemployment and loss of revenue by state respectively. Even though the three categories of participants ranked them differently, a hypothesis testing of the degree of agreement in their ranking indicated that there is a high degree of agreement among them.

The top 10 overall rankings for the effects in the order of importance are as follows: it slows down economic growth, loss of revenue by state, unemployment, cost escalation, bad image for government, collapse of local businesses, government sector underdevelopment, loss foreign aids/grants, discourages investment and stricter donor regulations.

### ***1. It slows down economic growth***

It was found that the number one effect of Ghanaian government project failure is the slowdown of economic growth. When projects fail, economic development is retarded in the country. It was observed that the ultimate aim of Ghanaian government projects is to improve the socio-economic standards of the general public, and so failure implies that these two main developmental goals are affected. Ghana is a typical example of a developing country and as such infrastructural development is paramount to economic growth and stability, as indicated in Chapter one; hence, failure slows down economic growth and this has subsequent effects on the economic well-being of Ghana's citizens. Accordingly, this gives the government a bad image, hence, affecting the party in power's chances of winning the next general election.

This finding is not surprising as earlier researchers have argued that projects are intended to create goods and/or services in the form of 'physical or soft' products for the enhancement of citizens' livelihoods (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010, Ngacho & Das, 2014; Yang, 2014). In the case of Development Projects, Ngacho and Das (2014) specifically argue that they are able to create both economic wealth and social services in such countries, as well as having negative impacts, and these are mainly on the general populace. The suggestion is that the purpose of the projects and their effects as a result of failure are directly linked. Thus, if the purpose of government projects is to enhance the life of the general populace in the form of economic wealth, then failure implies that this economic development would be slowed down, hence, affecting the economic well-being of the citizens.

## **2. *Loss of revenue by state***

As indicated in Chapter five, if Ghanaian government projects fail, this results in the state losing huge sums of tax-payers' money and/or donors' money. Money is lost through abandonment of projects and delays in them. Accordingly, this has direct effects on the general public and indirect effects on the government. The study's participants perceived strongly that, if the state loses this money, it affects the well-being of its citizens as monies that are supposed to be used elsewhere have to be channelled back into such projects in order to complete them. Ultimately, it is the general public who will bear the last negative effects. This finding suggests that, even though the direct effects of Ghanaian government projects failure are in the form of loss of money, the indirect effects are the suffering of the ordinary citizens and the fact that the government will have to look elsewhere for money to make up the losses, hence affecting its financial capabilities.

## **3. *Unemployment***

The study found that Ghanaian government project failure has huge effects on the employment situation in the country. For instance, the interviewees argued that

Ghanaian government projects create both direct and indirect jobs. Specifically, interviewees were of the view that, in most cases, entrepreneurs specifically create jobs in 'project areas' to meet demand for certain products which it is assumed will arise due to the project implementation. In this case, if such projects fail, the entrepreneur loses out and the employees are sacked. It was also found that, if projects are delayed as a result of delays in payments, some workers, especially labourers, are laid off until the money is paid. If the project is subsequently abandoned, they will not be called back. The country already has high unemployment problems – to the extent that there is an Unemployed Graduates Association of Ghana (UGAG) (Modern Ghana, 2015). Thus, failure of government projects compounds the phenomenon. As a result, the study found that this sometimes leads to social vices such as armed robbery and theft, as the unemployed want to use unlawful means to 'earn' a living. As indicated in the previous chapter, these situations sometimes have negative psychological effects on citizens.

#### **4. Cost escalation**

According to the findings, interviewees perceived that cost escalation comes in different ways. The study found that one major way is increment of project cost as a result of payment delays. It was further found that failed projects' contracts are often re-written and given to another contractor. This means that the whole bidding for and awarding of the project will start afresh, and this leads to increments in the original prices for the whole project. In addition, cost escalation can occur on the part of the contractor, due to price fluctuation as a consequence of an unstable currency.

The Ghana cedi has depreciated against the US dollar in excess of 100% in less than two years and this affects the cost of Ghanaian government projects (Bawumia, 2015). This was echoed in the 'True State of the Nation Address' organised by the minority leader in parliament on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 (Ghanaweb, 2015; GNA, 2015; Asempa FM, 2015). This has direct and indirect effects on the government, the general public, contractors and other project management practitioners, as they have to adjust to these cost fluctuations. Respondents perceived that sometimes the local communities have to bear some of these costs – thus, projects are partly funded by local communities.

Cost escalation has been researched in project management literature but not in the context of effects of projects on stakeholders. Thus, previous literature has discussed effects of project failure on the project's completion. For instance, Sambasivan and Soon (2007) identified cost overrun as an effect of project failure in the Malaysian construction industry. Similarly, studies by Manavazhia and Adhikarib (2002) and Pourrostan and Ismail (2011) on material and equipment procurement delays in highway projects in Nepal and effects of delays in Iranian construction projects respectively identified cost overrun as one of the effects of such project failure. Nonetheless, this research takes a different dimension by looking at it from effects on the key stakeholders associated with Ghanaian government projects – this effect has knock-on effects on both the general public of Ghana and the government.

#### **5. *Bad image for government***

As indicated in under the data analysis in Chapter five, interview participants vehemently perceived that Ghanaian government project failure leads to a bad image for the government. The implication is that the government is in charge of the projects and therefore failure means that the government is not performing well.

Respondents perceived that, in Ghana, the illiteracy rate is very high and thus most people do not understand who is supposed to execute government projects. They have no knowledge of who the project manager is, and what a technocrat is; thus, all they know is that the project 'belongs' to the government and as such any failure is caused by the government. It was further found that the general public have this perception because politicians involve themselves in project execution and make 'big' campaign promises about projects they have no influence in bringing to the local area. Therefore, the citizens feel betrayed by the sitting government and the nation as a whole and so speak against the government, hence making the government unpopular. Accordingly, this leads to a bad image for the government, hence leading to it losing the next general election.

This is supported by earlier assertions by Goodman and Love (1980) that government policies are often translated into programmes and projects. This suggests that government project failure implies that the government is failing. This is a unique finding for both project management literature and literature about the Ghanaian context, as prior literature has not mentioned it.

### **6. Collapse of local businesses**

Directly related to unemployment is collapse of local business. The study revealed that local businesses operating alongside projects collapse as soon as the projects fail. Some of these businesses have been operating before the commencement of the projects, whilst others are created alongside them.

Further, some projects are given to local businesses to boost their capacity, and therefore any form of failure often leads to their collapse. The respondents perceived that, at times, these local businesses borrow money from financial institutions to boost their chances of executing such projects and, as such, failure leads to their businesses going bankrupt in some extreme cases. Some of these business people end up in court and in prison.

This finding is in agreement with earlier research conducted by Adams (2008), which concluded that business people in developing economies sometimes end up bankrupt as a result of project failure.

### **7. Government sector underdevelopment**

The study found that Ghanaian government project failure leads to underdevelopment of the public sector. The respondents are of the view that, if government projects fail, the sector in which the projects are implemented is not important, as the failure will retard public sector development overall. Thus, the public sector development becomes retarded as the public sector project is a panacea to a country's development, as espoused by Eichengreen (1994), Eichengreen (1996), and Eichengreen and Vazquez

(1999). Their studies suggest that public sector projects are inevitable in national development.

This finding is not surprising as the phenomenon under study pertains to the government or public sector projects. This is in agreement with Goodman and Love's (1980) assertion that government policies are often translated into programmes and projects, and therefore public projects are key in the development of every economy. Similarly, this result confirms Eichengreen (1994), Eichengreen (1996), and Eichengreen and Vazquez's (1999) work, which argued that public projects are inevitable in the development of any economy. Further, this finding is in agreement with earlier research by Pinto (2013), which found that project-based work has become a critical component of global industrial activity, and therefore failure of Ghanaian government projects implies that the sector's development will suffer, hence, the entire country's development will suffer. Thus, public sector development through projects is a panacea to the developmental needs of the citizens of Ghana.

#### **8. Loss of foreign aid/grants**

It was revealed that sometimes foreign donors are unwilling to release funds or continue to fund Ghanaian government projects due to project failure. Participants were of the view that the Ghanaian government often lost foreign aid if it had experienced project failure in the past. Further, most of the projects are executed in phases, and the progress of the first phase determines the release of the subsequent phase's funds, so, if the earlier phase fails, donors are unwilling to release the remainder of the funds.

This finding is similar to an earlier statement made by the Daily Graphic (2007) and the study of Amponsah (2013), which concluded that donor agencies are reluctant to provide aid for infrastructure projects due to previous disappointing project outcomes. They argue that this has resulted in donor apathy towards projects in the country (World Bank report, 2007; Amponsah, 2013). Similarly, Fabian and Amir (2011) found that the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline project was abandoned due to the World Bank's withdrawal of funding.

### **9. *Discourages investment***

The research found that Ghanaian government project failure leads to the discouragement of investment – both local and foreign investment. This is because most of these investments depend on these projects – hence, failure means investment has to stop. For example, it was revealed that a large number of companies depend on electricity to function, so, if government projects are focusing on electrification of certain areas and there is a fluctuating power supply, this means that these investors will not move to these areas.

Further, projects such as construction of roads, which are solely constructed by the government or in partnership with the government, are crucial to development in rural areas and therefore, if these projects fail, investors have no option than to pull out. Accordingly, the implication is that it is the ordinary citizens who lose out as this withdrawal of investment affects their livelihoods both direct and indirectly. Directly, it increases unemployment, and indirectly, it creates social vices in such communities. Further, this affects the Gross Domestic Product and growth rate, and this has an adverse effect on the government as well as on the citizens.

### **10. *Stricter donor regulations***

The findings revealed that Ghanaian government project failure leads to stricter donor regulations. For example, before it releases funds, the government would have to pay what is called ‘counterpart funding’ and ‘commitment fees’. Counterpart funding means that the Ghanaian government would have to pay part of the full cost of the project; however, it would want to see to it that such funds were available before it released its own. The commitment fee, on the other hand, is a fee that the Ghanaian government needs to commit to the projects before donors release their part of the funding.

In addition, it was found that, due to project failure in the country, donor partners monitor Ghanaian government projects closely to see to it that their funds are being used for their intended purposes. Further, due to this persistent project failure on the

part of the government, they do not release the funds in full – they release as and when they inspect the progress of the projects and are satisfied with it. In most circumstances, they appoint their own representative, who will be on-site to monitor the project, as indicated in Chapter five. Media reports and discussions in the country have highlighted this issue. For instance, the “Dwaso Nsem” programme discussed on Adom FM on 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2015 disclosed that the World Diabetes Association had to withhold further funding of its programme on diabetes as a result of project failure (Adom FM, 2015). However, it is clear that this finding provides a local-specific context to the discussion, as the above were only media reports and discussions, and therefore it represents an academic contribution to the literature on the subject.

#### **6.4.1 Grouping of the Effects**

The 26 factors identified as possible effects of Ghanaian government project failure were classified into four groups – namely, economic, social, political and psychological. These four themes were arrived at from the interview analysis with the use of thematic and content analysis with the help of NVivo 10 software, as discussed in the method chapter.

In the group ranking analysis, contractors and PMP unanimously agreed that economic effect is the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by political, social and psychological effects respectively. The general public was, however, of the opinion that political effect is the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure, followed by economic, social and psychological effects respectively.

This result reflects the perceptions that different categories of stakeholder group hold. The differences in perception by PMP and contractors versus the general public are not surprising. The general public ranking of political effects as the number one effect is a total reflection of how the general public have voted for political parties and governments in the past (Bawumia, 2015). The general public vote based on two main issues in Ghana – ethnic and religious, and project implementation. Interviewees perceived that most Ghanaians are illiterate and do not understand economic issues

such as interest rates, inflation, budget deficits, government borrowing, or GDP, and therefore the only way they judge the performance of the government is on its ability to implement projects. The next sub-sections discuss these four groupings in detail. These groupings are arranged in descending order.

### **1. Economic**

Economic factors were unanimously rated as the number one effect by contractors and PMP and number two by the general public; and they were number one overall. In fact, seven of the first 10 individual effects were economic effects. The reason for the general public not ranking economic factors as number one but two is perhaps due to how they judge political parties and government on the basis of successful project implementation, as indicated in preceding sections. When projects fail, economic activities are affected and this has direct effects on the key stakeholders associated with such projects. These effects are: loss of revenue by state, government sector underdevelopment, collapse of local businesses, it slows down economic growth, loss of foreign aid/grants, financial institutions lose confidence in the state, unemployment, loss of revenue by the citizens, cost escalation, loss of worker hours, discourages investment, and loss of properties.

Like development projects, the ultimate aim of Ghanaian government projects is to improve the socio-economic standards of the general public (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Ngacho & Das, 2014; Yang, 2014), and so failure implies that these two main developmental goals are affected. Ghana is a typical example of a developing country and as such infrastructural development is paramount to economic growth and stability; hence, failure implies that it will affect the whole country and its populace economically.

### **2. Social**

Social effects were ranked overall as number two. It was found that Ghanaian government project failure contributes to a number of social effects such as: it slows down citizens' human empowerment, stricter donor regulations, lack of capacity, sub-

standard infrastructure, relocation of services, accidents and deaths, denial of citizens' basic rights, armed robbery and theft, abandonment of homes, and pollution. It was found that, like many developing countries' projects, Ghanaian government projects are meant to provide infrastructure and other social amenities such as water and healthcare, and therefore failure implies that the citizens are denied such amenities. It emerged that these effects are sometimes in the form of teenage pregnancy or children dropping-out of school; hence, creating a long-chain of social vices. For example, if an education facility such as the building of classroom blocks fails, prospective students are denied their basic right to education provision, as enshrined in the constitution, which leads to young people being on the streets and creating problems. Some may become pregnant (teenage pregnancy), and give birth to children who have no proper care and education; these new children may turn to social vices in the community and a continuous downwards spiral emerges. Moreover, it also emerged that these social effects are intertwined and/or one leads to another and therefore it becomes cyclical in nature.

It was found that most people in the country cannot afford many social amenities and therefore rely on the government for such provisions, and so failure of such facilities has a direct impact on the citizens as a whole. Earlier studies have concluded that projects such as developmental projects are meant to provide goods and services to enhance the life of the citizens of the implementing countries (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Ngacho & Das, 2014; Yang, 2014); therefore, this finding confirms these studies. Although the effects part has not been fully discussed, a deduction can be made from these prior studies and this research. The deduction is that, if these projects are meant to help the general populace to improve their social life, then failure will definitely affect them socially.

### **3. Political**

As discussed in a previous section (causes), Ghanaian government projects are highly 'political', and therefore the political implication of project failure is huge, according to the interviewees. Accordingly, the study revealed two main effects – bad image for the

government and losing of general elections. The study also revealed that, apart from tribal and religious reasons, the other main reason for a government losing an election in the country is project performance, especially in the rural areas where most of the residents are illiterate. It was further revealed that most of the populace do not understand issues such as economic growth rate, GDP, inflation, fiscal and monetary policies and other economic indicators – all that they are interested in is seeing projects in their communities, and therefore, if government projects fail, it dents the image of the party which is in power. This can lead to that party losing the next general election.

#### ***4. Psychological***

The study found out that the psychological effects of Ghanaian government project failure is huge; however, people rarely discuss this. Moreover, these psychological effects are often not direct; for example, if a project fails, one of the direct effects is that people lose their business and, if they lose their business, it affects their psyche. Sometimes, they lose hope in life. Further, if they go bankrupt, it has a negative psychological impact on them for the rest of their life. It was revealed that, in some instances, people are imprisoned because they default on the bank loans they have secured to embark on projects. This finding provides a unique dimension to project management literature, as previous literature has not discussed these effects. It also provides a country-specific context to the literature.

## **6.5 THE MOST AFFECTED KEY STAKEHOLDERS OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE**

Although prior literature had not specifically looked at the stakeholders who are affected the most, it had indicated that government projects are purposely implemented to create wealth for the general populace, and therefore the finding is not surprising. The logic is that, if government projects are executed purposely to improve the well-being of the citizenry, as espoused by Ahsan and Gunawan (2010), Ngacho and Das (2014), and

Yang (2014), then any failure will have effects on the citizens. This section discusses the most affected key stakeholders of Ghanaian government project failure. This is presented in order of the most affected to the least affected.

The results indicate that the most affected stakeholders of Ghanaian government project failure are the citizens/general public, as shown in Table 18. This is followed by government, contractors, local businesses, financial institutions, consultants, and donor agencies respectively.

This result is not surprising as the ultimate purpose of government projects is to improve the life of the citizens in the form of 'physical and soft' benefits, as Ahsan and Gunawan (2010) put it. This finding also confirms Ngacho and Das's (2014) argument that, in the case of Development Projects, the purpose is to create both economic wealth and social services in implementation countries; and therefore the project failure have negative impact on the general populace. Even though Ngacho and Das's (2014) study was restricted to development projects, their finding can be likened to Ghanaian government projects to some extent, in that some Ghanaian government projects are development projects. In fact, this finding is in line with Yang (2014), who equates stakeholders to the community or the public – even though, Yang's study was in urban development projects. Yang (2014) further asserts that failure of such projects has both direct and indirect effects on the general populace – however, Yang did not find these specific direct and indirect effects. Therefore, like these studies, when Ghanaian government projects (of which both development and urban projects are part) fail, this would have negative effects on the general populace in particular.

The government came second; again, this finding is not surprising. As stated by the research objective, the projects under study are government projects, whether at local or central government level, as defined in the literature review chapter. This implies that the project 'belongs' to the government and, as such, whatever the project outcome; it will have a significant impact on the government. This result could also be attributed to the nature of politics in Ghana. As indicated by most interviewees, projects can influence general election results for both the government and the opposition parties. That is, projects influence how voters vote. This result also attests to the Institute Of

Economic Affairs, Ghana (IEA) debate organised in 2012 prior to the 2012 general elections, which showed that electoral success could be attributed to project success (Ghanaweb, 2012).

Contractors came third – contractors are the direct implementers of Ghanaian government projects and as such any failure will affect them. It came out that sometimes contractors lose their capital through Ghanaian government project failure. When contractors are unable to pay for materials bought on credit for projects, they are sometimes arrested for default of payment. This not only results in them losing money, but they are sometime imprisoned for default of payments of loans and credit facilities. It was found that, in Ghana, financial institutions are able to arrest their clients for default of payment and if they are unable to pay or agree on a better payment plan, they are kept behind bars until their families are able to pay for them.

Fourthly, local businesses – it was found that local communities, including their businesses, are also key stakeholders who could be affected by Ghanaian government projects. These local businesses are not the same as contractors; they are the businesses around the project sites. They are mainly small- and medium-size business which operates within the project's environs. It was revealed that, when projects are being implemented, a lot of people set up new businesses or move their businesses to such places, so that when the project starts, they can meet demands arising from it. If it is a big project like the building of dams and roads, some even buy and/or build properties, so that they can rent them out to the workers or 'to people who will want to live in the area after the project has been completed. Thus, if such projects fail to materialise, then such businesses collapse.

Next is a financial institution – financial institutions provide financial support to Ghanaian government projects. It was revealed that, in Ghana and many other developing countries, financial institutions have to raise certificates of payment and other payment on behalf of the government and sometime they lend to the government in cash; therefore, if such projects fail, they have to chase the government for a long time to obtain their money. This puts a strain on these financial institutions meeting their targets

(Bawumia, 2015). Most often, it means that they are unable to lend more to individual customers, who are perceived as being more risky (Bawumia, 2015).

Consultants come next – it was found that consultants provide the technical advice and monitoring services to executors of Ghanaian government projects and therefore could influence Ghanaian government project performance; as such, failure will affect them.

Lastly, donor agencies – donor agencies and donor countries are those who provide funding in the form of cash and in kind. This was ranked last perhaps because failure of Ghanaian government projects does not have a direct effect on them.

Again, as discussed in the preceding sections, these findings provide an academic and practical dimension to the literature. From the above discussion, it can be deduced that literature on these effects is rare and the little available is mainly in the form of reports and lecture proceedings (see Bawumia, 2015).

## **6.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter has discussed the results from Chapter five by linking them to the literature reviewed in Chapter two. It has discussed the level of failure in Ghanaian government projects in relation to various failure criteria. It has further discussed the various factors that cause Ghanaian government project failure with an emphasis on the most influential factors. In addition, it has discussed the effects of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders by highlighting the most important effects and also the most affected key stakeholders. It has also discussed the degree of agreement among the categories of participants on the causes and effects of Ghanaian government project failure identified in the research.

The next chapter summarises the main findings of the research by highlighting the main contributions of the study and also points out the limitations. It further makes suggestions for future research in the subject area.

# **CHAPTER SEVEN**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

### **7.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the main findings of this study based on the research aims and objectives. It highlights the main contributions and the limitations of the study. Further, it makes suggestions for further research in the subject area. The purpose is to shed light on the main findings of the research, and contribute to both the academic and practical fields.

The rest of the chapter is presented as follows: section 7.1 presents Ghanaian government project failure; 7.2 presents causes of Ghanaian government project failure whilst 7.3 discusses the effects of Ghanaian government projects on key stakeholders. Section 7.4 looks at the contribution that the study makes to knowledge. Section 7.5 highlights the limitations of the research whilst section 7.6 makes recommendations for future research. Lastly, section 7.7 summarises the chapter.

### **7.1 GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE**

The first objective of this research was to find out the extent of failure in Ghanaian government projects using different failure criteria. As a result, an adapted Square Root Framework proposed by (Atkinson, 1999) (time; cost; deliverables; contribution to sector where projects are implemented; contribution to national development; and stakeholders' satisfaction) was used to investigate this objective. The findings showed that all the three categories of the study's participants (contractors, PMP and general public) agreed that Ghanaian government projects fail on all six criteria; however, the extent of failure differs from criterion to criterion. They agreed that the worst performing criterion is meeting the projected time, followed by cost, deliverables, stakeholders'

satisfaction, contribution to national development and contribution to the sector where the project is implemented respectively.

This shows that the criteria in which Ghanaian government projects fail most are within the iron triangle (time, cost and deliverables) (Atkinson, 1999). This is followed by failures to provide the expected benefits of the project's product.

Some of the findings are supported by the literature whilst others are not. For instance, prior literature supports the various failure criteria and the extent of failure within each criterion (KPMG, 2013), but has not empirically compared these failure criteria within a study.

## **7.2 CAUSES OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE**

A number of factors have been cited in the literature as the causes of projects failure; however, whilst some are peculiar to certain industries and geographical locations (Mukabeta et al., 2008; Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Amid et al., 2012), others are generic to all projects (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009; Ochieg & Price, 2010; Fabian & Amir, 2011; Pourrastam & Ismail, 2011). As a result, the second objective of this study was to identify factors that cause Ghanaian government projects in general to fail and their relative importance.

In the main, the study identified 32 factors that account for Ghanaian government project failure. These are: monitoring, corruption, political interference, change in government, bureaucracy, fluctuation of prices, lack of continuity, planning, delays in payment, release of funds, change in project leadership, management practices, procurement processes, project funding, commitment to project, selection of project managers, project team formation, project management techniques, feasibility studies, communication, supervision, scope change, capacity, task definition, definition of specification, requirement, regulations, culture and belief systems, user involvement, labour, pressure groups (media, NGOs, political activities etc.), and natural disaster.

Some of these findings are in agreement with previous literature, whilst others are new and/or have different meanings in the local context. For instance, issues such as price fluctuation, delays in payments, monitoring, resources and commitment are often found in project management literature but corruption, culture and belief system were not supported by previous literature. Moreover, although some of these factors are the same as previous literature, the meanings in the local context are not the same. For instance, monitoring was perceived from a different angle – whereas previous literature looked at it from the execution point of view in relation to culture (Amponsah, 2010); in the case of this research, it goes beyond culture to relate to political and cultural perspectives. Further, release of project funds was looked at from the perspective of the donor agencies rather than the clients as indicated in the previous research (Frimpong et al., 2003; Kaliba et al., 2009; Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Fugar & Agyakwah-Baah, 2010; Aziz, 2013). Issues such as counterpart funding and commitment fees were all mentioned as part of the reasons for the delays, and these relate directly to donor agencies and partner countries. Again, capacity meant different things in the local context – to some interviewees, it means human resources but to others, logistics and to others, it means both human resources and material resources.

Previous literature had shown that the causes (factors) do not have the same importance (influence) (Frimpong et al., 2003; Kaliba et al., 2009; Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Fugar & Agyakwah-Baah, 2010; Aziz, 2013). Accordingly, all the factors were ranked using Mean Average Ranking, Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficients, and Kruskal-Wallis H test. The statistical testing of the degree of agreement among the three categories of participants indicated that there is a high degree of agreement on the most important factors (causes) of Ghanaian government project failure. The findings indicate that contractors, project management practitioners and general public agreed that the top 10 causes of Ghanaian government project failure in descending order are: (1) monitoring (2) corruption (3) political interference (4) change in government (5) bureaucracy (6) lack of continuity (7) fluctuation of prices (8) planning (9) delays in payment and (10) release of funds.

The position of some of these factors in the rankings was surprising – for example, monitoring being the number one most influential cause of Ghanaian government project failure. Prior literature has ranked delays in payment as the most influential factor (Frimpong et al., 2003; Fugar & Agyakwah-Baah, 2010); however, the variance in findings may be due to the sector where the studies were conducted. These prior studies have been conducted in specific industries whereas this research is conducted in Ghanaian government projects in general. Moreover, interviewees linked monitoring to politics, corruption and cultural orientation towards government projects rather than technocrats as espoused by other authors (Frimpong et al., 2003; Fugar & Agyakwah-Baah, 2010).

Again, corruption has not been featured much in prior literature, especially, academic literature; therefore, this finding makes a contribution to the theory by adding to the previous literature, which has only been in the form of media, industry and commentary reports (TI, 2008; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012, OccupyGhana, 2014; Imani, 2015; Bawomia, 2015; Addo, 2015). Moreover, although these findings appear surprising as earlier studies have not identified them as important factors, given that the study is conducted in the public sector in a typical developing country, they are not surprising, as these countries have always been among the worst performing countries in corruption-free public sector league tables (see Transparency International (TI), 2008).

Furthermore, the political interference finding provides a unique contribution to the academic literature in the Ghanaian context as previous literature on the subject has been in the form of industry reports and media commentary (see Meet the Press, 2009; Takyi-Boadu, 2011; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012). Closely related to political interference is management and administrative practices. Prior literature has discussed this factor in relation to the management of the projects (Mochal, 2005; World Bank Report, 2007; Lever, 2008; Ruuska & Teigland, 2009); however, this study has identified another dimension to the project management literature by espousing management and administrative practices linked directly and indirectly to political leadership in project management. This is a unique contribution to the literature.

Additionally, the study has espoused bureaucracy as a major factor that contributes to Ghanaian government project failure – this is country-specific contribution; it can be applied in many countries with similar systems. Prior studies have espoused this problem in the Ghanaian institutional system (Killick, 2008; Amoako & Lyon, 2014); however, it has not been discussed in the context of project management within the Ghanaian local context.

In addition, the 32 factors identified as causes of Ghanaian government project failure were classified into four groups – namely, leadership, management and administration practices, resources, and external forces. These groupings were made based on the themes that were arrived at during the interview analysis phase. In the group ranking, contractors, PMP and the general public unanimously agreed that poor leadership is the most influential cause of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by poor management and administrative practices, low resources, and external forces respectively. This shows that leadership and project management and administrative practices are more influential in causing Ghanaian government projects to fail as compared to resources and external forces. Further, leadership in previous research related to the management and administrative (executors) perspective (Perkins, 2006; Hwang & Ng, 2013), whereas leadership in this study mainly pertains to political leadership and/or government officials' leadership. Even though external forces came last, it must be noted that the managers and leaders of Ghanaian government projects need to pay attention to such forces as they are beyond their control.

### **7.3 EFFECTS OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE ON KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

The third objective of this study was to identify the effects of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders associated with such projects and their relative importance. The study identified 26 possible effects of Ghanaian government projects failure on key stakeholders. These are: it slows down economic growth, loss of revenue by state, unemployment, bad image for government, collapse of local businesses, cost

escalation, government sector underdevelopment, loss of foreign aid/grants, discourages investment, stricter donor regulations, loss of election, financial institutions lose confidence in the state, loss of revenue by the citizens, lack of capacity, sub-standard infrastructure, it slow down citizens' human empowerment, loss of worker hours, pollution, armed robbery and theft, relocation of services, denial of citizens' basic rights, loss of properties, emotional stress on citizens, accidents and deaths, imprisonment, and abandonment of homes.

The findings indicate that, whilst some of the effects are associated with specific projects and/or industry, others cut across all government projects. For example, whilst teenage pregnancy is linked directly to educational project failure, loss of a general election by the incumbent party in government is general to all government project failure.

Furthermore, the study revealed that some of these effects are direct whilst others are indirect. Thus, the findings show that the effects are interrelated and sequential – one effect could lead to another effect and in that order. For example, if the direct effect of government project failure is unemployment, the indirect effects would be social vices such as armed robbery and theft, and lack of capacity (human resources).

In addition, the study ranked all these effects using the average mean in order to find out the most important (severe) effects of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders associated with such projects. The findings indicated that the three categories of the study's participants agreed that the top 10 effects of Ghanaian government project failure on key stakeholders are: it slows down economic growth; loss of revenue by state; unemployment; cost escalation; bad image for government; collapse of local businesses; government sector underdevelopment; loss foreign aids/grants, discourages investment; and stricter donor regulations.

In the group rankings, contractors and PMP unanimously agreed that economic effect is the biggest effect of Ghanaian government project failure; this is followed by political, social and psychological effects respectively. The general public was, however, of the opinion that political effect is the biggest effect of such failure, followed by economic,

social and psychological respectively. Overall, economic effects were ranked number one, followed by social, political and psychological effects respectively.

Furthermore, the study intended to find out the key stakeholders who are affected the most by Ghanaian government project failure. The findings showed that the most affected stakeholders are the general public, followed by the government, contractors, local businesses, financial institutions, consultants, and donor agencies respectively.

## **7.4 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings, it is recommended that Ghanaian government makes the monitoring of its projects a priority with minimal political interference. Thus, projects should be left with technocrats to manage public projects rather than political patronage. These should be independent body devoid of party politics. To reduce shoddy works (projects deliverables); independent laboratories should be allowed to test projects materials rather than the assemblies; which are part of government. Moreover, consultants who monitor and certify completion of Ghanaian government projects should be independent. Again, the part which has to be certified by government should constitute incumbent party and the opposition members of parliaments (MPs). This will help reduce partisanship, hence, being more independent.

Moreover, Ghanaian government projects should not be based on party manifesto but they should be based on national policy directives. In this case, all parties and policy think tanks should meet to devise national agenda on project implementation, and then it should be subject to parliamentary approval. This should become national development projects – so that individual political parties manifestos should be on “how they can achieve the national agenda” rather than coming out with their own manifesto on projects. This will ensure continuity of projects if there is change of government and/or projects leaders.

Further, it is important for the leadership of Ghanaian government projects to institute projects offices separate from government agencies. This will help reduce political interference and political patronage.

In addition, stricter laws need to be enacted by parliament to ensure that projects cannot be halted when there is change of government. These laws need to be enforced by the law enforcing agencies. Also, the role of national development planning commission to set out programmes and plan for development devoid of politics should be strengthened in order to reduce projects being halted with changes in government.

To ensure that funds are paid on time, government needs to ensure that projects funds are available and released from donor agencies before the commencement of projects. Similarly, to reduce payment delays, the government should reduce the bureaucratic processes involved in the procurement of Ghanaian government projects. The use of hardcopies of projects documents should be replaced with electronic ones; this will help reduce corruption and delays in accessing projects documents. This can also help easy access of projects documents by the media and the general public – this will help monitoring and transparency.

It can also be recommended that apart from national projects, the government should allow local communities to initiate their own local projects rather than being 'dump' on them. Government representatives at the local level should play advisory role. This will allow local ownership of projects, hence, local participation and patronage of deliverables of projects.

In relation to the effects, it is recommended that Ghanaian government project managers should reduce and/or avoid projects failure as failure has huge negative effects on the key stakeholders, especially the general public. If failure is reduce or avoided, the negative effects will not emerge. However, if they fail, there should be mitigation measures such as payment of compensation to local businesses by the government so that they can continue to stay in business.

Furthermore, parliament needs to enact a law that will prevent financial institutions from imprisoning of defaulted borrowers. However, there should be an independent

committee that can investigate to establish if business owners default payments are genuinely linked to such projects.

## **7.5 CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE**

The research makes a two-fold contribution to knowledge – theory and practice. Firstly, extant literature in project management and causes of projects failure has focused on three areas: generic view of project failure (Frimpong et al., 2003; Kaliba et al., 2009; Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Liu et al., 2011; Amid et al., 2012), private sector projects (Mangione, 2003), and public or government sector – but this group has concentrated mainly on projects in specific case(s) (Kumar & Best, 2006; Maubeta et al., 2008; Fabian & Amir, 2011; Patanakul., 2014), which makes these studies industry-specific by default; hence, they cannot be generalised. This study therefore contributes to project failure literature by studying government projects in general, which will make the research cross-industry, and hence it can be generalised.

Secondly, this research has used the general public as participants, and they have not been used before by researchers in prior studies of causes and effects of project failure. Previous studies have mainly used technocrats such as architects, quantity surveyors, and engineers, and contractors (e.g. Aibinu & Jagboro, 2002; Frimpong et al. 2003; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007; Kaliba et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2011; Pourrostan & Ismail, 2011; Patanakul, 2014). This study bridges the literature gap by using the general public as part of the study's participants, thereby adding a new and unique lens to the literature in the field. The use of general public is very vital to this study as they are the main beneficiaries of government projects and therefore, whatever the performance of the projects are, would have impact on their lives – directly or indirectly.

Thirdly, extant literature in project management and effects of projects failure focuses on project completion (Aibinu & Jagboro, 2002; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007; Pourrostan & Ismail, 2011; Zhang, 2013) without looking at the effects on stakeholders associated with such projects. This study has bridged this gap in the literature by focusing on

effects on the stakeholders associated with such projects. In all, 26 effects of project failure on key stakeholders associated with such projects have been identified.

Fourthly, earlier research has made assertions about effects of project failure on some specific groups (stakeholders) (Ngacho & Das, 2014; Yang, 2014); they have not looked at key stakeholders in general. Specifically, Ngacho and Das (2014) and Yang (2014) have mentioned local communities as those who are impacted by project performances; however, these were not fully studied, neither did the authors compare the local community (which can be equated to the general public) to other key stakeholders associated with such projects. By comparing the most affected key stakeholders of Ghanaian government project failure; this study has made a unique contribution to project management literature.

Moreover, this research has also espoused politics, corruption and political leadership as major factors of project failure. Prior studies have not given much attention to these areas, although project leadership has looked at them, but not in the direction of political leadership of projects. Additionally, the research has highlighted factors such as culture and belief systems. Prior studies have espoused culture as a major factor for project failure in developing countries; however, these are in relation to management practices, frameworks and models for project implementation (Heeks, 2002, 2006; Saad et al., 2002; Muriithi & Crawford, 2003; Alsakini et al., 2004; Maube et al., 2008; Amid et al., 2012), whilst this study has linked culture in the form of belief systems.

In addition, this study contributes to the project management literature by espousing bureaucracy as a major factor that contributes to project failure. This is a country-specific contribution; it can be applied in many countries with similar systems. Even though these prior studies have espoused bureaucracy as a major problem in the country (Killick, 2008; Amoako & Lyon, 2014), it has not be discussed in the context of project management, and therefore this provides a unique finding that contributes to the project management literature within the local context.

Again, this study contributes to the academic and practical fields of project failure, causes and effects of project failure in Ghana and developing countries in general. This

gives country-specific contributions to knowledge that can be used by both academia and practitioners on how to manage Ghanaian government projects. Specifically, factors such as political interference in the local context have only been identified in industry reports and media commentary, and therefore this study provides a unique contribution to the local context in the academic field.

Furthermore, this research has provided statistical evidence to support claims of project failure, causes of project failure and effects of projects failure on key stakeholders of Ghanaian government projects. Practising managers and policy makers of Ghanaian government projects can use this as a guide during project management in order to reduce project failure and its subsequent effects on key stakeholders.

In addition, given that most of the findings related to political leadership, it will serve as guide for project management practitioners to develop the skills necessary to manage political leaders as well as government officials, in order to reduce and/or avoid project failure in future. This will help them to manage both the projects and other key stakeholders associated with them.

Lastly, since this study followed a rigorous and robust research design, this allows for the research to be replicated in other countries and/or industries, enabling cross-sector comparative studies to be made.

## **7.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

Like any research project, this research has a number of limitations. The data collected for this study were based on a two-stage approach (sequential sampling technique) employing semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. Although there was control over the choice of interviewees, there was no control over the completion of the questionnaires. Nonetheless, all necessary efforts were made to make sure that the questionnaire was mailed direct to the right person or it was given to the participant in person by the researcher. Nevertheless, this may not necessarily guarantee that the questionnaires were, in actual fact, completed by the intended person, as the researcher was not present whilst they were completed. This may lead to bias in the

findings, but this can be deemed minimal and as such does not affect the overall findings.

Further, this research used simple random selection of the questionnaire participants. However, to reduce the impact of this limitation, the sample size for the contractors and PMP was increased from 87 to 300 using Yamane's sample size calculations formula. More so, it was economically and practically impossible to sample the whole country; however, this limitation was reduced by picking 20 respondents from each region, which is within the quota sampling technique (Saunders et al, 2012). Although this does not guaranteed bias-free responses, it was performed to improve regional representation and as such does not affect the overall findings.

In addition, the participants in the three categories were not equal, and therefore this could affect the mean average of the various statistical calculations made. In order to reduce the impact of this limitation, a non-parametric test was used, which means that the samples from each categories of respondents might not necessarily be equal (Field, 2012); however, this does not affect the findings.

## **7.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This research has contributed to the project management literature by investigating the extent of project failure, and causes and effects of project failure in developing countries by using Ghana as a case study. This has addressed a number of gaps in the literature; however, from the findings, it is clear that further research needs to be conducted in future to address issues that were espoused.

First and foremost, the study did not compare the various industries within government projects as this was not within the scope of this research. Therefore, further research needs to look at the various industries in the economy in order to compare their individual performance. This can be done by making a comparative study of project failure in Ghanaian government sectors. This can help policy makers to know on which

sectors to focus the most in reducing and/or avoiding Ghanaian government project failure in the country and other developing countries in general.

Secondly, the findings linked most of the causes to politics, especially party politics, as a root cause of Ghanaian government project failure, and therefore this needs further investigation, to find out the link between government project failure and politics. An empirical studying of the relationship between politics and project failure in Ghanaian government projects is recommended. This can be carried out through correlation analysis.

Thirdly, given that corruption was mentioned by all interviewees as a cause of government project failure, and subsequently ranked as the second most influential factor, it is surprising that little has been researched about it, hence, the need for further investigation into the phenomenon. This can be achieved by exploring how corruption affects Ghanaian government project failure and the cost associated with this.

In addition, this research has established that most of the causes of Ghanaian government project failure are in the area of leadership; however, this is not management leadership but political leadership. Nevertheless, little has been researched on political leadership, and therefore future research can look into this by researching how political leadership of Ghanaian government projects influences their performance.

## **7.8 SUMMARY**

This chapter has presented a summary of the entire research by highlighting the main findings of the research, and the main contributions to both theory and practice. It has also identified the limitations of the research and the areas which require further research.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: Semi-structured Interview Guide

### **(A) GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT PERFORMANCE**

1. Can you explain to me if Ghanaian government projects achieve the following targets: time, budget and requirements?
2. How would you evaluate government project performance in terms of its benefits to the general public?
3. How would you evaluate Ghanaian government projects' contribution to the sectors in which they are implemented?

### **(B) CAUSES OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE**

4. What are the causes of Ghanaian government project failure?
5. Identify Ghanaian government project management practices that hinder success.
6. How would you describe the involvement of citizens in the implementation of government projects?
7. What is the role of media in the implementation of government projects?

### **(C) EFFECTS OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECTS FAILURE ON STAKEHOLDERS**

8. What are the effects of these failures on the various stakeholders of Ghanaian government projects?
9. How would you explain the effects of government project failure on national development?

**(D) LINK BETWEEN CAUSES OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECTS  
FAILURE AND THEIR EFFECTS ON STAKEHOLDERS**

10. Is there any link between any of the causes and the effects of Ghanaian government projects? If yes, how?
11. How would you assess the link(s), if any, in terms of their strength (strong, moderate and minimum)?
12. Can you explain which ones have a direct link and which ones have an indirect link?
13. Give your overall comment on causes and effects of government project failure.

## APPENDIX B: Questionnaire



Dear Respondents,

I am a PhD student of Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) - UK. I am carrying out a research project on: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF PROJECT FAILURE IN GOVERNMENT PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: GHANA AS A CASE STUDY.

I would be grateful if you could help me by responding to the questionnaire below.

I assure you that information you provide shall be treated confidentially.

By completing this questionnaire, it implies that you consent to participate in this research.

Thanks for your anticipated co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Isaac Sakyi Damoah

Isaac Sakyi Damoah

**PART A****DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Date.....

Please tick as appropriate

1. Age: (a) Below 20  (b) 20 - 30  (c) 31 – 40  (d) 41-50  (e) Above 50 2. Sex: Male  Female 3. Region where you live. (a) Greater Accra  (b) Ashanti  (c) Brong-Ahafo  (d) Eastern  (e) Central  (f) Volta  (g) Western  (h) Upper- East  (i) Upper-West  (j) Northern 4. What is your highest educational qualification or nearest equivalent? (a) High school  (b) HND  (c) Bachelor  (d) Master's degree  (e) Professional qualification  (f) PhD  (g) Others .....

5. What is your level of position at work?

Corporate management   
  Senior management   
  Junior management   
  Supervisory   
  Subordinate   
  Others (Specify).....

6. Which of these categories best describe you? (Please tick only 1) (i) Contractor  (ii) Project management practitioner  (iii) General public 

7. How many years of work experience do you have?

	Less than 1 year	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	31-35 years	36-40 years	Other years .....
Current position	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>							
General experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>								

8. What sector do you work in? (1) Public  (2) Private  (3) NGO  (4) Not working  (5) Others (please specify).....

9. Which industry does your company operate in? (i) Retail/Wholesale  (ii) Manufacturing  (iii) Construction  (iv) Service  (v) Agriculture  (vi) Mining  (vii) Others (Please specify) .....

Isaac Sakyi Damoah

**PART B****GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT PERFORMANCE**

How do you rate the achievement of Ghanaian government projects goals in relation to the following, with 1 being the least achievement and 5 the highest achievement?

	1	2	3	4	5	don't know
Cost	<input type="radio"/>					
Time	<input type="radio"/>					
Deliverables	<input type="radio"/>					
Stakeholder satisfaction	<input type="radio"/>					
Contribution to the where the project is being implemented	<input type="radio"/>					
National development	<input type="radio"/>					

**PART C****CAUSES OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE**

To what extent do you agree that the following factors influence the failure of Ghanaian government projects? (Please tick (√)).

	<b>Causes</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
1	Planning						
2	Monitoring						
3	Change in project leadership						
4	Selection of project managers						
5	Project team formation						
6	Task definition						
7	User involvement						
8	Project management techniques						
9	Commitment to project						
10	Requirement						
11	Definition of specification						
12	Scope change						
13	Procurement processes						
14	Feasibility studies						
15	Release of funds						
16	Project funding						
17	Labour						
18	Communication						
19	Management practices						
20	Supervision						
21	Bureaucracy						
22	Lack of continuity						
23	Political interference						
24	Corruption						
25	Regulations						
26	Pressure groups (media, NGOs, political activities, etc.)						
27	Change in government						
28	Natural disaster						
29	Culture and belief systems						
30	Fluctuation of prices						
31	Capacity						
32	Delays in payments						

**PART D****EFFECTS OF GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT FAILURE ON KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

1. To what extent do you agree that the following statements of effects on Ghanaian government project failure have on the key stakeholders of such projects? (Please tick (v)).

	<b>Effects</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
1	Loss of revenue by state						
2	Emotional stress on citizens						
3	It slows down citizens' human empowerment						
4	Government sector underdevelopment						
5	Collapse of local businesses						
6	Loss of election						
7	It slows down economic growth						
8	Loss foreign Aids/grants						
9	Financial institutions lose confidence in the state						
10	Unemployment						
11	Loss of revenue by the citizen's						
12	Stricter donor regulations						
13	Cost escalation						
14	Lack of capacity						
15	Loss of worker hours						
16	Sub-standard infrastructure						
17	Discourages investment						
18	Relocation of services						
19	Accidents & Deaths						
20	Denial of citizens' basic rights						
21	Armed robbery and theft						
22	Abandonment of homes						
23	Loss of properties						
24	Bad image for government						
25	Pollution						
26	Imprisonment						

2. Rank the various stakeholders of government projects in terms of how they are affected by Ghanaian government project failure from 1 to 7; with 1 being the least affected and 7 the most affected. (Please write only one figure in against each stakeholder.)

- i. Government ( )
- ii. Citizens/general public ( )
- iii. Contractors ( )
- iv. Consultants ( )
- v. Financial institutions ( )
- vi. Local business ( )
- vii. Donor agencies ( )

Thank you

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## APPENDIX C: NVivo 10 Data Analysis

The screenshot displays the NVivo 10 software interface. The main window shows a table titled "Causes of Ghana Government Project Failure" with columns for Name, Sources, References, Created On, Created By, Modified On, and Modified By. The table lists various causes such as Leadership, Lack of continuity, Politics, Feasibility studies, Lack of leadership commitment, Scope change, Management and Administrative practices, Corruption, Bureaucracy, Planning, Monitoring, Selection of project managers, release of payment, disbursement of funds, Communication, Supervision, Changes in project leadership, Bureaucracy, Resources, and Labour.

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Leadership	1	21	03/12/2013 11:11	D	03/12/2013 11:11	D
Lack of continuity	1	7	03/12/2013 11:12	D	07/12/2013 16:47	D
Politics	1	5	03/12/2013 11:12	D	07/12/2013 16:46	D
Feasibility studies	1	9	03/12/2013 15:11	D	07/12/2013 16:05	D
Lack of leadership commitment	1	2	07/12/2013 12:28	D	07/12/2013 12:30	D
Scope change	1	3	07/12/2013 12:42	D	07/12/2013 16:55	D
Management and Administrative practices	1	39	03/12/2013 11:17	D	03/12/2013 11:17	D
Corruption	1	10	03/12/2013 11:17	D	07/12/2013 16:54	D
Bureaucracy	1	3	03/12/2013 11:19	D	07/12/2013 16:04	D
Planning	1	4	03/12/2013 11:18	D	07/12/2013 16:02	D
Monitoring	1	1	03/12/2013 11:18	D	07/12/2013 16:07	D
Selection of project managers	1	1	03/12/2013 11:20	D	07/12/2013 14:10	D
release of payment	1	13	03/12/2013 12:40	D	07/12/2013 16:57	D
disbursement of funds	1	6	03/12/2013 12:40	D	07/12/2013 16:38	D
Communication	1	2	05/12/2013 10:44	D	07/12/2013 12:37	D
Supervision	1	3	05/12/2013 10:59	D	07/12/2013 17:02	D
Changes in project leadership	1	2	07/12/2013 12:32	D	07/12/2013 12:34	D
Bureaucracy	1	3	07/12/2013 12:36	D	07/12/2013 13:53	D
Resources	1	13	03/12/2013 11:20	D	03/12/2013 11:20	D
Labour	1	4	03/12/2013 16:01	D	07/12/2013 16:05	D

## APPENDIX D.CONSENT FORM

### LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY



### CONSENT FORM

*Title of Project:* **AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF PROJECT FAILURE IN GOVERNMENT PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: GHANA AS A CASE STUDY**

*Name of Researcher and School/Faculty:* **Isaac Sakyi Damoah; (LJMU Business School)**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and that this will not affect my legal rights.

3. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be anonymised and remain confidential.

4. I agree to take part in the above study.

5. I agree that any information I give can be published

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Name of Person taking consent

Date

Signature

Isaac Sakyi Damoah

## APPENDIX E. PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET

### LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY QUESTIONNAIRE



You are invited to participate in a Research Project that is explained below. Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

*“ You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it involves. Please take time to read the following information. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide if you want to take part or not.”*

Mr Isaac Sakyi Damoah (Liverpool Business School)

**Title of Project: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF PROJECT FAILURE IN GOVERNMENT PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: GHANA AS A CASE STUDY**

#### 1. Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this research is to reduce project failure rate in government projects in developing countries.

#### 2. Participants

This is a voluntary participation. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do you will be given this information sheet and asked to sign a consent form. You are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw will not affect your rights/any future treatment/service you receive.”

#### 3. What will happen to participants

This is a semi-structured interview and will take approximately 30mins. You may not feel comfortable with some of the questionnaire/questions.

#### 4. Risks / benefits involved

There will not be risk of reviewing personal identity going to be seen by others that will risk your life or career or any relations. Data is for academic research purpose only.

Isaac Sakyi Damoah

**5. Confidentiality**

Data from this research will be treated in the strictest confidence.

**6. Contact Details of Researcher**

You should return completed forms to me.