

## **INVESTIGATING THE CHANGING ROLE WITHIN PM TEAMS IN AEC PROJECTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The role of project management teams in the AEC sector has seen a transformation within the last two decades from a traditional single function and discipline driven to current and emerging roles whereby multi-functional skills are becoming the norm. The contemporary AEC environment constitutes a new reality which challenges the traditional organisational structures deployed by the industry in managing projects. This paper presents a study that explores the changing role of project management teams in distributed environments, a situation that is prevalent in construction. The study investigates how various actors within project environments, that reflect distributed working, see the changes in their role they perform. The research is conducted among six large construction organisations comprising clients, contractors, consultants by adopting a hybrid research methodology, based on a quantitative exploratory survey and a qualitative descriptive case study. The research concluded that although the traditional organisation structure is still in use, construction projects tend to orient themselves towards flatter, less hierarchical, more open and flexible forms of organisation. The general view that emerged from the study suggests a shift in the ‘power’ within projects to a more egalitarian culture in construction, where teams and individuals are not managed on the grounds of hierarchy or authority, but their common sharing of values, goals and beliefs.

**KEYWORDS:** construction industry, organisational structures, project management teams, survey, case study.