

Internal and external stakeholders



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is an ambitious goal which requires, among other efforts, new kinds of governance and decision making process involving a large variety of stakeholders (Irwin et al., 1994; Loorbach and Rotmans, 2006). Modern day world is dominated by power sharing and competition. Project managers need to be efficient not only in delivering projects, the real test of their skills is how they manage project stakeholders and cater to their ever changing expectations. Stakeholders will influence the overall outcome of the project. Freeman (1984, p. 46) defined stakeholder as “ Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organizations objectives.’ Each project would have different stakeholders, objectives, hence sustainable development would differ accordingly. Olander (2007, p. 279) defines stakeholders in two categories- “ Internal Stakeholders, who are those actively involved in project execution and “ External Stakeholders” who are those affected by the project. Stakeholder engagement plays a vital role in achieving sustainability and it has to be defined so to obtain maximum benefits.

The paper highlights how the various forms of Stakeholder Engagement in Construction projects(As a Management Perspective, Ethical Perspective) and a combination of the above two forum for dialogue of values to encourage social learning, how the various forms leads to different benefits for sustainability and its assessment. However if sustainability needs to be achieved a new formula needs to be developed that would include benefits of the both the above process with the inclusion of a social learning concept. Social learning is basically a process which can be seen as a common

platform where all stakeholders share their views, work towards a common vision, get to learn about each other. The key challenge to plan for sustainability is to facilitate a dialogue which encourages reflection of various claims in a framework where these can be openly debated..

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Three dimensions of Stakeholder engagement are highlighted on this topic. They are Stakeholder engagement as a management technique, ethical perspective and a dialogue for social learning. The first dimension classifies stakeholders as people who influence the outcome of projects and project managers need to manage both stakeholders who are part of it and stakeholders who will be influenced by the project, draw a fine line between the varying expectations of diverse stakeholders. This view leads to reduced conflicts, increases sharing of information and brings about innovative ideas. The second dimension views stakeholders as citizen or tax-payers whose views need to be considered in the decision making process. Ethical perspective focuses on public participation, promote the principle of fairness and impartiality, and include ideas of all players concerned. The third dimension is the most crucial one which will shape the outcome of sustainability. Stakeholder engagement as a Dialogue of Values creates a platform where all stakeholders can understand each other's views, work towards common objectives, build mutual trust and respect each other's opinions. Social learning process would involve discussing all issues concerned and possible solutions to mitigate them. Sustainability would be achieved only when Stakeholder engagement is viewed as a dialogue of values. The focus then shifts to sustainability and its assessment.

Sustainability assessment is an emerging concept which can be viewed as EIA (Environmental Impact assessment), Objectives led approach both which are conclusive to suggest a method is sustainable or not. Assessment of Sustainability would require clear guidelines based on the principles of sustainability and it should not be a separate process but it should be coupled within the decision making process.

CONCLUSION

Sustainability Assessment is an evolving concept and Stakeholder engagement process needs to be defined clearly with more emphasis on dialogue among various stakeholders. The sustainability assessment process should be designed clearly to pursue the objectives of sustainable agenda. More research is required in the field of sustainability assessment. A dialogue oriented approach is the best way of achieving sustainable assessment as it creates an atmosphere for stakeholders to converge and share their opinions, respect each other's traditions and views. Stakeholder engagement when chosen through the social learning process will form the key to attaining sustainable development.

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