Journal of Human Resource & Leadership

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ISSN: 2616- 8421

Stratford Peer Reviewed Journals and Book Publishing
Journal of Human Resource & Leadership
Volume 4||Issue 2||Page 30-47 ||June||2020|
Email: info@stratfordjournals.org ISSN: 2616-8421

Project Management Practices, Corporate Governance and Sustainability: A Critical Literature Review

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***How to cite this article*: Owuori P, J., Ngala, M., & Obwatho S. (2020): Project Management Practices, Corporate Governance and Sustainability: A Critical Literature Review. *Journal of Human Resource & Leadership,* Vol 4(2) pp. 30-47.**

Abstract

The relationship between project management and sustainability is rapidly gaining interest from professionals and academics. Achievement of a project means that a number of its perceived factors are attained. While the success of a project largely depends on the way it is managed and controlled, it is not guaranteed that application of project management practices will result in project success. The challenges met during the execution of project management practices has been during project planning, exceeding the set budget and going beyond its set schedule and poor quality. Project managers, logically, strive for project success and considering sustainability may influence this success. Studies on the integration of sustainability concepts into the management of projects generally address the topic from a conceptual, logical or moral point of view. Given that the relationship between sustainability and project management is still an emerging field of study, these approaches make sense. The paper develops a conceptual model that provides a more detailed understanding of how considering different dimensions of sustainability may affect the individual criteria of project success. The study also provides a conceptual mapping of the different relationships between dimensions of sustainability and criteria of project success. This mapping shows that the most positive relationships are expected for the relationship between sustainability and the success criteria stakeholder satisfaction, future readiness and controlled project execution. The expected relationship between considering sustainability and completing the project on schedule and within budget is uncertain. The need for studies on the convergence of sustainability

issues and project management, coupled with the increasing importance of both on the current business environment, as well as its relationship with success in projects, motivates this paper which seeks to contribute to the development of the sustainability issues in project management and success in projects. Thus, this study focuses on the alignment of these themes, with the aim of systematizing a theoretical framework that can evidence constructs of sustainability in project management with orientation to success in project. It is anticipated that the paper's postulations would guide empirical research in various contexts to hasten addressing of the extant knowledge gaps.

Keywords: *Project Management Practices, Corporate Governance, Sustainability, Projects*

Introduction

The concept of sustainability has been linked to project management in prior research (Gareis, Huemann, & Martinuzzi, 2013; Silvius, Schipper, Planko, van den Brink, & Köhler, 2012; Silvius, Schipper, & Nedeski, 2014; Martens & de Cavalho, 2014; Tufinio, Mooi, Ravestijn, Bakker & Boorsma, 2013; Marcelino-Sádaba, González-Jaen & Pérez-Ezcurdia, 2015), with more than 200 publications (articles, conference papers, books, book chapters) written up to date mostly dating from the past five years (Økland, 2015). This sudden growth in interest can be explained in terms of the emergence of this field as well as a shift in terminology from CSR to "sustainability" or variations of the word "sustainable" as focus has moved away from enterprise and supply chain to projects (Økland, 2015). Since project management entails the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet pre-set requirements (PMI, 2013), sustainability is ought to be applied to all these components.

Literature has attempted to provide a definition to sustainability in project management through a multitude of dimensions suggested and discussed by various authors (Turner, 2010; Goedknegt & Silvius, 2012; Gareis, 2013; Silvius *et al.*, 2012; Økland, 2015). To implement sustainability into project management, decisions need to be made at multiple levels of the society, ranging from a private individual level to a business level and a national as well as international communities and organizations level. This requires better communication amongst firms, between firms and consumers as well as between firms and authorities leading to improved cooperation. Rules, regulations, standards and processes set up by authorities can often represent barriers at national or international level to the implementation of sustainability into project management processes (Marcelino-Sadaba *et al*., 2015). Nevertheless, studies show that local and regional governments can often facilitate the design and application of sustainable practices to projects (Brandoni & Polonara, 2012). It's interesting to point out that Goedknegt and Silvius (2012) treat stakeholders and participation as two separate principles.

The upsurge in interest to incorporate sustainability in project management is given by the many benefits projects offer as vehicles towards addressing the challenges imposed by a range of unsustainability threats (Marcelino-Sadaba *et al*., 2015). Projects are frequently utilized as means of realizing objectives within an organization's strategic plan (PMI, 2013). Furthermore, they are perceived as optimum means to bring about change both to industry practices and industry culture (Silvius et al., 2012). Since they connect the present and the future of a company, they have the potential to transform today's objectives into real future outcomes (Marcelino-Sadaba *et al*., 2015). Projects improve connections between sustainable initiatives and corporate strategy, which are essential for achieving organizational success (Porter & Kramer, 2006). The potential held by

projects in attaining a more sustainable future is also given by their significant share in the world's economic activities as nearly one third of the world's gross domestic product (total GDP) is realized through projects (Økland, 2015). Along with scholars, practitioners have also expressed an interest in understanding the linkage between sustainable development and project management (Silvius *et al*., 2014). Association for Project Management's (APM) President Tom Taylor along with International Project Management Association's (IPMA) Vice-President Mary McKinlay have both called for Project and Programme Managers' to take responsibility for and contribute towards Sustainable Management practices (Silvius *et al.*, 2013).

Project Management Practices

Project management practices can be characterized as those key issues inborn in the project, which must be observed to ensure efficiency in the execution of the project. These practices need everyday consideration and work through the duration of the undertaking. They are essential issues inherent in the project, which must be maintained for an efficient and effective implementation of the project. Some of the fundamental practices in project management include: stakeholders' involvement, capacity building, top management support and funding (Ocharo & Kimutai, 2018). Ahmed, Mohamad and Ahmad (2016) observe that leadership is an effective tool to be used by the project manager which moderately influences project outcomes, otherwise, lack of leadership skills is directly associated with project failure. Haque and Anwar (2012) observe that top management needs to support project activities and project teams and take the leadership role. The authors further observed that top management commitment was essential for improving project performance in Pakistan. Another important factor that accounts for the success of any project, according to Lester (2006), is effective communication. The effectiveness of project communication depends on the quality of the communication flows. The quality of communication all through the project life cycle can be described as the degree to which appropriate information reaches the intended information sources/receivers at the right time.

Management of resources is another key aspect of project management practice. Resources are scarce, therefore it important to carefully allocate them in order to obtain the desired results of the project. Meredith, Mantel Jr, and Shafer (2017) observe that the result of resource allocation enhances planned start and completion dates for each project activity, dates on which each resource will be required and the level of that requirement and planned cumulative expenditure incurred by the use of resources over time. Allocation of resources leads to review and modification of the project plan, revise stages, project completion dates (Selaru, 2012). Stakeholders bring a wide range of skills, knowledge, and experiences to the project and if they are well managed, they can help to make the project more successful (Bourne, 2006). The success or failure of many conventional development projects and programmes has been attributed to stakeholders' inclusion or lack of involvement in the project cycle management.

Despite an increase in the number of publications focused around sustainability and project management, the existence of a gap between models, tools and frameworks suggested by academic articles and practice recommended by standards, is evident (Økland, 2015; Tufinio *et al*., 2013). The lack of consideration of sustainability in major project management frameworks such as Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK®), PRINCE2® and ISO 21500:2012 also hinders project managers' ability to deliver projects sustainably (Marcelino-Sadaba *et al*., 2015). In lieu of the above, there is a need for further studies to clarify concepts and bring about unanimity over sustainability considerations that ought to be made by project managers. Prior to exploring

ways to link sustainable development to project management, one needs to understand the 'natural differences' between the characteristics of the two fields to successfully implement the former field in the latter one (Silvius *et al*., 2014).

Given the universally accepted definition of a project, as a "temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result" (PMI, 2013), the short-term orientation of projects is evident, conflicting the short and long-term orientation inherent to sustainable development. Furthermore, the projects' focus on deliverables or results is contradictory to the life cycle orientation central to sustainable development (Silvius *et al*., 2012). If the two fields are fused together, project management would need to stretch its system boundaries beyond its project life cycle (initiation, planning, execution, control and close-out) by also considering the project's result called the asset, the product or service produced by the asset and their corresponding lifecycles. Since the three life cycles, the project, the asset and the product life cycle interact and relate to each other, sustainability thinking in project management requires the involvement of all three considerations with the additional benefit of simultaneously allowing for a long-term perspective (Labuschagne & Brent, 2005). A further dissimilarity that needs to be addressed is the emphasis of project management on the interests of the sponsors versus the focus of sustainable development on the interest of present and future generations (Silvius *et al*., 2012). This difference can be eliminated through project decisions that take into consideration the interest of all stakeholders. Since the effect of a project may outlive the project itself, additional stakeholder groups may be formed during project execution, which were not existent when decisions were made, or activities were carried out.

Therefore, to adopt sustainable thinking, project managers need to contemplate the interests of both current and future stakeholders (Økland, 2015). Similarly, projects are built around considerations of scope, time, and budget whereas the building pillars of sustainable development are people, planet, profit (three Ps) (Silvius et al., 2012; Silvius *et al*., 2014). To tackle this dissimilarity, project managers need to additionally balance and harmonize the economic, social and environmental interests of each project delivered (Silvius *et al*., 2012; Silvius *et al*., 2014; Økland, 2015). Finally, traditional project management tools and practices intend to reduce complexity through the breakdown of various deliverables, schedules, processes and responsibilities whereas sustainable development increases complexity by considering the interrelations between multiple projects as well as dimensions (Silvius *et al*., 2012). To incorporate sustainability thinking into projects, project management needs to embrace this complexity and allow for multiple considerations to be made during project management decision-making.

Corporate Governance

Governance defines roles, responsibilities and accountability within an organization according to Dunphy, Griffiths and Benn (2013). According to Sisulu (2012), governance is the act of establishing policies, through continuous monitoring of proper implementation, by the executive in power of the governing body of an organization. Corporate governance, according to Blenko, Mankins and Rogers (2010), is operationalized as the means of human development that is achieved from managing of social and economic resources by empowering others. In the current political pluralism, corporate governance has been of critical importance (Bloom & Van Reenen, 2007). It is an essential and crucial factor that is mainly used in maintenance of an active balance between equality in society and the need for order.

Good governance has eight elements or characteristics, according to Mangena, Tauringana and Chamisa (2012). The characteristics include transparency, participation, rule of law, accountability, being responsive, effective and efficient, consensus oriented and inclusiveness. Good governance creates the conditions in which managers and service providers are more likely to exercise leadership in health services organization. When managers and service providers are empowered, they deal with change effectively, seek and create opportunities, provide a vision, motivate, inspire, and energize people and develop more leaders like them. Good governance provides purpose, resources, and accountability in support of management, enabling organizations to achieve strategic objectives (Kibua & Mwabu, 2016). One's ownership, commitment, level of empowerment, power of imitativeness, level of professionalism, motivation levels and morale are what great organizational autonomy is comprised of.

Sustainability

Sustainability is the developing of environmental, social and economic resources in a way that meets the needs of the current and future generations. Silvius *et al.* (2012) suggests that sustainability is more concerned about the way things are currently produced, consumed and organized as having a negative impact to the environment, the biggest concern in sustainability is the depletion of natural resources (Silvius *et al*., 2014). Sustainability is made up of three bottom line components; environmental sustainability which requires that the environmental sources should not be dissolved, social sustainability requires the society to work together towards the common goal so that their individual needs are catered for and economic sustainability which occurs when environmental and social sustainability are catered for (Silvius *et al*., 2012).These concepts are interrelated and therefore have influence over one another in a number of ways.

Sustainability is mainly focused on the long-term bases of the situation, while project management is usually for the duration of the project. Sustainability focuses on integrating the economic, environmental and social aspects, while project management is about time, cost and quality. Failure of project management standards to address sustainability (competency) makes it difficult to apply sustainability in projects (Silvius *et al*., 2014). Silvius *et al*., (2014) further states that sustainability in project management is about considering the full life cycle of the project. Integrating economic, environmental and social aspects in the management of projects may change the project management profession. Project managers are concerned that the incorporation of sustainability in project management will not only affect the project management practices but also the project manager's competencies (Silvius *et al*., 2014).

Sustainability is an important component that can contribute to institutional profitability and hence should be considered in project management. Therefore, the importance of proactively linking the concept of project sustainability within the entire project life cycle rather than leaving sustainability to chance (Gardiner, 2016; Ozguler & Yilmaz, 2016). However, an apparent research gap exists in literature regarding sustainability and its contribution to project management therefore unsustainable practices may continue to persist if the dearth in literature continues (Labuschagne & Brent, 2005). Therefore, the article aims to bridge the existing knowledge gap between sustainability and project management by proposing and legitimizing a new research framework for 'project sustainability management'.

Stratford Peer Reviewed Journals and Book Publishing
Journal of Human Resource & Leadership
Volume 4||Issue 2||Page 30-47 ||June||2020|
Email: info@stratfordjournals.org ISSN: 2616-8421

Project Management Practices and Sustainability

Project is a short-term task carried out to generate products or services that are distinct within a definite ending point, and unique means and are done to are carried out in line with the strategic objectives of the organization (Ohara, 2005). Projects are executed in different ways and are different from each other in terms of size, scope, industry and as per the observation by Bradley (2012) all organizations anticipate that projects to be executed within a shorter period possible, within minimum cost but of better quality. In this regard, effective project management practices are the only means which can result to these because they lead to better management of all resources that are required for effect project performance.

Kerzner (2017) argued that it is difficult to put the knowledge into practice when project managers are not given consistent projects to work on or there is a long gap between the formal training and having a role as project managers delivering the project. When this occurs, the inability of the project managers to apply the knowledge of project management to real projects can often have a detrimental effect on project success when he does finally get the opportunity. Therefore, there is a need to train the managers on the relevant project management methods for high project efficiency and to achieve the project success. Ó Conchúir (2010) opines that it is difficult to practice what the PM preaches due to the three criteria (time, budget, and objectives) which affects project success. Ó Conchúir (2010 identified that the failure to implement project management techniques is due to the project managers not having adequate time to develop project products, access to or shortfall within budget and vague project objectives. Fong (2003) also stated that when the success of the project is measured by considering these three factors, different assumptions should also be considered, including boundary crossing between knowledge sharing, collective learning, and knowledge generation.

Lindner and Wald (2011) have elaborated another assumption in this regard and stressed that the success of the project depends on project managers practicing correct tools and techniques throughout the project life cycle. Kerzner (2017) referred to this with the assumption that the success of the project has an impact on stakeholders; however, it can only be measured when the actual output is delivered by the project manager at project completion. On the other hand, Ling, Low, Wang, and Lim (2009) asserted that the failure for project success is due to lack of knowledge of project management practices rather than the lack of ability to apply them.

Project Management involves various aspects that include how to plan, organize, monitor and control activities that comprising a project and the involvement of all the parties in order to attain the objectives of the project within set time, budget and performance metrics (Turner, 2016). According to Irefin (2013), all the firms value the idea of the management of the project because it provides an organized process of project control. It is also the best procedure in which dependable project results can be arrived at during execution of a new project and an influential tool that could enhance the ability of an organization to achieve better performance. The success of a project is arriving at what the clients expects from the project and all other parties involved and attaining the rationale of the project (Arslan & Kivrak, 2008). According Chua, Kog and Loh (1999) project success requires creating a proper project plan in terms of time to be taken as well as considering the key factors towards its success. It helps the project manager and the stakeholders to arrive at better decision and focus on the success of the project.

Sustainability integration at the project or operational level is necessary as the traditional project management techniques provide a limited consideration for sustainable development (Labuschagne & Brent, 2005). If realized, it can gain reputation for the project, reduce financial risks and potential litigations as well as develop a competitive edge (Schieg, 2009). Based on Willard's model (2005), the authors try to establish the difference between the constructs of 'sustainability projects/corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects' and 'project sustainability'. While undertaking CSR projects is a more reactive, short-term approach where organizations tend to cover up or compensate for the amount of bad done to people and the planet, project sustainability is a more proactive, long-term approach where organizations focus efforts towards doing good and delivering all projects sustainably.

Corporate Governance and Sustainability

Corporate governance is a key success factor for businesses, as it has been associated with improving sustainability performance and gaining trust of investors (Saltaji, 2013). The relationship between corporate governance and sustainability has been researched quite extensively separately, in terms of corporate governance and environment performance, corporate governance and social equity, and corporate governance and economic value. The sustainability performance of a firm is greatly influenced by its profile of corporate governance (Lawrence, Collins & Roper, 2013). Aras and Crowther (2008) argue that corporate governance and corporate sustainability are interlinked and fundamental to the continuing operation of any institution.

According to Shrivastava and Addas (2014), sound corporate governance itself can engender high sustainability performance. Good corporate governance mechanism always play significant role in ensuring management practices aligning with the interest of both shareholders and stakeholder. This includes the sustainability considerations and integration of economic, social and environmental concerns of the stakeholders into their business strategy and operations (Morioka & de Carvalho, 2016). In this way, the sound corporate governance increases not only financial performance, but also sustainability (social and environmental) performance (Docekalová & Kocmanová, 2016).

Recently, there has been a significant increase in the aspiration for achieving sustainable development goals worldwide. Sustainable development agenda has been the key concern for various governmental as well as non-governmental organizations. No business agenda is complete without referring to the concept of sustainability (Williams, 2010). Moreover, due to the growing awareness and demands for business behavior, the concept of sustainability has been even gradually transformed from a macro-environment issue into a mainstream business practice (Milne, Tregidga & Walton, 2009; Laine, 2010). There is a fundamental belief that that businesses can deal with sustainable development through better sustainability performance (Escrig-Olmedo Muñoz-Torres, Fernández-Izquierdo & Rivera-Lirio, 2017). Firms are being pressurized by, policy makers, investors, shareholders and stakeholders to adopt sustainable practices (Morioka & de Carvalho, 2016), that will further enhance their economic position in the long run.

Numerous research studies have focused on how corporate governance and sustainability contribute in firm' performance (Tornyeva & Wereko, 2012; Makki, Abdul & Lodhi, 2013; Makki & Lodhi, 2014), while some studies focused on the impact of sustainability disclosure on sustainability performance (Goyal, Rahman & Kazmi, 2013; Hummel & Schlick, 2016 and Rezaee, 2016). However, the empirical results of both types of researches are mixed, conflicting and inconclusive (Trumpp & Guenther, 2017). Considering the controversial nature of the results

for the relationships between firms' governance and performance, and sustainability and firm performance, there is a need to devise sound conceptual framework to investigate these relationships. Furthermore, the corporate governance research has ignored the impact of corporate governance on sustainability performance (Aras & Crowther, 2008) and the moderating role of corporate governance on the Project management practices and sustainability link (Shrivastava & Addas, 2014).

Project Management Practices, Corporate Governance and Sustainability

The concept of sustainable development within the project management context has continuously evolved over the past decade highlighting various views over the fundamentals that processes and procedures should build on. One of the first contributors to this field was Lambuschagne and Brent (2005), who revised project management frameworks in the process industry to include two core principles of sustainable development, which are intragenerational and intergenerational equity. This highlights early endeavors of introducing the spatial and temporal element of sustainable development in project management practices. Labuschagne and Brent (2005) argue that project evaluation criteria focuses on financial indicators with very limited questions on environmental factors and no mention of social factors. Therefore, their contribution to the field is made through the development of a model to assess projects based on the triple bottom line definition of sustainability.

In an attempt to relate sustainable development to project management while pointing out challenges and potentials to its implementation, Gareis, Huemann and Martinuzzi (2009) differentiate content-related definitions of sustainable development from process-related ones. The authors argue that the former present less relevance to the study of sustainability integration in project management as they are focused on contents of projects and their results (e.g. climate change, clean energy, public health, social inclusion) rather than the management of them. By contrast the latter provide for the guiding principles of sustainable development, which coincide with the fundamentals proposed by Labuschagne and Brent (2005) with an additional emphasis on values and ethics as well as risk reduction instead of accountability. Influential publications that followed are dated from the past five years, these being triggered by an increasing interest in developing models that can break down the existing barriers between the two fields. In a PMI (Project Management Institute) study centered around assessing how eight sustainability principles can be considered in order to improve the quality of the project assignment and of the project management process, the authors (Messikomer *et al*., 2011) referred to a simultaneous and balanced economic, ecologic and social orientation, as well as a temporal, spatial and value based orientation as principles that can offer possibilities and limits to sustainable development.

Following researches (Turner, 2010; Goedknegt & Silvius, 2012; Silvius *et al*., 2012; Gareis, 2013; Økland, 2015) build upon the aforementioned four principles identified by Massikomer *et al.* (2011), highlighting the core fundamentals that literature perceives as crucial for ensuring sustainability in projects and corresponding processes. An exception to this is Økland (2015) who disregards the principle of balancing and harmonizing the people, planet and profit pillars as well as value and ethical considerations as fundamentals of sustainable project management. Nevertheless, the author stresses the importance of developing within the limits of the social, ecological and economic systems as these are interconnected and influence each other in a highly complex way. This fundamental is complemented with the spatial and temporal dimensions as well

as with considerations about reducing risk and making an accurate risk assessment as part of preventing the occurrence of negative externalities over any of the three Ps.

In addition to the four fundamentals highlighted by Messikomer *et al*. (2011), other authors also referred to transparency and accountability (Goedknegt & Silvius, 2012; Silvius *et al*., 2012), stakeholder participation (Turner, 2010; Goedknegt & Silvius, 2012), risk reduction (Turner, 2010; Goedknegt & Silvius, 2012) and consuming income and not capital (Silvius *et al*., 2012). Goedknegt & Silvius (2012) make a separate consideration of transparency and accountability as well as stakeholders and participation, but given the significant overlap between the interpretation of these fundamentals as well as the suggestion of grouping them supported by the majority of the authors, the paper jointly discusses transparency and accountability as well as stakeholder participation. Another dimension of sustainability considered for project management practices is transparency and accountability. Transparency refers to the avoidance of a black-box methodology and disclosure of the policies, decisions, activities and the subsequent environmental and societal impact of these. It also involves a "clear, accurate and complete portrayal, to a reasonable and sufficient degree", of all the above (Hemphill, 2011). This allows stakeholders to evaluate and address any arising potential issues thereby contributing to an adherence to sustainable practices (Silvius & Schipper, 2014).

Transparency in the context of project management implies that project managers disclose all decisions, relevant events and impacts to stakeholders. However, the presence of an organizational structure with formal reporting protocols makes this dimension rather difficult to adhere to. Often the goal of such structures is to influence the perception of the stakeholder on the project, which can be seen as logical. However, with multiple stakeholder groups including the government and society, transparency can enforce the delivery of all projects sustainably (Silvius *et al*., 2014).

Accountability as a sustainability dimension implies that an organization owns the impacts of its actions, decisions and policies on the environment and society (Silvius & Schipper, 2014). Additionally, this dimension calls for actions to prevent the recurrence of negative impacts on the environment and society in the future (Hemphill, 2011). In project management practices the Organization Breakdown Structure (OBS) assigns tasks to an individual and makes them accountable for it. While the accountable is usually questioned when the activity performs poorly on the cost, time, quality and scope criteria, it is important that the person be held responsible from the triple-bottom-line perspective. Thus, it calls for an integration of the environmental and social indicators in work progress reports (Silvius *et al*., 2012). Risk in project management is often referred to either as an opportunity or a challenge (Caron, 2013). Given this, risk reduction refers to the minimization of the negative impacts of project management interactions and decisions on the environment, society and income required to assure financial sustainability (Turner, 2010; Okland, 2015). The Deepwater Horizon oil-spill is one such example where societal and environmental risks were high and, due to inappropriate management, led to a disaster (Silvius & Schipper, 2014). The indeterminacy, complexity, nonlinearity and irreversibility of the society - environment interactions, make it easier to prevent rather than ameliorate adverse impacts leading to the formulation of the precautionary principle (Gareis *et al*., 2009; Goedknegt & Silvius, 2012).

Project managers, when dealing with sustainability, future scenarios and evolutionary trends, face an unavoidable degree of uncertainty, ambiguity and ignorance thereby posing a significant challenge on how knowledge is produced, distributed and used (Giampetro & Ramos-Martin, 2005; Gareis *et al*., 2009). Given this and the success criteria of projects, which is mainly defined by the iron triangle, project managers are solely accustomed to considering risks pertaining to the

unfulfillment of the financial success criteria. Hence there is a need for the consideration and evaluation of risks associated to society and environment that can arise from the project. To gain stakeholder participation, Porter and Kramer (2011) stresses the importance of creating shared value amongst stakeholders, arguing that prioritizing shareholders' short-term gains may result in the delivery of unsuccessful projects in terms of value delivered, which is unsustainable in itself.

Thomson, El-Haram and Emmanuel (2009) discuss the different types of knowledge on sustainability held by stakeholders, while Tam (2010) contribute with a communication-mapping model stressing the need for better cooperation between project participants. Labuschagne and Brent (2005) proposes evaluating the standard of information sharing and the degree of stakeholder influence as part of project evaluation criteria. Singh, Murty, Gupta and Dikshit (2007) calls for the involvement of stakeholders when setting sustainability assessment rates. Thabrew, Wiek and Ries (2009) believe that intersectional integration of projects is needed to meet sustainability targets. De Brucker (2013) emphasizes the importance of involving different stakeholders in decision-making, as not enough consideration is given to those groups that are key at only particular moments of the project.

ISO 26000, as cited by Silvius and Schipper (2014), underlines the principle that proactive stakeholder engagement requires a process of dialogue and consensus-building amongst all stakeholders, who come together to define the problems that need to be addressed, develop feasible solutions to these problems, proactively implement them through collaboration and finally monitor and evaluate the outcome (Gareis *et al*., 2009; Goedknegt & Silvius, 2012). Furthermore, incorporating sustainability thinking in PMI's (2013) stakeholder definition increases the number of stakeholders than what the Stakeholder Registry would have normally reflected (Økland, 2015). The challenge that the increased number of stakeholders presents to a project is the need to balance their interests while maintaining equilibrium between economic gains and environmental as well as social targets (Marcelino-Sadaba *et al*., 2015).

Excellent corporate governance can be defined by having a common long-term vision and strategic objectives (Kardos, 2012; Broman & Robert, 2017). Another perspective is board committees and leadership role, which is vital for a sustainable structure (Christensen, Mackey & Whetten, 2014; Michelon & Parbonetti, 2012; Salvioni, Gennari, & Bosetti, 2016). In fact, the board's commitment and sustainable corporate engagement (reflected in its goals, strategies, operational activities and accountability) can be a factor in overcoming the traditional differences in corporate governance structures. Furthermore, a stakeholder model and transparency for corporate governance convergence with sustainability come from different perspectives, which have been discussed in the reviewed literature (Mason & Simmons, 2014; Kardos, 2012). Consequently, there is no typical sustainability framework with governance integration that has been developed, which may have complicated the selection of relevant literature.

Conceptual Framework for the Study

Literature review reveals gaps in the findings and opinions of past studies. Whereas some views agree that Project Management Practices has a direct influence on Sustainability, others argue that this relationship is not conclusive and is subject to other factors. This study investigated moderating role of Corporate Governance in this relationship as presented in a diagrammatical form in Figure .1.

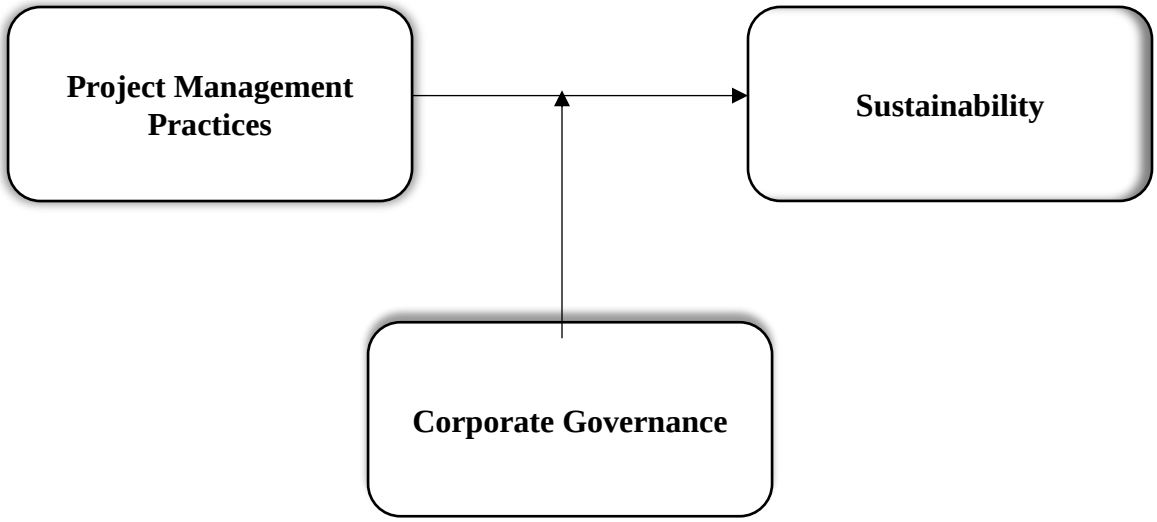

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Methodology

This paper adopted a qualitative research design which entailed a critical review of literature on the effect of Project management Practices on Sustainability and the role Corporate Governance plays in this relationship. The rationale for this design was to interrogate views, methods, and findings of authors on the relationships among study variables. Therefore, the study used secondary data obtained from journal articles, books, publications, and conference papers drawn globally. The review mainly used content analysis which were mentioned, and discussions specific to the study variables were identified, analyzed and critiqued.

Conclusion

Despite a growing interest in establishing the fundamentals of sustainable development, researchers have not yet reached an agreement over the core sustainable considerations to be made. Authors have found it important to bring the varying contributions of multiple researchers in the field of project management practices and sustainability under one discussion to examine how other factors applied in project management practices strengthen the grounds for future research.

Extant literatures on project management and sustainability themes have been addressed by countless studies. In China, Ling, Low, Wang and Lim (2009) evaluated the project management practices that Singaporean AEC firms have adopted and their impact on project performance. The study established a significant effect of project management practices on project performance. Further, the research identified various practices adopted by the firm. In particular, the study cited management as a key practice in influencing performance of projects. The research suggested the need for firms to adopt project management practices that enhance project performance. In Ghana, Ahadzie and Amoa-Mensah (2010) looked at the persisting management issues facing the Housing sector. In particular, the researcher looked at the impact of project managers in enhancing project

excellence in terms of completion and cost incurred. The research established that the housing sector lacks professional management. There was therefore need to invest in competent and experienced management professionals who will turn around project performance in the housing sector. In Kenya, Rahab (2018) analyzed the impact of project management practices on execution of mobile money transfer project. The study findings indicated a significant association between venture management practices and project excellence. However, the relationship between Project management practices and sustainability is inconclusive.

This study reveals that corporate governance plays a moderating role on the project management practices -sustainability link. A quantitative study results indicate a positive relationship between corporate governance and performance (Lakhal, 2005; Sanda, Mikailu, & Garba, 2005; Mak &Kusnadi, 2005; Chen, Lin, & Yi, 2008; Ujunwa, 2012; Shukeri, Shin, & Shaari, 2012). On the other hand, some researchers argued that there has negative relationship between these two variables (Mishra, Randøy, & Jenssen, 2001; Singh & Davidson, 2003). Therefore, this conclusion finds support in literature (Lawrence, Collins & Roper, 2013; Saltaji & Issam, 2013) which report that corporate governance moderates the sustainability. The investigation of the relationship between corporate governance and sustainability is very important as it not only bridges the two kinds of literature, but also provides substantial evidence to the practitioners and policymakers for improving practices. In identifying this gap, this paper has endeavored to contribute to the emerging literature by investigating the interrelationships between project management practices, corporate governance and sustainability. This paper recommends that future studies can use a contingency framework to focus on how other factors are likely to affect this relationship.

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