

Restoring Human Rights: Dialogical Stakeholder Engagement for Marginalized Women

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Women experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, vulnerability and marginalization and they are often unequal victims of unethical and illicit 'business' practices. Systematic exploitation of structural, social, physical and other gender-related inequalities dangerously combines to normalize the experience of rights abuse, constraining their voice and agency. This presents a unique problem for marginalized women who endure human rights abuse and those organisations who seek to engage with them in the process of restoring rights. Mobilizing the theoretical lens of dialogue, our starting point is that effective stakeholder engagement with marginalized women– i.e. one culminating in the restoration of their rights – requires power-cognizant communication modes that enable stakeholder voice, participation and agency. In this paper, stakeholder engagement is organised into three general communications approaches – essentially monological, seemingly dialogic, and authentically dialogic- whose forms and consequences for effective engagement are interpretively developed.

Keywords: stakeholder engagement; marginalised stakeholders; dialogism; women's rights abuse