

Book Review:
BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY: ESSENTIALS FOR BUSINESS

Sudiyanti

Universitas Gadjah Mada
(sudiyanti@ugm.ac.id)

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INTRODUCTION

Business today cannot be separated from issues that relate to sustainable development. For example, business is often accused of being the thing most responsible for environmental damage, natural resources scarcity, and climate change. For this reason, companies are required to not only pursue their economic goals, but also must pay attention to the environmental and social aspects of their business. Businesses are expected to be able to balance all 3 tasks. They can earn profits from their operational activities, but at the same time they also must be fastidious in their care of the planet as well as the society (people).

In responding to this issue, business schools in Indonesia are expected to instil such positive values while educating their students. One way to do so is by integrating ethical values into each course in their program. Furthermore, according to Conroy & Emerson (2004: 384), the business leaders acknowledge that they feel business students should be exposed to business ethics and for this reason, the Association to Advance Colleges and Schools of Business (AACSB) in 1974 promptly included “ethical considerations” in its body of required knowledge. Some leading Indonesian business schools (MB IPB, FEB UGM, SBM ITB, FE UI) directly support this value by presenting the subject of Business Ethics, Business Sustainability or Corporate Social Responsibility both in their undergraduate and graduate programs.

References to business ethics and corporate social responsibility might already be widely available. However, text books discussing these

basic concepts, applied theories, and citing cases of businesses in every aspect of sustainability are extremely rare. One of them or perhaps the only one is *Business Sustainability: Essentials for Business*, which was written by Scott T. Young and Kanwalroop Kathy Dhanda (SAGE Publication, Inc., 2012).

Scott T. Young is a professor in Operations Management and currently is chairman of the Department of Management, Kellstadt Graduate School of Business at DePaul University. Formerly, he was Associate Dean for Academic Programs at the University of Utah (1997 to 1999). Professor Young has written articles in many reputable international journals such as the *International Journal of Operations and Production Management*, *Review of Business*, *International Journal of Production Research*, *Journal of Operations Management*, *Journal of World Business*, *Information and Management*, *International Business Review*, *Production and Inventory Management Journal*, *Production and Operations Management*, *International Journal of Purchasing and Materials Management*, and the *Journal of Education for Business*. Together with Winter Nie, he wrote the book *Managing Global Operations* (Westport, CT: Quorum Books, 1996). He is also the author of *Essentials of Operations Management*, (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009).

The second author, Kanwalroop Kathy Dhanda is Associate Professor in the Department of Management, Dreihaus College of Business at DePaul University. Her academic scholarship focuses on sustainability issues with a primary emphasis in the areas of environmental model-

ling, carbon markets, emissions trading, corporate social responsibility and reverse logistics. She is also the co-author of Together with Edward Elgar, she wrote a book title *Environmental Networks: A Framework for Economic Decision-Making and Policy Analysis* and her research focused on the modelling and design of environmental topics. She developed and taught courses in the area of sustainability. She has been published in *Operations Research*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *Energy Economics*, *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing Policy Watch*, *Organization and Environment*, *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, and many other journals (SAGE Publication Inc., 2000).

The book presents the key business interactions with sustainable development while at the same time also providing a basic background on environmental sciences.

EVALUATION OF THE BOOK

The book *Business Sustainability: Essentials for Business* is broken up into 3 categories, which are natural capital (planet), human capital (people), and the financial capital (profits). In the first part, the book provides some basic concepts and the history of sustainability. It describes various definitions of sustainability, sustainability-related definitions, sustainability and its relationship with the green movement, urbanization, profit and competitiveness, path to sustainability, triple bottom line (TBL) and why it is important to implement sustainable strategies. Part 2 describes renewable resources that are related to air and climate issues, water issues, sustainable agriculture and food, forests, wildlife, and biodiversity, as well as alternative clean energy and fuels.

Part 3 puts the topics of stakeholder interests and choices as the main focus in explaining why and how to build sustainable strategies and frameworks. It uncovers the roles of customers, corporations and the governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on determining what and how goods and services are planned, produced, used, and disposed of with

no or little negative impacts on the environment. Regulations, acts, and its implications to business practitioners are also discussed.

The Part 4 of this book embraces the strategies for a sustainable future, in which transparent reporting, measurement, and standards of sustainability performance are clearly explained. This part also points out what and how the current situations of carbon markets are, including offsets and standards, green marketing and the strategies to design sustainable cities and communities. Additionally, the book provides material across all business functions – production and operation, marketing, and particularly, strategy. Some topics for debate, a selection of websites for further information and suggested case studies are also provided.

The most revealing part of this book is where the author includes examples of cases and the fact that the role of the consumer contributes the largest portion to supporting sustainable development on Earth. The authors argue that the increasingly large world population combined with economic growth are the drivers for global consumption increases. The 4 greatest global consumptions are in the categories of food and beverage, transportation, and clothing. From this point, it is important to emphasize that the emerging markets and high population countries such as China, India, and Indonesia have a significant role in supporting the movement toward a more sustainable Earth. As we come from one of these emerging market countries, individually, the choices we make in our consumption of food, drink, housing, clothing, and transportation have a considerable impact.

Moreover, the book of *Business Sustainability: Essential for Business* is the first business text to offer an in-depth exploration of the relationship between environmental science and business. Compared to other business sustainability text books such as Carroll & Buchholtz (2014), Esty & Simmons (2011), Hitcock & Willard (2012), and Landrum & Edwards (2009), this book does not look at sustainability from the perspective of the ecological standpoint only, but also includes business practices that come into contact with economic, social, cul-

tural, and technological aspects. As most people think that sustainability is all about being green, the authors subsequently help the readers to better understand that the concept of sustainability is actually described in several facets. In this point, the authors provide a clear understanding that we might find such a concept in various situations ranging from universities, education, cities, community development, food, agriculture, design, society, value, processes, ethics, commerce, economy, environmental and government sustainability.

This book furthermore explores and directs the reader to have the experience of calculating and comparing the amount of carbon footprint generated by emitters such as their household, and transportation by utilizing a carbon footprint calculator. For this reason, the readers are expected to understand that the role of technological advancements today is to help in the continuity of the businesses as well as the Earth's sustainability.

As well as many books on the topic of business sustainability, this book also compares and contrasts what and how the role of consumers, corporations, governments and organizations, non-governmental organizations help in promoting sustainable development. Exposure of these parties is also provided together with many examples of implementation, objectives, and historical development of their involvement. Strategies for a sustainable future and the importance of transparent implementation of voluntary reporting, measurements, and existing standards within the marketplace, the carbon markets and its standards are also presented. Although this book is oriented to the context of the USA, many cases of the implementation of sustainable businesses are taken from the events and conditions in the various countries across the world.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the book of *Business Sustainability: Essential for Business* is the first busi-

ness text to offer an in-depth exploration of the relationship of environmental science to business. This book offers a better understanding about sustainability concepts within the business context, in which profit, people, and the planet are simultaneously important. If one thinks to use a Business Sustainability textbook as course material, this book could be offered to students in a variety of settings ranging from an interdisciplinary course in the liberal arts to an advanced undergraduate or graduate course in business.

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