Chapter 10

Institutionalizing Social Responsibility Through Workplace Green Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Corporate social responsibility in the last six decades has been construed as a compensation for environmental pollution. Such compensation in most cases cannot replace the damages done to the natural environment by many companies. The academic discourse in promoting responsible business practices and environmental sustainability remains one of the focal point of reference in the 21st century. The need to challenge the status quo through collective green initiatives and eco-innovation is an effort mitigating against environmental dilapidation. This chapter provides insights on institutionalizing workplace green behavior as a way of minimizing industrial pollution, rather than compensating for environmental pollution. This chapter adopted a literature review approach on corporate social responsibility (CSR), workplace green behavior, and environmental management. Therefore, workplace green behavior should be institutionalized at individual, team, and organizational levels by business leaders. There is need for a perfect fit between HR strategies and green management initiative.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation as a result of depletion of physical/natural resources and industrial pollution is a serious challenge mitigating human, environmental and business sustainability across the globe (Loucks, 2017; Reible, 2017). Environmental challenges in the 21st century include depletion of the ozone layer; soil degradation and increased desertification; increased air and water pollution; a reduction in the availability of fresh water; and increasing depletion of physical and natural resources (Scott, 2005; Tietenberg & Lewis, 2016). Organisations around the world need to make drastic changes in the business processes and invest more in green initiatives and eco-friendly innovative products and services for environmental sustainability and customers' well-being.

This chapter explores the process of institutionalising social responsibility through workplace green behaviour. Workplace green behaviour is an extension of organisational citizenship behaviour and a perspective shift in corporate social responsibility and environmental management initiatives (Kim, Kim, Han, Jackson, & Ployhart, 2017; Stubbs & Cocklin, 2008a). The implication is that organisations can no longer continue on the same path by repeating the old and unsustainable business practices. An overhaul of the traditional and dominant worldviews about resource management and the negative impact of business practices on societies and the environment is necessary (Fields & Atiku, 2016). For example, ecological modernisation is a business orientation towards self-seeking interests without doing any harm to other stakeholders and the nature (Stubbs & Cocklin, 2008a). Thus, ecological modernisation is a shift perspective in corporate social responsibility towards human, organisational, and environmental sustainability.

This chapter is structured to provide the background of corporate social responsibility, and institutionalising pro-environmental behaviours at individual, team and organisational levels. The Human Resources (HR) roles in institutionalising workplace green behaviour is identified and discussed. The last section draws conclusion from the conceptual framework and managerial implications for enhanced workplace green behaviour.

BACKGROUND

Institutionalising social responsibility through workplace green behaviour could be linked to the developments in corporate social responsibility (CSR). The evolution of CSR can be traced to Bowen's study of "Social Responsible Businessman", which was published in 1953 (Madrakhimova, 2013). This implies that academic discourse on CSR has been in existence for over six (6) decades. The concept has received

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