

Chapter 9

An Innovative Approach to Cultivate Responsible Next Generation Leaders: Transcendental Meditation in Management Education

Dennis P. Heaton

Maharishi University of Management, USA

ABSTRACT

The next generation of business leaders aspires to integrate financial success with social and environmental responsibility. A fundamental enabler of more enlightened business practice is a change of consciousness toward the compassion, comprehension, and courage needed to conduct business in a way that leads to sustainability and thriving. This chapter presents the system of Consciousness-Based Education (CBE), which incorporates the Transcendental Meditation program. CBE as practiced at Maharishi University of Management is an innovative approach of management education which integrates experiential, intellectual, pedagogical, and environmental features all aimed at developing students toward enlightened consciousness. Empirical evidence on the effects of this educational approach includes cognitive, moral, and emotional development and brain integration. This growth of consciousness gives rise to responsible business leadership to create shared value that integrates the interests of shareholders and stakeholders.

INTRODUCTION

An innovative direction in management education has been the spreading global adoption of the United Nations' Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) (UNPRME, 2015), which Forray & Leigh, 2012 in their special issue of the *Journal of Management Education* referred to as a "wave of change" (p. 301). Through adopting these principles, business schools are committing to teach, research, and disseminate business values of contributing to society, respecting the natural environment, and enhancing quality of working life.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-9691-4.ch009

An Innovative Approach to Cultivate Responsible Next Generation Leaders

Researchers at the Fowler Center for Business as an Agent of World Benefit are extending the thinking about responsible management by recognizing the role of spirituality, defined as a sense of connectedness rather than separation from one another and separate from nature (Pavez & Kendall, 2015). The Distinguished Fellow Program at the Fowler Center has been exploring the role that practices to cultivate “consciousness of connectedness” (Laszo et al., 2012, p. 37) can play in stimulating enactment of the values of responsible management and realization of thriving for the individual, business, and society.

This chapter presents the educational model of Consciousness-Based Education (CBE)^{SM1} which combines experiential, intellectual, pedagogical, and environmental features all aimed at developing students’ consciousness of connectedness with his or her own deepest self and, through that, connectedness with others and with nature. This consciousness approach is presented as a foundation for realizing the aims of PRME and for furthering the contribution of business towards social and environmental sustainability.

Business as usual has been designed too much along a cradle-to-grave, take-make-waste model which generates huge amounts of waste and depletes and damages the natural environment. As McDonough and Braungart (2000) have pointed out: “Neither nature nor industry can prosper in the long term under the cradle-to-grave system (p. 59).” The responsibility of businesses to be stewards of the environment has been highlighted by Paul Dickinson, Founder and Executive Chair of CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project):

We face an unprecedented environmental crisis. The impacts of climate change, water stress and deforestation are today affecting people’s lives all over the world and if unchecked will cause devastation for generations to come. National governments have a responsibility to protect their citizens but they cannot do so alone. Corporations, investors and cities must also take responsibility to create the systemic change we need for an environmentally sustainable economy. (CDP, 2014, inside cover page)

The fields of business and business education are in a position today to make a difference to the sustainability or unsustainability of our future. By sustainable business we mean simultaneously delivering economic, social, and environmental benefits (the so-called triple bottom line), achieving positive rather than negative impacts for stakeholders and shareholders (Hart & Milstein, 2003; Laszlo & Zhexembayeva, 2011). The mindset of unsustainable business has taken a narrow perspective focused on current profits while ignoring the full costs of social and environment impacts such as depletion of natural capital, environmental waste, global warming potential, and human toxicity at any stage in the life of the product. A number of external forces are now pressing for a shift toward greater business accountability for sustainability. Among these are declining resources, radical transparency, and increasing societal expectations (Laszlo & Zhexembayeva, 2011).

Efforts to measure and reduce environmental impacts of business are increasing, for example among the global businesses that voluntarily participate in CDP programs regarding water and forest resources, and greenhouse gas emissions. Among students there is growing interest in a more holistic approach to business that integrates economic, social, and environmental responsibilities. According to Net Impact (2014), “Grad school students around the world have spoken, and they’re increasingly committed to making an impact. They want to leave their programs fully equipped to create positive change in the workplace and the world.”

20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/an-innovative-approach-to-cultivate-responsible-next-generation-leaders/141603

Related Content

Reflections on Teaching Business Ethics

Ambika Zutshi, Greg Woodand Leanne Morris (2018). *Business Education and Ethics: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1-13).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/reflections-on-teaching-business-ethics/186565

Reskilling Supply Chain Workforce for AI-Driven Service Marketing to Enhance Efficiency and Customer Engagement

Ravishankar Krishnan, P. Sandhiyaand Sanjiv Marwah (2025). *Strategic Workforce Reskilling in Service Marketing* (pp. 177-198).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/reskilling-supply-chain-workforce-for-ai-driven-service-marketing-to-enhance-efficiency-and-customer-engagement/376099

Paradigm Shift in Management Education: Need for a Cross Functional Perspective

Smitha Nayakand Nandan Prabhu (2021). *Research Anthology on Business and Technical Education in the Information Era* (pp. 755-769).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/paradigm-shift-in-management-education/274394

Social Media Driven Management Education

Owen P. Hall Jr. (2018). *Business Education and Ethics: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 750-768).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/social-media-driven-management-education/186605

Social Media Advertising as a Marketing Tool: Examining the Influence of Digital Signage on Purchasing Behaviour

Leena Jenefa, M. Jayakumar, C. N. Vidya Lakshmi, Sachin Sabharwal, R. Mohan Kumarand M. C. Shubin Tad (2025). *Strategic Workforce Reskilling in Service Marketing* (pp. 447-468).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/social-media-advertising-as-a-marketing-tool/376111