Chapter 106

Green Work–Life Balance and Global Leadership in Industry 4.0

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ABSTRACT

Industrialization brought about by the development in science and technology is like a double-edged sword. Despite the benefit of the massive industrialization to humanity, it is noted to exert huge pressure on the ecosystem and the environment. Green work-life balance is an emerging concept aims at reshaping the work-life debate by introducing environmental dimension. Employees as agents of change are saddled with the implementation of organizational green work-life balance policy. However, the implementation of green work-life balance policy across the diverse culture by multinational companies poses a serious challenge. This chapter explores green work-life balance and global leadership in Industry 4.0.

INTRODUCTION

Industrialisation brought about by advancement in science and technology is like a double-edged sword. Despite the benefit of massive industrialisation to humanity, it is noted to exert huge pressure on the ecosystem and the environment. In other words, industrialisation came with both laudation and scepticism especially regarding an increase in the greenhouse effect on the planet. There is an upsurge in the level of ecological contamination emerging from industrial waste, which necessitated an increase in the enactment of guidelines by government and private sectors for the purpose of reducing the damage to the ecosystem and the eventual adverse effect on communal well-being (Martinez- Fernandez & Hino-

josa, 2010). Boiral (2006) posits that there is improved acceptance and awareness of the need to manage the environment strategically, however, it much be given much importance as companies' bottom-line. Green work-life balance is an emerging concept aimed at reshaping the work-life debate by introducing the environmental dimension. As an emerging concept in green human resources management (HRM), green work-life balance places emphasis on the development of environmentally friendly values and behaviour in employees' work and family domains (Datta, 2011; Vasa & Thatta, 2018). In other words, it is a reconciliation of employees' work and family lives with respect to environmental values, attitudes and behaviour (Muster & Schrader, 2011). Employees as agents of change are responsible for the implementation of organisational green work-life balance policy. Green work-life balance involves availing employees with sustainable strategy which helps to promote environmentally friendly behaviour both at work and family domains.

'Eco-consciousness or colour green' as posited by Dutta and Kolkata (2012), indicates the level of attention being accorded environmental issues in individual daily lives both at work and on the home front. Consistent with this argument, Atiku and Fields (2017) suggest that global leadership is faced with environmental challenges which require a holistic multicultural orientation of the business environment. Multinational companies (MNC) have global operations which traverse cultural boundaries. The implementation of green work-life balance is aimed at promoting environmentally friendly behaviour in work and family domains of the workforce. The introduction of environmentally friendly policy to align with overall strategy of the organisation in some parts of the world by the MNC is seen as bias (Bueno, Girot & Gutiérrez-Orrantia, 2017; Tricoire, 2019). This is because such policy is perceived not to meet up with the environmental challenges in other cultures where the MNC operates. This explains the frequent demonstrations in addition to environmental activism in developing countries where people protest against MNCs regarding their corporate policies that damage the haunting beauty of flora and fauna of those countries.

The introduction of Industry 4.0 to the global scene specifically from the green eco-system perspective has been attracting scholarly attention over the past two decades (Müller, Buliga & Voigt, 2018)). Industry 4.0 is established to be synonymous with innovative experiences and a sharp departure from the traditional ways of doing things to an automated system, especially with the aid of highly-digitalised information technology. For instance, the innovative idea of electric cars has succeeded in eradicating the emission of carbon monoxide which has contributed over the years to the toxicity of the ozone layer, causing what is today known as global warming. Also, the introduction of renewable energy through Industry 4.0 has recorded an increase in the global level of energy intelligence ensuring a further reduction in global warming and enhancing the global agenda of a green ecosystem.

While considering the role and the importance of global leadership towards green work-life-balance, the focus of this chapter rests more on the implementation of green work-life balance. Green work-life balance includes everything that has to do with the implementation of conscious practice towards a healthy and sustainable environment conducive for not only habitation but also business purposes.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work-life balance is a complex phenomenon that has constantly continued to spark the interest of scholars and human resource practitioners worldwide (Ganiyu, Derera, Atiku & Ziska, 2020, Ganiyu, Ziska & Atiku, 2017). There is no consensus among researchers as to the origin of the concept of work-life

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