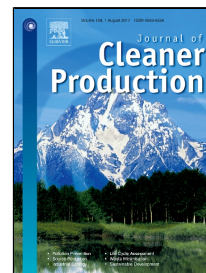


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Integration and Organizational Change Towards Sustainability

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Integration and Organizational Change Towards Sustainability

Abstract

This interdisciplinary study examines why and how corporate leaders operationalize sustainability in organizational strategy, systems and activities. Through interviews with sustainability professionals using a cross-industry sample of multinational organizations recognized as top performers by multiple sources (Dow Jones Sustainability Index, Newsweek Green Rankings, GRI, and KLD), the research identified drivers, enablers, evaluation methods and change management practices for corporate social, environmental and financial initiatives. Using multiple coders, and an analysis of responses to structured interview questions, we determine how sustainability professionals influence the alignment of sustainability goals, mission and values at leading organizations. Scholarly contributions include insight into how top performing companies manage change involving social and environmental responsibility. Insights come from primary research with the individuals who anchor those corporate sustainability initiatives providing a foundation for further theory development and testing of propositions. The key findings include integration as a systems-based approach to sustainability, change management, innovation, and corporate strategy. Integration takes place through the alignment of performance metrics within and across business units and functions with a call for Integrated Bottom Line performance measurement throughout organizations and value chains to inform management decision-making, transparency, and external reporting. Predictions are that integration and change management are critical success factor for the advancement of strategic sustainability initiatives.

Key Words

Best-Practice; Integration; Integrated Bottom Line; Multinational Companies; Organizational Change; Sustainability; Sustainability Professionals

1. Introduction

As more organizations elevate sustainability to a strategic priority, the challenges associated with execution of these activities have escalated (Kolk and Pinkse, 2007). Simultaneously, there is a research void in understanding how integrated systems leverage financial, social and environmental benefits (Asif, et. a., 2013). The research presented in this study responds to a growing need to understand how sustainability is operationalized (Dahlsrud, 2006; Marrewijk, 2003; Garcia, et. al., 2016). This research explores who is involved in the integration of

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