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EDITORIAL

Editorial: Sustainability, the circular economy, cradle-to-cradle, the blue economy and green economy

Vanessa Ratten

Editor in Chief
Email: v.ratten@latrobe.edu.au

All organisations in some way need to make decisions about their involvement in the natural environment (Cristofaro, Giardino, Camilli, & Hristov, 2023). This means they need to consider sustainability and corporate social responsibility as business priorities. Thereby thinking about societal obligations in addition to profit maximisation. This means organisations need to take into account a range of responsibilities they have in society by being a business but also answerable to others. Corporate social responsibility broadly refers to economic, legal, and technical responsibilities with regard to social issues (Stubbs, Farrelly, Fabianke, Burch, & Ramesh, 2023). In so doing recognising that an organisation should balance competing interests and be willing to confront social problems in a proactive way by including moral concerns that are deemed to be important societal issues (Voyer, Quirk, McIlgorm, & Azmi, 2018). By trying to solve social problems it helps to balance both social and economic needs. This form of social responsibility can be optional but viewed in a good light due to external stakeholders ranking organisations high in terms of social responsibility, which enhances their public reputation in the marketplace.

An organisation should try to achieve profitable production through socially responsible activity. This can include addressing social problems that are evident in the business environment such as poverty and civil rights. Organisations have ethical obligations to address social issues that affect the psychological well-being of society. These issues can range in magnitude from narrow consumerism problems to broader global ecology issues. The basis of social responsibility is that the actions and decisions of an organisation can affect others. This means an organisation should address a range of obligations they have to society, which can include both economic and non-economic interests that promotes the long-term survival of the business (Guidi, Vitali, Giuliani, & Chiucchi, 2024).

A circular economy is linked to the idea of the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle). Reduce means decreasing the amount of waste in an economy. Reuse means products are used in new products. Recycle means to use again a product. The circular economy is a way to understand how resources can be used then reused by emphasising how a product becoming waste it turns into something else (Perotti, Dhir, Ferraris, & Kliestik, 2023). This tends to refer to a product having a linear relationship in terms of being made and used it has a circular relationship in terms of being made then remade and used with the process ongoing. The concept is derived from industrial economists who suggested that waste prevention strategies can help an economy. This means a circular or loop economy is a way to facilitate economic activity. The industrial economics literature on the circular economy has led to a new area of the literature called industrial ecology or environmental economics becoming popular (Graedel & Allenby, 1995). There are many definitions of the circular economy existing in the literature with most emphasising resource loops in business output strategies. This means the whole economic system from start to finish is emphasised.

The cradle-to-cradle concept refers to a waste free system when after a product has been used it is recycled. This means it refers to an efficient way to reuse products through sustainability processes. Geisendorf and Pietrulla (2018:773) state that it is 'a closed-loop supply chain, where the end of life of a product leads to the recycling process'. It is a useful way to rethink the environmental impact of a product and promotes more sustainable disposal practices that reuse or repurpose waste. Sometimes it is discussed in terms of reutilisation in terms of designing more sustainable systems, which decreases negative environmental effects of product usage (Gionfriddo & Piccaluga, 2024).

The blue economy has also been referred to as the ocean or marine economy due to the emphasis on the sea (Lee, Noh, & Khim, 2020). It focuses on sustainable use of the world's oceans in terms of preserving it for the future and is important as it highlights the need of society to look after water resources due to human well-being (Bari, 2017). This is due to the flow on effects arising from ecological damage of the ocean influencing other economic progress (Silver, Gray, Campbell, Fairbanks, & Gruby, 2015). Many livelihoods rely on the ocean ecosystem including tourism and fisheries. The blue economy emphasises a decrease in pollution and regeneration of ocean resources, which means embracing a stakeholder perspective that takes into account different usages of the ocean (Lee et al., 2020). Each stakeholder has their own view about the ocean depending on how they use it and this might depend on their geographic location or occupation (Martínez-Vázquez, Milán-García, & de Pablo Valenciano, 2021). Therefore, it is important to consider different interests regarding water management (Smith-Godfrey, 2016).

Sustainable management is essential for a company's success in the marketplace as it helps differentiate a company and highlights its selling points (Ligorio, Venturelli, Rosato, & Campo, 2023). Management messages regarding sustainability can communicate to consumers key areas of concern. Often sustainable management practices are referred to as green management due to the emphasis on ecological and environmental concerns (Bina, 2013). Ecological management tends to focus more on how entities are affected by land, soil, and water conditions whilst green management involves communication strategies about environmental strategies and activities (Merino-Saum, Clement, Wyss, & Baldi, 2020). It involves focusing on management activities that provide an environmental solution as increasingly more businesses are emphasising how they are decreasing environmental problems (Spalding, 2016). This means highlighting the process and implementation of green management activities in overall operations (Georgeson, Maslin, & Poessinouw, 2017). Therefore, emphasising the way management can utilise environmental problem solving techniques as a remedy for societal issues. The focus of green management is on ecological concerns that are not addressed through traditional management programmes. Thus, it tries to solve specific environmental problems and issues faced by businesses in the environment that can include natural resource depletion, climate change, pollution, poverty, and biodiversity loss. Green management can be described as a holistic management process as it involves a range of activities from promotion to production thereby anticipating environmental needs of society and identifying solutions.

Consumers are buying more green products and services due to their interest in the environment. This means it is desirable for companies to prioritise their green strategies. Increasingly companies are trying to create a sustainable economy by integrating environmentally friendly production processes. Green management is usually motivated by ethical and moral concerns. Market pressures and economic policies are prioritising green management principles, which means that management has an impact on the natural environment through the production of products and services. Governments are encouraging sustainable practices through motivating citizens to play their part. Social management is related to green management due to the role consumers can play in buying environmentally friendly products. More management techniques are focusing on social and public goals, which means it focuses on social change through the systematic application of management programmes. By encouraging socially responsible activities social management tries to bridge social with economic goals.

Green management is a management philosophy that suggests managers should take into account environmental interests by encouraging environmental policies by businesses that sell these products.

This can be achieved by building sustainable management relationships with stakeholders and integrating social management due to taking into account social and environmental goals. The idea of green management is to reduce unnecessary waste and disposal of products. Therefore, it is a management approach that seeks to amend and refocus management practices.

Management that includes an environmental message is being prioritised by companies. This is due to more consumer concerns around sustainability in the global economy. Issues such as global warming and climate change are important for consumers. This means companies are trying to incorporate more green management. Green management is a different type of management process that has evolved out of a need to stress environmental qualities of a product. Typically, it refers to how management can integrate green practices with regard to the production, design, marketing, usage, and disposal of goods and services (Lampe & Gazda, 1995). It is a way of identifying customers wants in a sustainable fashion by satisfying their needs based on their ideas of green products. It can include management activities that promote less wastage and take into account the environment. Thereby considering how production systems can have less societal impact. It is a type of management philosophy that embeds a societal perspective as it emphasises building good relationships with the natural environment. This can be conducted by taking into account the implications of pollutants. Green management aims to increase consumers awareness about the implications of waste by aiming to market products that are good for society.

The term greenwashing is related to green management as it is based on manipulating consumers to believe a product is more environmentally friendly than it is in practice. Dangelico and Vocalelli (2017:1269) state greenwashing 'is a clever play on the well-known terms "white washing," which refers to the general attempt to appear better than one is'. Greenwashing is a way managers can over emphasise certain product features that are associated with the environment. By doing so they are misleading consumers as to the product's actual environmental attributes. Green management can involve trying to change energy usage as a remedy for environmental problems. To do this the design and packaging of products is altered to be more energy efficient. In addition, the production of products can be changed in order to satisfy the needs of consumers in a sustainable way.

Related to the usage of green management techniques is social management, which tries to change behaviour to be healthier. Thereby not focusing on consumption but rather quality of life issues. Part of social management might be to emphasise certain products when there is a shortage. This can occur in times of crisis when specific resources are needed for other products.

In conclusion, this editorial has highlighted the need for managers to focus on sustainability and corporate social responsibility through innovative techniques. This can include emphasising the blue and green economy by prioritising societal needs. It is increasingly important for organisations to integrate sustainability as a way to focus on social management issues.

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