More information on the special issue…

SPECIAL ISSUE CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR A BETTER WORLD: CONTRIBUTIONS OF LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONS

Submission deadline: July 1 to July 30, 2018

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OVERVIEW

On September 25th 2015, all 195 member countries of the United Nations adopted a set of 17 "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" to **end poverty**, **protect the planet**, and **ensure prosperity for all** as part of their new global "Agenda 2030". Achieving these goals will require the concerted efforts of governments, the business sector, society, and individual citizens. Innovative leadership and management will be essential for organizations in any sector to integrate these development goals into strategic plans and operational activities in service of realizing the 2030 aspirations. The integration of SDGs into business strategies challenges traditional business practices, including those that already address sustainability. Business organizations will need to aspire to and imagine much bolder approaches. What will these look like? How can managers undertake them? And how can management research contribute to this aspirational agenda?

Extant management research has only begun to explore and inform practices related to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, entrenched practices frequently serve as obstacles to sustainable development. At the same time, the challenges captured in the SDGs may require or stimulate new management innovations or approaches. To help business contribute to achieving the goals, we call for submissions to a special issue on "Sustainable Development for a Better World: Contributions of Leadership, Management and Organizations." *Given the current state of knowledge, we seek to fully exploit the core mission of Academy of Management Discoveries (AMD), "to promote exploratory empirical research of management and organizational phenomena that our theories do not adequately explain."*

Business and the Sustainable Development Goals

Business managers increasingly recognize that addressing sustainability issues delivers benefits to society, the environment, and to companies themselves, through reduced costs and risks of doing business, increased brand reputation, increased attractiveness to talent or increased competiveness (Bonini & Bové, 2014; Kiron et al., 2013; Kiron et al., 2012; Haanaes et al., 2011; UN Global Compact & Accenture, 2013). Many companies have started to manage for the "triple bottom line" by seeking to simultaneously create economic, ecological and social value. However, in practice, business sustainability is often strongly aligned with economic advantages for the businesses themselves – the "business case for sustainability" – while being much less aligned with solutions for the challenges we face globally, as captured in the UN SDGs. There is an opportunity to explore the role of business in sustainable development through a fundamental change in perspective, which may involve orienting to specific societal goals that cannot be addressed adequately through business as usual (Dyllick & Muff, 2016). The SDGs raise a number of questions regarding the roles and engagements of all kinds of organizations – not just businesses – and across all levels of analysis of interest to management scholars.

Management research has begun to tackle some of these questions, as evidenced by a growing interest on societal 'grand challenges' (George, Howard-Grenville, Joshi, Tihanyi, 2016) and 'wicked problems' (Rittell & Weber, 1973). Scholars examine how complex institutional arrangements and organizational configurations both perpetuate and mitigate problems like climate change (Schüssler, Rüling, & Wittneben, 2014) inequality (Mair, Wolf, & Seelos, 2016) and the social impact of supply chain practices (Kim & Davis, 2016). Others have drawn attention to potential solutions for wicked problems through the lenses of social movement theory (Luo, Zhang, & Marquis, 2016), framing (Ansari, Wijen, & Gray, 2013), or robust action (Ferraro, Etzion, Gehman, 2015). Accounts also explore how individuals frame desired changes for their peers (Bansal, 2003; Howard-Grenville, Nelson, Earle, Haack, & Young, 2017) and document the risks involved (Sonenshein, DeCelles, & Dutton, 2014; Whiteman & Cooper, 2011). At the individual and group level of analysis, insight into issues raised by the SDGs have been gained through research on stress, coping, and well-being (Gaines & Jermier, 1983; Xie & Johns, 1995), income (Judge, Piccolo, Podsakoff, Shaw, & Rich, 2010; Leana & Meuris, 2015), justice (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, Ng, 2001), and status differences (Marr & Thau, 2014; Pettit, Yong, & Spataro, 2010). This research has emphasized the positive consequences of stress-free work, higher income and status, and fair treatment, underscoring the individual and organizational benefits that accrue from tackling the SDGs.

Despite these contributions of management research to topics relevant to the SDGs, much more scholarly attention is needed to chart this important territory and generate insights into issues that defy explanation by extant theories. As well, some of the SDGs have received very limited attention in managerial research, and hence are ripe for empirical research that can describe the phenomena, and offer ways forward to future theory development.

Cross-SDG Research Themes and Illustrative Questions

The 17 SDGs offer an ambitious agenda for driving forward research on management, organizations, and leadership in relation to sustainable development. We rely on key themes proposed by the UN Global Compact (2016) to identify cross-SDG issues relevant for management research aimed at advancing the agenda. *We invite papers that empirically examine some of these cross-SDG themes and questions. Ideally, papers will exhibit research that adopts a multi-disciplinary approach and that engages with the entanglement of social, environmental and economic concerns, rather* *than treating these as separate, siloed areas. Papers emphasizing two if not all three of the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability are important for the AMD special issue.* Below are some illustrative questions, recognizing that there are many additional questions that address these themes and await discovery.

1. Innovation in technological, social, and business models. This cross-SDG theme recognizes the need for breakthrough innovations in technology, social and business models that can spur the achievement of the SDGs.

- Are any existing leadership or business models truly aligned with spurring breakthrough innovations for sustainability?
- How can incentive systems or other employment practices be designed to foster innovative capabilities and release human potential among employees?

2. Business for decent work, decent pay and decent treatment. Respecting workers' rights and empowering workers, paying a living wage, ending the trafficking of labor, and of all forms of child labor fall under this cross-SDG theme.

- How can business organizations and supply chains be designed to end forced labor and/or child labor, or to protect human rights and advance human conditions?
- How do organizational practices aimed at ending poverty and worker exploitation such as paying beyond a living wage shape employee attitudes and organizational performance?

3. Health, wellbeing and business. All over the world, non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, obesity, and cancer remain the leading causes of death. These diseases are directly linked to non-sustainable lifestyle choices and have immense socioeconomic consequences across all segments of the global population. This cross-SDG theme also recognizes the growing healthcare costs that employers and governments face in many countries due to these non-sustainable lifestyles.

- What types of institutional and cultural factors serve as barriers to or facilitators of business contribution to health and wellbeing of citizens?
- How are employer investments in health and wellbeing actually linked to employee health, sustainable lifestyle choices, economically viable organizations, and sustainable communities?

4. Diversity, inclusion and equality. Building inclusive culture at societal and organizational levels is critical for the attainment of the sustainable development goals. Inclusive practices within organizations could potentially set the stage for change in the communities and societies in which businesses are embedded.

- How can management practices and leader behaviors enable employee wellbeing and organizational effectiveness in face of ethnic and racial conflicts?
- How does a climate of inclusion and equality within organizations and in the communities that these organizations serve relate to social and economic sustainability?

5. Sharing best practices and leading SDG efforts. The UN Global Compact has called for the sharing of best practices and the use of metrics that raise the level of adoption and implementation of SDGs across businesses. Management research may be uniquely positioned to address this part of the agenda by providing frameworks for developing and validating evaluation criteria and metrics.

- What role do management standards and metrics play in encouraging and disseminating SDG oriented business practices? How can these be designed to enhance transparency and sustainability?
- How do SDG champions differ from SDG followers and SDG resisters? Why do some organizations or leaders embrace the SDGs and others do not?

We expect contributions to the special issue to be empirical and to describe unique, puzzling and intriguing phenomena that are not explainable by any extant theory. Given the current state of knowledge and the mission of *AMD*, we expect contributions to be focused on the exploratory pre-theory stage of empirical description, diagnoses of important and interesting phenomena, and abductive hunches of phenomena, rather than more traditional theory development or testing. Overall, we are seeking evidence that will help us make better sense of the contemporary issues surrounding the engagement of business and other organizations in the Sustainable Development Goals, as outlined above.

We have no disciplinary preference and welcome papers from management scholars, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, historians, economists, political scientists, and data scientists, among others. We will give preference to studies that use a multidisciplinary approach and address sustainability as multi-faceted (i.e., involving social, environmental and economic aspects) by exploring interactions or trade-offs between these aspects. We are open to a wide range of methodologies and welcome studies that provide robust evidence through multiple samples or multiple methods.

AMD will organize a workshop for potential authors and reviewers of this special issue at the 2017 Academy of Management meeting, Atlanta, Georgia. Members of the guest editing team and Advisory Board will engage with potential authors about potential research topics and approaches suitable for the special issue.

To submit a manuscript, please visit http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/AMD/. Please remember to select Manuscript Type as **Special Issue: Sustainable Development for a Better World** from the drop down menu. Manuscripts should be formatted according to the *AMD* Style Guide.

Submissions will be accepted between July 1 and 31, 2018.

THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

(http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/)

For more information on how the SDGs can translate into specific business goals, visit http://sdgcompass.org/

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

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