

The New Science Of Organizations: A Reconceptualization Of The Wealth Of Nations

Introduction

Jorge A. Arevalo and Shelley F. Mitchell

The goal of this *Handbook* is to enhance knowledge and application about sustainability in management education (SiME). We aim to provide a road map for researchers interested in navigating their way around four proposed areas in SiME: (1) theory development; (2) transformative interventions; (3) conceptualization of the role of external facilitators; and (4) definition of characteristics within successful programs. In this process, we used various criteria to help us decide which subjects to include in the volume: directly and indirectly related issues, empirical and conceptual, quantitative and qualitative, different levels of analysis, interdisciplinary–transdisciplinary approaches, old and new models, regional and internationally based contexts, and from well-established authors and relative newcomers to the field. We hope that this original edition will be a reaffirmation of the dominant streams of thought in SiME studies as well as a celebration of some newer modes of inquiry (see Chapter 25). In fact, as we conceptualize SiME, we take the opportunity to define sustainability, and sustainable development in the same context, by drawing from well-cited and applied definitions. Sustainability focuses on the long term contribution of business to society and the impact of that activity on future generations (Visser and Tolhurst, 2010; Waddock and McIntosh, 2011). Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is the classic definition of sustainable development provided by the Brundtland Commission (1987). Since the late 1980s, sustainable development planning has sought achievement of the five goals of sustainable development: resource conservation, built environment, environment quality, social equality, and political participation (Blowers, 1991). Achievement of these goals has depended on the incorporation of transdisciplinary participatory processes to address current social, economic, and ecological paradigms. More recently, SiME is defined as a holistic body of knowledge and understanding for management practice that meets the needs of current and future generations (Benn and Martin, 2010; Rusinko, 2010). Hence, SiME can be framed as incorporating the management of economic, social, environmental (Elkington, 1997), and cultural imperatives in all decision making.

In this regard our objective is to provide an overview of research in SiME, using the metaphor of conversations to guide our selection of topics and ground our introduction to them. Our interest in academic conversations and development of SiME has been widely shared, starting with the Academy of Management (AOM), and the work and accomplishments of its supporting divisions' members. In particular, we share how a unique number of AOM divisions and their active members have advanced our knowledge in SiME and how this model has facilitated new knowledge and combined research/pedagogical conversations to enrich this domain. We also aim to conceptualize SiME as a new series of conversations, in particular those of management studies scholars and researchers who help to constitute sustainability in business education through terms derived from paradigms, methods, and assumptions themselves derived from earlier and on-going dialogues.

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