

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES AND OBSTACLES IN SELECT COUNTRIES

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Abstract

This research aims at examining and analyzing sustainable business practices in various Asian developing economies. It also acknowledges the challenges these nations confront in putting sustainable practices into effect. To accomplish the goals of the study and respond to the primary research questions, a systematic literature review approach was used. Establishments in many developing Asian nations are concerned about ecosystem problems and are starting to invest in sustainable business strategies. Nevertheless, they have a variety of implementation difficulties that differ by nation. Throughout order to help businesses and governments create new practices or enhance current ones for better results, this study adds to a deeper knowledge of the sustainable practices being used in Asia. Future research may build on this study by include other countries and sectors and conducting empirical testing to acquire a more thorough grasp of the subject at hand. This is because the study was controlled to a few Asian nations and a small number of sectors. Organizations may embrace sustainable practices that are acceptable for them and strive to teach workers and all stakeholders on how to execute these practices by using the knowledge of that suit to various Asian nations gathered in this study. The identification of the obstacles to the implementation of sustainable practices in each nation in this study can assist policymakers in creating and enacting regulations to address the limitations of prevailing arrangements.

Keywords- *Business Sustainability, Sustainability Obstacles, Asian nations*

1. Introduction

Academics and professionals throughout the world are becoming increasingly interested in sustainability and green projects (Tripathi et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2017). The necessity to utilise natural resources and growing environmental concerns have increased the usage of the term "sustainability" among governments, organisations, and people (Richardson, 2019; Ortiz-de-Mandojana and Bansal, 2016). Due to a rising need for strategies and practises that are both sustainable and socially responsible, sustainable practise is one of the main concerns of organisations worldwide (Caldera et al., 2017). These behaviours span from corporate accountability enforced by regulation to customer demand for "green" items (Gatti et al., 2019; Lundgren et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2018).

The Asian nations place a high priority on sustainable business practices due to several reasons. First, Asia's rapid economic development has a big influence on the environment (Hansen and Wethal, 2014). Second, Asia's population is expanding quickly and exponentially, which results in increased resource demands and considerable resource depletion (James and Daryanomel, 2019). Third, Asia has a diverse geographic range, both of which are increasingly being threatened by construction projects (DasGupta et al., 2019). Taking a sustainable strategy is essential to reducing the detrimental environmental impacts of growth, provided that the aforementioned advancement is unavoidable in growing nations.

Despite the fact that several sustainable practises in Asia have been discussed recently in various contexts, important areas like energy, supply chains, and agriculture remain understudied in the region. Additionally, the challenges that arise with implementing sustainable business practises are yet to be explored (Liu and Froese, 2020).

The study discussed in this paper examined ethical business practises in developing Asian economies. The data was segmented by sector and examined for five nations. The study's second objective was to learn more about the challenges that these nations face while implementing sustainable practises. A systematic and thorough study of pertinent literature was carried out to comprehend the trends and advancement in the area of concentrate. The primary contribution of the paper is an examination of sustainable

business practises and difficulties they face in Asian nations, with particular emphasis on real-world examples from developing nations with projected high demand industries.

2. The Core Elements of Study:

Asia, the continent with the largest population, has a shortage of resources. Emerging economies start to invest in diverse sustainable business strategies as they realise how important they are (Joshi and Visvanathan, 2019). The study looks into Asian implementation challenges for sustainable business practises. For this, a thorough assessment of the literature was done. Regional representation was employed for the examination of each individual nation. China, Thailand, and Uzbekistan were selected from East Asia, South East Asia, and Central Asia, respectively. West Asia was given to Turkey, while South Asia was given to India. The decisions were taken keeping in mind the growth rates of the areas' identified developing markets. Due to the importance of energy, supply chains, and agriculture in sustainable development, these three sectors were chosen for sectorial representation.

3. Research Method

The aims of the study were attained by using the systematic literature review methodology. Region-by-region analysis of Asian nations was carried out to improve the effectiveness and focus of the search. The literature evaluation started with a computerised search for easily available resources on sustainable practises in Asian nations. The computer searches utilised ProQuest, EBSCO, Science Direct, and Web of Science. To discover papers pertinent to the research topics, use the keywords "sustainable business practises," "sustainable business practises in Asia," "sustainable industry practises in Asia," and "green business practises." The texts included English-language peer-reviewed journal articles, novels, and symposiums. Results from national and international institutions were also analysed. The time period recognised the relevance of sustainable development measures such as the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals, therefore research articles published between 2008 and 2020 were taken into consideration.

5. The Significance of Sustainable Business Practices

The definition of sustainable development is "fulfilling the demands of the present without compromising the capacity of future generations to satisfy their own needs" (Brundtland, 1987, p. 8). After the United Nations adopted a set of 17 global objectives, the aforementioned notion became more well-known. These goals offer a guide for businesses to invest continuously and effectively in sustainable development while achieving their business objectives (Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2018). This has inspired businesses to broaden their activities to incorporate sustainable business practises, and nations to advise or research these methods (Fowler and Hope, 2007). Additionally, the need for these activities has risen due to recent worries about environmental conditions including global warming, resource constraints, biodiversity loss, air pollution, and others. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, and 15 are where most organisations focus their efforts. Assuring "access to and sustainable management of water and sanitation for everyone" is the focus of Goal 9. Goal 9 attempts to create "strong systems, stimulate long-term economic growth, and foster innovation," whereas Goal 7 seeks to "guarantee that all people have access to cheap, dependable, sustainable, and modern energy." A "sustainable pattern of consumption and manufacture" is ensured by Goal 10. "Urgent action to reduce climate change and its implications" is stated as goal 13. While Goal 14 seeks to "conserve and sustainably use oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development" (Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2018). Based on the aforementioned factors, the assessment areas of energy, supply chains, and agriculture were chosen.

6. Sustainable Business Strategies for Energy Conservation

China is the top emerging country for study on ethical business practises (Muhmad and Muhamad, 2020). The reduction of carbon emissions is one of the nation's top priorities as the world's most populous rising economy. As a part of its attempts to create Smart Energy Cities, China is concentrating on the deployment of green technology in urban areas.

Two Asian nations actively pursuing social harmony and sustainability are Singapore and Thailand (Kantabutra, 2012). Thailand's agrofuels are remarkable; the nation actively promotes agriculturally based liquid transportation fuels as a sustainable energy source that can lessen reliance on imported fossil fuels (Daniel et al., 2009; Virakul et al., 2009). Thailand's land ownership structure and agricultural practises are more sustainable on a social and environmental level than those of its rivals (Mukherjee and Sovacool, 2014). Utilizing agrofuels will lower the price and emissions of carbon (Fargione et al., 2008). Another endeavour is the creation of biogas from solid waste, as the nation generates a lot of solid trash (Ali et al., 2012).

India is pushing microhydropower, a significant source of renewable energy (Khan, 2015). The provision of improved heating systems that use biomass in place of traditional heating systems that harm consumers' health is another noteworthy endeavour in India (Shrimali et al., 2011). Turkey, who represents West Asia in the study, is significantly reliant on energy imports. Due to an increase in energy demand, the nation has started to prioritise locally producible renewable energy sources such hydropower, biomass, geothermal, solar, and wind energy (Gomakli et al., 2008). Today, a large portion of the nation's power is generated by renewable sources, which is encouraging for sustainable activities (Kaygusuz, 2009). Turkey's geographic position offers prospects for the development of wind energy (Erdogdn 2009). Turkey's substantial geothermal, hydroelectric, and wind resources are also being utilised in a variety of ways to provide domestic energy (Kelep and Bilgen, 2012).

7. Sustainable Business Strategies in Supply Chains

One of the nations that have effectively adopted green supply chain management is China (GSCM). Business practises and problems in Asia environmental requirements, investment recovery, and eco-design practises are examples of GSCM approaches. Emerging environmental techniques like investment retrieval and eco-design are among

them and have had a significant influence on GSCM (Zhu et al., 2005). Increasingly severe environmental and sustainability standards as well as a focus on the community have made GSCM crucial for many Thai firms (Tippayawong et al., 2015). The electronics sector in Thailand is where GSCM is most prevalent (Jermstittiparsert et al., 2019).

A "cleaner production promotion legislation" and a "circular economy promotion law" have been enacted by the Uzbek government. Additionally, the country's version of the RoHS regulation and the WEEE directive, which place limits on the usage of specific dangerous compounds in electrical and electronic devices, have been drawn because of the environmental issues brought on by fast industrialisation. This nation's environmental awareness has increased, and many enterprises have started using GSCM (Bakhodirov and Peng, 2015).

India, one of the most populated nations and a rising market, has effectively implemented GSCM in areas like the automotive and mining industry because of the environmental dangers associated with big industrial businesses (Mathivathanan et al., 2018). Stakeholders are aware that GSCM would raise competitiveness and improve company performance even if it is still in its early phases of adoption in Indian manufacturing businesses, especially MSMEs (Mani et al., 2016; Mohanty and Prakash, 2014).

Companies attempt to safeguard the environment in line with the laws that the Turkish government has set to comply with international pacts such as the "United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change" (UNFCCC) and "Kyoto Protocol" (Sezen and Cankaya, 2013). As a result, GSCM has been widely used in Turkey (Cankaya and Sezen, 2019).

8. Environmentally Responsible Agricultural and Forestry Business Practices

Because China's food security and sustainability are reliant on how smallholder farmers, who lack the resources and skills, harvest their land, these issues are very problematic. However, China might boost output and guarantee food security by bettering agricultural techniques and worker training (Cui et al., 2018; Tang et al., 2013). The country has boosted greenhouse vegetable output as a consequence, and sustainable agri-food processing appears to be effective in the area (Yang et al., 2016; Kao et al., 2012).

Thailand established agricultural restructuring programmes, including training, assistance, and technology for appropriate income, as well as the engagement of NGOs and the business sector, in the 1990s after realising the necessity of sustainable agriculture (Kasem and Thapa, 2012; Roonnaphai, 2006). Thailand is renowned for its eco-friendly aquaculture methods and ocean food industry standards (Lebel et al., 2013; Lebel et al., 2010; Setthasakko, 20071).

In Uzbekistan, land governance and irrigation are crucial due to the country's topographical characteristics (Hornidge et al., 2013). As a result, the bulk of sustainable agricultural practises are focused on the adoption of irrigation regulations to increase agricultural productivity (Aleksandrova et al., 2016; Rakhmatullaev et al., 2011). India has recently introduced novel sustainable agricultural strategies to meet the requirements of a rising population and multiple cropping and organic farming also (Dwivedi et al., 2015; Patil et al., 2014). Small farmer engagement, private sector participation, and NGO involvement have all advanced significantly (Ferroni and Zhou, 2012). Turkey's agricultural laws precisely outline sustainable methods including organic farming, ploughing, rehabilitating pastures, and low-flow irrigation (Kaygusuz, 2010).

9. Implementing Sustainable Business Processes: Challenges

China

Uncertain government policies, a lack of worldwide cooperation, a dearth of provincial creativity, and corporate behaviour are China's biggest obstacles to the creation and preservation of sustainable electricity (Liang et al., 2020). An further issue is a lack of creativity (Mah et al., 2017). Although GSCM in China is still nascent, the key challenges are a lack of appropriate tools, a lack of managerial expertise, and a lack of acceptable financial justification for performance (Zhu et al., 2005). Agriculture sustainability implementation is hindered by economic considerations such as decreased crop output, restricted and farmer profits, and incomplete implementation of support programmes (Yang et al., 2016).

Thailand

A big worry is the loss of forest owing to expansions for agrofuel output, which might lead to severe pollution if conventional techniques like lighting forested areas on fire are adopted (Fargione et al., 2008; Peskett et al., 2007). Another problem is the significant amount of water needed to produce agrofuels, which might have an influence in locations where water shortage is a major problem (Kantabutra, 2012). Lack of a suitable legislative agenda for waste control and the generation of renewable gases, as well as a shortage of skilled labour, are further issues with sustainable energy methods (Menikpura et al., 2016; Ali et al., 2012). The biggest obstacles to sustainable supply chain management include natural disasters, high energy and labour costs, and problems with road infrastructure (Chakraborty and Mandal, 2014). Accessibility, legislative issues, and establishment engagement are the key barriers to sustainable agriculture (Straub et al., 2001).

Uzbekistan

Although Uzbekistan's sustainable energy practises face significant financial and climate change-related challenges (Kochnakyan et al., 2013), the main obstacle to implementing High power prices and maintaining current infrastructure are the primary obstacles to sustainable agriculture techniques (Rakhmatullaev et al., 2011).

India

Peripheral obstacles to the use of sustainable energy in India include opposition to the movement, corruption, a shortage of skilled labour, and ambiguous government policy (Khan, 2015). Supply management, inadequate management strategies, resource management issues, and a shortage of public accountability are some of the internal concerns (Bhattacharyya, 2010). Implementing sustainable supply chain management in India is hampered by high disposal costs for hazardous waste, rising costs for environmentally friendly packaging, ambiguity surrounding sustainability, a nonexistence of sustainability criteria and apt restrictions, insufficient drill about sustainability, and a lack of technical passivity (Al Zaabi ed af., 2013).

Other challenges to sustainable agriculture include democratic commitment to agriculture, organisational and application concerns, etc., while money is a big problem (Ferroni and Zhooi, 2012).

Turkey

Lack of coordination among stakeholders, a lack of sustainability knowledge, and insufficient finance for energy management operations are the primary obstacles to the execution of sustainable energy management (Ates and Durakbasa, 2012). The generation of wind power is hindered by a number of factors, including inadequate coordination between agencies and stakeholders, a nonexistence of knowledge about such ventures, industrial hazards, and a lack of public support. According to Erdogdu (2009), the barriers to GSCM implementation in Turkey include system flaws and legislative liability (Erol et al., 2010). Turkish agriculture still provides the majority of jobs, but owing to poverty, a lack of quality education, and unpaid labour, its economic impact is shrinking (Kaygusuz, 2010). As a result, poor pay and a lack of training are significant obstacles (Aerni, 2009).

10. Breakdown of challenges/difficulties

The difficulties are categorised as follows after looking at the similarities and contrasts between the difficulties in various Asian nations.

- Issues with Human Resources; Problems with organisation; Social and economic issues; Problematic tactics; Environmental problems; Technological challenges

11. Discussion

The paper's main objective was to analyse the sustainable methods used in various growing Asian nations and comprehend the numerous difficulties they have in doing so. The researcher concentrated on a few sample Asian nations because the review is not comprehensive. Consideration was given to a representation based on regions. Because they outperform their equivalents in terms of economic growth rates in their respective areas, China, Thailand, Uzbekistan, India, and Turkey were selected.

Emerging nations are starting to invest extensively in sustainable business practises because of how important they are. China's Smart Energy Cities proposal, Thailand's agrofuel production, Uzbekistan's on-grid photovoltaic power park, India's small hydropower, and Turkey's emphasis on energy generation from renewable sources have all been cited as examples of constructive drives on sustainable practises in power transformation. The study's chosen nations all use GSCM, a well-known and effective supply chain management approach. GSCM is widely recognised in these nations, despite the fact that the areas in which it is applied differ and that difficulties are faced in all of them.

Despite having a high labour participation rate, the agriculture sector's lesser economic contribution is thought to be a hindrance to the expansion of sustainable practises in this area (Kaygusuz, 2010). The research divided obstacles into six categories despite their geographic, sociocultural, and linguistic diversity: organisational concerns, economic and social issues, strategy difficulties, environmental issues, and technological difficulties. These nations share problems such a lack of qualified workers, problems with resource management, a lack of an appropriate legislative framework, corruption, and technology concerns. These difficulties have been explored in terms of nation, industry, and relatedness.

- **Practice Implications**

The study has many real-world applications, particularly since those environmental concerns are pervasive and there is a global movement toward sustainable living. This report can serve as a guide for businesses and governments by providing a comprehensive grasp of the existing sustainable practises in Asia's growing economies. This would also support the creation of new techniques or their improvement for better results. Planning beforehand can help interested parties deal with the issues found in Asia's representative nations.

- **Limitations and suggestions for future research**

The study's choice of nations and specific economic sectors is constrained. Although the current sustainable practises in these nations are comparable, generalizability could be a problem. Future research might examine a wider variety of sectors and geographical

regions. Recent occurrences and evidence-based research can offer fresh views and study options. The link between sustainable business practises and other management ideas including worker wellbeing, organisational performance, and societal growth should thus be the subject of future empirical study.

12. Conclusion

An analysis of sustainable business practises in Asian nations reveals two features. 1. These nations are developing more sustainability action plans in response to environmental issues. 2. Several challenges do exist to implementing the sustainable practises, grouped under diverse categories in this review. The successful implementation of sustainable business practises can be helped by increased social awareness and suitable policy frameworks. A complete understanding of the reasons and difficulties will be provided by more empirical study in this field. Asia should be a forerunner in sustainable business practises as the most populous continent with the most varied geographical features. Asia has already started to take steps toward sustainability, therefore the day of self-sustaining activities and livelihoods won't be far off. The energy coming from Asia has the potential to spread the word about sustainability all around the world.

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