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COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

Empirical study comparing organisations’ sustainability practices in New Zealand and in Brazil

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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in Management

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ABSTRACT

The sustainable development debate comprises the economic, environmental, and social challenges of the 21st century. These are unavoidable issues for organisations of all sectors. Private, public, and civil society organisations are pursuing ways to address such challenges individually and through collaborations. This study investigates how organisations in New Zealand and in Brazil address sustainability concerns through collaborative governance efforts with strategic stakeholders. A comparative analysis of the central management practices adopted by organisations in both countries is presented, and the goals, benefits and limitations associated with collaborative initiatives are investigated. Ten organisations are interviewed, five from each country. Thematic analysis is used to analyse the interview data.

The results revealed that organisations in both countries are employing similar management practices that focus on addressing sustainability concerns. Organisations perceive a number of value creation outcomes from sustainability practices. These include brand and reputational gains, improved supply chain management, and risk management attainments. Furthermore, organisations observe higher employee attractiveness and operational synergy gains between departments. In addition, companies observe that collaborative efforts with strategic stakeholders improve their ability to understand other management perspectives, and anticipate market pressures and opportunities. Thus, they can meet market demands and jointly develop innovative solutions toward sustainability goals by exchanging knowledge and enhancing their operational effectiveness. The results also revealed limitations of organisations concerning collaborative efforts. Organisations perceive lack of enough human resources to effectively collect, analyse and implement sustainability projects. Furthermore, there are internal limitations of organisations concerning how their executives and general staff incorporate sustainability issues into their organisations’ strategic planning and operational decisions.

This study identifies implications for management and directions for future research. These are based on how organisations measure sustainability outcomes of management practices and collaborative alliances, and how organisations map upcoming sustainability demands of the market as the sustainable development debate continues to evolve.
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