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Organizational Citizenship Behaviours as a Form of Real Commitment of Employees in Sustainable Management

Summary

The main purpose is to present the concept of Organisational Citizenship Behaviours as one of forms of commitment of employees in sustainable management. Therefore, the author made use of critical analyses of literature and results of research conducted by other authors in renowned periodicals. The additional purpose of the article is to present results of own research (an online survey) relating to the scale and frequency of Organisational Citizenship Behaviours of employees in commune offices in Poland. Sustainable management has to be realised in three aspects, namely environmental, social, and economic; however, without commitment of employees, the process of implementation of sustainable management in an organisation has only an apparent (temporary) character. Organisational Citizenship Behaviours are a form of real commitment of staff in such management. Thus, an organisation should promote such behaviours among its employees.

Key words: sustainable management, Organisational Citizenship Behaviours.

JEL codes: M54, Q01

Introduction

Commitment of employees is nothing but a condition, in which they make a contribution of themselves into duties performed (physical, emotional and cognitive resources), invest their own energy and experience an emotional relationship with their work (Christian et al. 2011, p. 123). This is extremely significant in the process of sustainable management understood as integration of social, environmental and economic purposes in business activities, which leads to improvement of economic situation of an organization itself as well as its environment and business partners.

The main purpose of this article is to present the concepts of sustainable management and Organizational Citizenship Behaviours as one of manifestations of commitment of workers in such management. In order to realize this purpose, the author used a critical analyses of renowned publications and results of research conducted by other authors.

An additional purpose is to present results of own research (online survey) on the scale and frequency of Organizational Citizenship Behaviours of employees of commune offices in Poland. Considering the data, respondents were mainly personal(coworkers)-oriented. This conclusion is important for managers, how to strengthen employees' commitment in sustainable management.

The essence of sustainable management

Despite the increasing number of publications relating to sustainable development and sustainable management, most of them do not provide sufficient answers to a question, how to implement such types of management in business activities successfully. The definition of sustainable management appeared for the first time in a report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (UN) in 1987. The development was described as one that „makes it possible to satisfy current demands without a fear that demands of future generations will not be satisfied” (Brundtland 1987, p. 41). However, in the contemporary literature there is a prevailing agreement that both sustainable development and sustainable management should be realized together in three aspects, namely environmental, social and economic aspects (Alkaddi 2015; Grudzewski et al. 2010; Hopewood et al. 2005; Pabian 2011). The aim of such management includes activities, which will be beneficial not only for an organization itself, but its stakeholders as well.

The Table 1 includes a list of activities that indicate, whether an management of an organization is sustainable or not.

Table 1
Areas and indexes of sustainable management

Area	Indexes
Environmental	improvement of packaging, energy efficiency, decrease of pollution emitted, minimization of waste, green purchasing (i.e. purchase of ecological products), green designing (environment-friendly facilities/systems), substitution of materials, ecological marking, use of renewable energy and clean technologies
Social	conditions of work, employees' rights, fair trade, transparency, education of employees, development of career, balance between professional and private life, social welfare, equitable remuneration, safety, health, adjustment of work to specific needs of employees, purchases on a local market, reduction of poverty, supplies to less developed social strata, support of community, guarantee of work on a local market, codes of ethics, equal treatment
Economic	optimization of resources, reduction of raw materials used, reduction of costs, delay of deliveries, minimisation of shortages

Source: own elaboration based on: Grudzewski et al. (2010).

The main reasons for an organization to commit to sustainable management are potential advantages resulting from it such as: an opportunity to apply higher prices, increase of quality of products, improvement of an image/reputation, reduction of costs, optimization of activities, new market opportunities, improvement of value for a customer, growth of satisfaction of stakeholders, improvement of profitability and reduction of losses.

Implementing the type of management, an organization may encounter a lot of barriers such as high costs of adaptation, too large focus on current profits, absence of resources (including, funds), an insufficient degree of integration of an organization, lack of govern-

mental support, resistance of partners and their little involvement, insufficient governmental support, cultural differences, insufficient awareness, knowledge and training, obsolete organizational standards, absence of sharing knowledge and technology. However, one of the greatest obstacles is internal resistance of employees or absence of their sufficient commitment (Florida 1996, p. 92, 96).

The role of commitment of employees in sustainable management

Sustainable management can be realized in an organization voluntarily (being a part of culture of sustainability) or be result of pressure of external factors such as legislation, trade unions, media, NGOs, local communities, an important business partner, consumer groups or competitors. For an organization the source of the pressure may be a fear of legal or economic consequences and loss of reputation. It should be emphasised that it is only voluntary adaptation of the management by an organization as a part of its organizational culture that can have positive influence on commitment of staff (Galpin et al. 2015, s. 9; Pabian 2011). This is because employees can trust their employees, perceiving the employer's activities as honest (Christian et al. 2011, p. 99). This commitment has a key importance from the point of view of effectiveness of organizational activities in the field of implementation of sustainable management (Godkin 2015, p. 15; Polman 2016, p. 38; Temminck 2015, p. 402, 404; Verhulst and Boks 2014, p. 75; Wolf 2013, p. 93).

Attitudes of employees towards sustainable management determine the way, in which activities of an organization are perceived in this respect. This is manifested directly in sustainable behaviours of employees and, at the same time, sustainable functioning of an organization (Cirnu and Kuralt 2013, p. 2-4; Ji et al. 2012, p. 2998; Pabian 2011; Polman 2016, p. 36; Temminck 2015, p. 404). The influence depends on cultural conditions (Cirnu and Kuralt 2013, p. 5) and the climate within an organization. What is more, an organization is perceived by employees as managed in a sustainable manner, if, in its activities, the organization focuses on natural environment and social issues. If economic aspects prevail, its staff becomes more and more sceptical (Cirnu and Kuralt 2013, p. 9; Polman 2016, p. 36).

It should be mentioned that the subject commitment of employees depends, to a great extent, on commitment (example set by) executive staff (Godkin 2015, p. 17; Ji et al. 2012, p. 2998). Apart from that, managers should identify ethically oriented employees and use their potential in the process (Godkin 2015, p. 15).

Commitment of employees may be intensified by appropriate training, which, owing to increase of knowledge, qualifications and skills, lead to changes in attitudes and enhance motivation (Ji et al. 2012, p. 2999; Liu 2014, p. 196; Verhulst and Boks 2014, p. 73; Wolf 2013, p. 97). One should also shape conditions of work in order to facilitate employees' involvement in sustainable management (Polman 2016, s. 37; Temminck 2015, p. 408). It is also significant to make employees aware of the fact that the activities are beneficial not only for an organization itself, but to its employees as well (Polman 2016, p. 37; Wolf 2013, p. 92).

The significance of Organizational Citizenship Behaviours for sustainable management

Committed employees not only perform their tasks better, but are also more eager to undertake additional tasks that are not formally connected with their jobs. This results from the fact that their commitment allows them to accomplish their aims more promptly (Christian et al. 2011, p. 120). These are extraproductive behaviours referred to in the literature as Organizational Citizenship Behaviours (OCB). A lot of them can be characterized as sustainable behaviours.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviours are referred by various authors also as ethical and ethos-related behaviours, Prosocial Organizational Behaviour (POB), contextual performance, organizational spontaneity or personal initiative (Nerding et al. 2016, p. 414).

In spite of the fact that various authors do not agree on, how such types of behaviours should be referred to, there is a general agreement as to comprehension of the same. One of the most synthetic definitions that is true even today was suggested by Organ (1988, s. 4), who referred to it as “individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization”.

The definition includes two key characteristics, namely the voluntary character of the behaviours and the fact that they are not recognized by the formal reward system. The first of them means that behaviours are completely a question of an employee’s personal choice. On the other hand, rewards for undertaking such behaviours have exclusively indirect character and, therefore, there is not guarantee of a reward (Organ 1997, s. 86-87). What is more, the behaviours do not contribute directly to accomplishment of an employee’s targets, but they develop the widely understood social and organizational environment, in which they are accomplished (Organ 1997, s. 90).

The most popular classification of Organizational Citizenship Behaviours includes two main dimensions (personal- or organizational-oriented) and seven categories (Podsakoff et al. 2000):

- 1) altruism/helping behaviour – voluntary helping other employees in tasks realized by them,
- 2) organisational compliance – acceptance of principles of an organization and diligent adherence to the same, even if no one controls the same,
- 3) sportsmanship – an ability to overcome difficulties and conflicts appearing in cooperation with others,
- 4) organisational loyalty – promoting an organization outside and loyalty to an organization also in case of negative incidents,
- 5) individual initiative – exceeding expectations and adopted standards in activities undertaken,
- 6) civic virtue – active participation in the life of an organization (e.g. meetings, “keeping abreast”, responding to announcements),

- 7) self-development – independent and voluntary extension of knowledge and improvement of one's skills and qualifications.

The research on OCB in commune offices – methodology and results

The author's own research on OCB was realized from June to November 2016 using a 13-item scale prepared by the author on Podsakoff et al. (2000)¹. It was used an online survey covered employees of all commune offices in Poland. The used scale was embedded within larger questionnaire (measuring also Counterproductive Work Behaviors)² worded in Polish. The questionnaire was sent by email to 2478 offices (including, to 304 municipal communes, 611 rural and municipal communes and 1563 rural communes). The message includes a request for participation of all employees of a given office in the survey.

The sample was no-random (it was purposeful). In total, the author received 872 correctly completed questionnaires, including 227 completed by men (26.0%) and 614 completed by women (70.4%); 31 persons (3.6%) did not answer the question concerning their gender. The respondents were employees of municipal communes (291 persons, 33.4%), rural and municipal communes (122 persons, 13.9%) and rural communes (448 persons, 51.4%); 11 persons (1.3%) did not indicate the type of a commune. The respondents worked mostly as office workers (557 persons, 63.9%); 5 respondents were operational workers (0.6%) and 305 persons were managers (34.9%); 5 persons did not respond to the question (0.6%). Concerning the length of work experience, 561 persons (64.3%) worked 8 years or longer, 152 persons: 4-7 years (17.4%) and 156 persons – up to 3 years (18.0%); there were 3 persons (0.3%), who did not answer to the question.

The table 2 presents the responses relating to each of statements used to measure OCB. Based on the results, we can state that the respondents were eager to undertake various forms of Organizational Citizenship Behaviours, primary personal-oriented. These were, most often, the following behaviours: "I am always ready to give a helping hand to those around me"; "I help those, who have been absent from work"; and "I am eager to help those, who had problems connected with work".

On the other hand, we can observe lower commitment in organizational-oriented behaviours such as: "I think that I should work honestly for equitable remuneration"; "I adhere to corporate principles and provisions, even if no one looks" or "My work attendance is above average".

The author did not discern any significant differences in the answers with respect to such demographic variables as gender, length of work experience and type of a commune, in which the respondents worked. However, the author could observe a higher frequency of undertaking of OCB by managers. This difference can be explained by the character of duties relating to a position, which requires a worker to take his/her own initiative.

¹ The reliability of used scale was very high (Cronbach alpha coefficient: 0,867).

² The whole questionnaire is available on <https://goo.gl/forms/apAg3uzLCpbEmWd12>.

Table 2**The frequency of undertaking of selected manifestations of OCB (in %)**

Statement	Never	Rarely	From time to time	Often	Every day
1. I am always ready to give a helping hand to those around me	0,7	0,3	1,0	23,3	74,6
2. I help those, who have been absent from work	1,4	0,6	3,0	33,7	61,3
3. I am eager to help those, who have had problems connected with work employees	2,5	1,5	2,5	32,6	60,8
4. I am one of the most diligent	0,7	1,2	7,3	50,2	40,6
5. I consider the influence of my activities on colleagues	3,0	2,1	6,4	33,3	55,1
6. I try to avoid making problems to colleagues	2,1	2,7	9,0	38,9	47,3
7. I help those, who are overloaded with work	0,2	2,6	12,1	63,2	21,8
8. I am aware of how my behaviour affects other people's work	1,3	2,7	21,3	52,1	22,5
9. I undertake activities in order to try to avoid problems with other employees	1,4	3,9	26,9	55,0	12,8
10. I help new employees to get acquainted with their work, even if this is not required	1,4	7,0	25,8	53,9	11,9
11. My work attendance is above average	3,4	8,5	29,3	43,9	14,9
12. I adhere to corporate principles and provisions, even if no one looks	7,8	12,4	23,7	43,5	12,6
13. I think that I should work honestly for equitable remuneration	0,6	6,5	41,4	45,9	5,7

Source: own elaboration on study results.

Conclusions

Sustainable management may be a source of competitive advantage of an organization. However, it is necessary to engage the whole staff so that they could undertake sustainable activities voluntarily. Organizational Citizenship Behaviours are a form of such engagement. Thus, an organization should promote OCB. Appropriate selection of staff is of key importance (one should look mainly for diligent and active persons with positive attitude) as well as appropriate leadership and development of conditions of work, including, among others, by diversified duties or proper motivating of workers (Christian et al. 2011, s. 124).

Considering the results of own research, it is possible to show interesting patterns in employee behaviors of municipal offices. Managers should be aware that employees' com-

mitment in this (public) sector has different objectives (the employees are more personal-oriented and less organizational-oriented). Thus, managers' efforts made in order to enhance overall employee commitment in sustainable management should focus on strengthening employees' loyalty to an organization.

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Zachowania obywatelskie jako forma rzeczywistego zaangażowania pracowników w zrównoważone zarządzanie

Streszczenie

Głównym celem artykułu jest zaprezentowanie koncepcji zachowań obywatelskich jako jednej z form zaangażowania pracowników w zrównoważone zarządzanie organizacją. Do realizacji celu posłużono się krytyczną analizą literatury i wyników badań innych autorów w renomowanych czasopismach.

Celem dodatkowym jest zaprezentowanie wyników badania (metodą ankiety internetowej *on-line*) nt. skali i częstotliwości podejmowania zachowań obywatelskich przez pracowników urzędów gmin w Polsce.

Zrównoważone zarządzanie musi odbywać się w trzech wymiarach: środowiskowym, społecznym i ekonomicznym, jednak bez zaangażowania pracowników, proces wdrażania w organizacji zrównoważonego zarządzania ma charakter pozorny (nietrwały). Zachowania obywatelskie są formą rzeczywistego zaangażowania personelu w takie zarządzanie. Organizacja powinna zatem promować tego typu zachowania wśród pracowników.

Słowa kluczowe: zrównoważone zarządzanie, zachowania obywatelskie.

Kody JEL: M54; Q01

Гражданское поведение как форма действительного включения работников в устойчивое управление

Резюме

Основная цель статьи – представить концепцию гражданского поведения как одну из форм включения работников в устойчивое управление организацией. Для осуществления цели применили критический анализ литературы и результатов исследований других авторов в признанных журналах. Дополнительная цель – представить результаты изучения (по методу онлайн-анкеты) по вопросу о масштабе и частотности выступления гражданского поведения у работников гминных (волостных) правлений в Польше. Устойчивое управление должно проходить по трем измерениям: в среде, в социальном

и в экономическом плане, однако без включения работников процесс внедрения в организации устойчивого управления имеет мнимый и непостоянный характер. Гражданское поведение – форма действительного включения персонала в такое управление. Следовательно, организация должна поощрять такое поведение среди своих работников.

Ключевые слова: устойчивое управление, гражданское поведение.

Коды JEL: M54, Q01

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