

Sustainable Development
Name
Institution

Sustainable Development

1. The Concepts of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development has a long time history. Particularly, in 1987, the report entitled “Our Common Future” was published by the Bruntland commission. The idea of producing the document was to provide a working solution of linking economic development and environmental management (Mundt, 2011). It is undeniable that with the rising number of people and expanding needs, economic development cannot be postponed. At the same time, the quest for using the world’s resources should not damage the environment. Most importantly, the definition of sustainable development was provided in the Bruntland report as “the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs” (Rogers, Jalal, & Boyd, 2012). Therefore, the essence is to create a mutual harmony between economic progress and environmental resources.

Critically, the definition is somewhat inconclusive and can get improved in the future. The view is that the report did not provide a detailed description of human needs and how they might change in the future. Besides, several factors influence the consumption of people, which were not well described. Nonetheless, the definition provides the essential basis of the concept. Rogers, Jalal, and Boyd (2012) noted that sustainability tries to ensure economic progress and advancement with intentions of protecting the nature’s value on a long-term notion. The concept provides the framework for enactment and implementation of development strategies and environmental policies (Morelli, 2011). For example, the hotel and tourism enterprises use several ecological resources such as water, land, energy, and others; therefore, they are obligated to operate based on principles of sustainability (Brodhag & Taliere, 2006). In essence, all business activities must ensure that environmental and economic sustainability benefits both the present and future generations.

The scope of this essay does not limit the concept of sustainable development to the Bruntland commission’s definition. Notably, it is essential to appreciate ideas such as intergenerational equity (IE). Cooper and Vargas (2004) defined IE as an idea that aims to conserve environmental resources to allow the future generations to benefit. Markedly, the general idea of reliable development is to ensure the steadiness of nature and economy. As a result, it is imperative to acknowledge and integrate environmental, social, and economic concerns when making decisions (Aall, 2014). Figure 1 below illustrates that for sustainable development to be achieved, all choice making processes should recognize the three issues to ensure that the linkage is viable, equitable, and bearable.

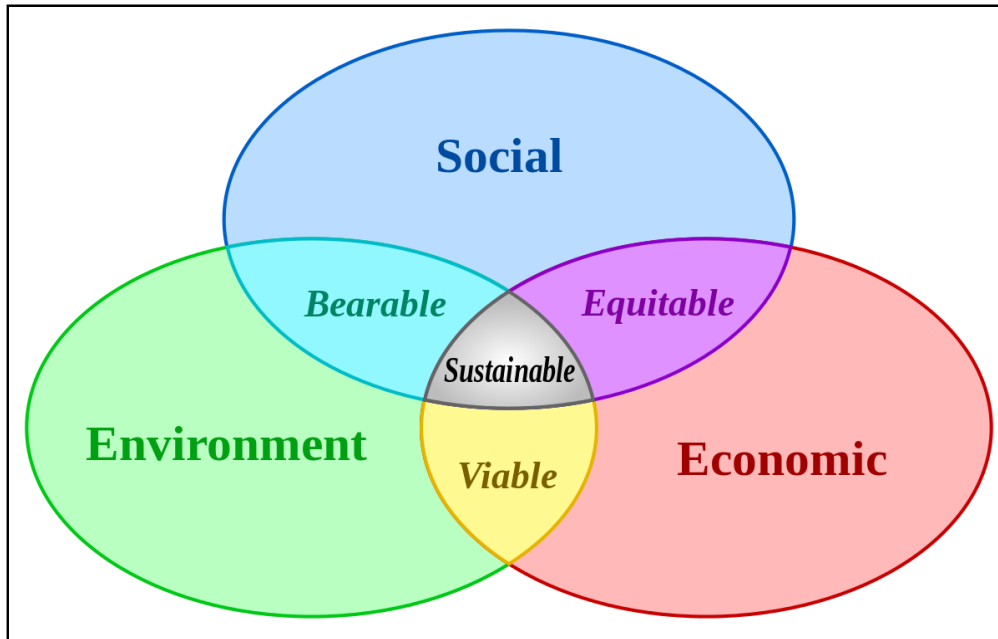


Figure 1: The overall concept of sustainable development

2. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Adopting Sustainable Development Principles

All concepts can be viewed from two angles. Rogers, Jalal, and Boyd (2012) mentioned that the principles of sustainable development include integration, prevention/ precautionary measures, cost-effectiveness, engagement and participation, and equity/fairness. The abstract idea is that environmental concerns must be integrated with social and economic dimensions to elicit reliable decisions. Besides, sustainability demands prevention before curing. Cooper and Vargas (2004) explained that avoidance is about taking prompt actions to evade either large-scale or irreversible damages. The idea is to minimize the potential environmental destruction caused by economic and social changes. Planning and coordination are some of the early stage activities that are used to reduce ecological damages. Thus, people should take precautionary actions and measures to avoid the potential harm.

Resources are not immune to depletion. Mundt (2011) mentioned that either cost-effectiveness or efficient utilization of natural resources is an essential principle of sustainability. The core argument is that environmental assets are not infinite; thus, the users should reduce their consumption rates to minimize wastage and potential damages. Notably, the principle of prevention is meant to decrease the costs of either repairing or reversing the ecological destructions. Further, there is the need for ensuring equity, where sustainability requires inter and intra-generational fairness (Mundt, 2011). The essence is that the consumption of the present generation should not affect the expected future use (intergeneration). Moreover, people within the same cohort should not consume the resources with the variability that limited the availability of assets to specific sections. Involving the local population is also essential in ensuring sustainable development (Tan, 2012). For example, through corporate social responsibility and engagement of the stakeholders, there is a widened opportunity for harmonizing developmental and environmental concerns. Most importantly, there are various advantages of adopting the sustainable principles.

Advantages

- Overall, adopting the sustainability principles helps in reducing hunger, improving nutrition, attaining food security, and promoting sustainable business activities. For example, minimizing environmental damages allows the local communities to implement responsible agricultural practices that increase food availability. Tourism and hotel businesses also use the principles to enhance the well-being of the locals.
- Prevention and precautionary policies are essential for reducing the costs of environmental degradation. Sometimes, it becomes either intricate or even impossible to revert or reverse the damaged natural resources to their original states.
- Moreover, equity enhances fairness in the distribution of resources. Different people from this and future generations get opportunities for enjoying and appropriately utilizing the environmental assets.
- Engaging the local communities in sustainable activities such as green technology, recycling, reusing, and reducing programmes lead to empowerment and developments that are vital for enhancing human well-being.
- Harmonizing economic progress and advancements with social and environmental concerns allows humanity to reduce poverty while fostering innovations and infrastructural development if not to mention the benefits to the overall biodiversity. Rogers, Jalal, and Boyd (2012) indicated that adhering to the principles results in the adoption of sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Sustainable use and concerns are necessary for combating climate change, protecting, and promoting sustainable application of natural resources such as water bodies, land, air, forests, and the overall biodiversity.
- The measures also help to reduce human-wildlife conflicts due to mutuality created between the two dimensions.
- Investments such as hotels and restaurants can adopt the sustainable strategies and policies to steer the development of either new or green technology that reduces costs while maximizing the expected business benefits.
- Enterprises that comply with this principles earn higher public reputation, and it translates to attraction and retention of several customers.

Disadvantages

- Some of the values are not suitable for small and medium enterprises that face financial burdens. Sustainability is often perceived to be costly to implement, especially for the small-scale hotels.
- Notably, there are several definitions of reliability which result in confusion and, sometimes, variations in interpretations. Further, there are limited available sustainable models, and therefore, it is difficult to understand and conceptualize them.
- Cooper and Vargas (2004) mentioned that the ideas of sustainability are either complicated and difficult to understand or put into practice.

3. Key Sustainability Issues in Hotels

Hotels often fight to offer more than what the guest wants, and the services include food, space, water, fresh air, and light among others. Despite the fact that hotels need profits from the products and services offered, the quest should not be at the expense of the environment. Therefore, the hotels' owners must invest in environmentally and socially responsible concepts that balance the need for generating income and responsibility (Rogers, Jalal, & Boyd, 2012). Markedly, the tourism sector is segmented into various sections such as catering, resorts and hotels, and travel services; nonetheless, there are common issues such as climate change,

depletion of resources, health and wellness of the workers and locals, and company's attractiveness that affect every department (Mundt, 2011).

Carbon and Other Greenhouse Emissions

Hotels contribute to emission of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane. CO₂ is emitted from fossil fuel use, transportations, and other point sources from the hotels. Therefore, hospitality industry adopts sustainability principles to help reduce carbon footprint. Besides, rotting biomass and wastages from the hotels when disposed inappropriately decompose to release methane gas (Tan, 2012). For that reason, the investors should appreciate the need to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases by adopting the sustainability principles. Thus, by using new technologies that decrease the release of the toxic components, the entrepreneurs contribute to the need to minimize the impacts of climate change.

Resource Use and Wastage

Hotels consume various resources that are drawn from the environment. Just to mention but a few, hotels use water, energy, biomass, and land among others. Apparently, there is a correlation between the size of the business and some assets used. Power is always consumed during cooling and heating. Besides, luxury services such as laundry, spa, heated pool, or golf increase the energy consumption (Legrand, Sloan, & Chen, 2017). Water is also an essential resource applied in the rooms, lawns, spaces, and almost every section of the hotels. Therefore, investing in new ways and adopting the sustainability principles reduce the costs incurred while protecting the environment.

Health and Wellness

Hotels often strive to offer what the clients want without affecting either their health or wellness. For instance, wellness authorities are concerned about the safety of the served food to avoid cases of poisoning, allergy, and obesity among other consequences (Baldwin, 2015). As a result, businesses invest in alternative cooking, prevent contamination, and improve meals' hygiene. Ideally, crisis management entails either preventive or precautionary measures that are consistent with sustainability.

4. Course of the Action Plans for the Preservation of the Environment to Enhance Sustainability, Competitiveness, and Profit of Your Organization

Recycling

Hotels should plan to recycle wastes to reduce the costs of wastage. Materials that can be reprocessed include papers, water, polythenes, and many other recyclable assets (Legrand, Sloan, & Chen, 2017). Either developing internal projects or partnering with external institutions can achieve the plan. Notably, the aim is to recover everything.

Reusing

Furthermore, hotels can opt for reusing materials such as plates and other reusable items to minimize wastage. For example, cardboard boxes, cans, and plastics may be reused to limited wastage and cost of buying new products. Thus, the environment would be saved from pollution.

Reducing

Reduction of use is essential. The quantity of water, paper, energy, and other resource usages can be diminished. For example, instant switches may be applied to limit energy usage. Overall, decreasing the number of assets can prevent depletion.

Community-Based Tourism and Responsible Disposal

Community-based tourism is applicable in facilitating awareness and empowering the locals in regards to sustainable development. On the contrary, proper waste disposal is essential to minimize costs, protect environment, and comply with the regulations (Legrand, Sloan, &

Chen, 2017). On this note, well-designed and located disposal points such as incinerators should be invented. Thus, the strategies mentioned above improve protection of the resources for the present and future generations.

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