

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES FOR MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

A Roadmap for Institutional Integration

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ABSTRACT

What are the best ways to integrate sustainability concepts into higher education institutions and management education? Sustainability, global responsibility, and social innovations are increasingly accepted worldwide as part of a common agenda and international priority. Yet, higher education institutions and management programs are slow to institute these standards and value-based perspectives to help students change the world for our common and better future.

This study reviews key international initiatives, resources, frameworks, and paradigms that can help speed up integration of sustainability in higher education institutions. It also provides suggestions to better integrate Ignatian pedagogy and Buddhist perspectives into management education. Based on these analyses, the authors present practical recommendations to integrate sustainability more effectively into management education and to help develop conscious sustainability leaders for the 21st century.

KEYWORDS

sustainability education; responsible management; PRME; *cura personalis*; Jesuit tradition; Buddhist tradition

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable business and management education is at a crossroads. It can choose to integrate sustainability values effectively, systemically, and strategically into its curricula, or it can continue with business as usual by adding superficial “green-only” perspectives and a few “sustainability-related” courses. If academia is going to significantly contribute to sustainable leadership education, it needs to use its institutional frameworks to help make a deeper impact on its educational value proposition. The 2030 Agenda and its comprehensive Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets for 2030 and 2050 require our academic institutions to fully integrate teaching and learning goals, outcomes, and impacts, to benefit our common future and common good. Higher education institutions (HEIs) and management education programs can foster sustainable and systemic solutions to positively affect human communities worldwide (people), while diminishing the environmental impact (planet), help promote well-being for all (prosperity), create conditions for human rights and social justice (peace), and encourage collaborations across multiple actors (partnerships).

Sustainability is a rapidly growing field in business education and responsible management education (RME) (Storey, Kilian, & O’Regan, 2017). Besides business ethics, most business and management schools recognize the strategic priority and value of implementing sustainable solutions and social responsibility for a higher purpose. Yet, fostering sustainability in management education requires more than adding a course or two (Stachowicz-Stanusch & Amann, 2018). It requires that HEIs discern how ‘sustainability values’ are integral to their mission and values, strategic priorities, and curricula offerings. It requires promoting effective and impactful integrations by creating curricula with a focus on ‘sustainability’ values for leadership mindsets and social impact competencies (Tavanti & Davis, 2018). It requires updating institutional and program learning outcomes (PLOs) to integrate

global responsibility and systems thinking with multidisciplinary, multilateral, multi-sector, and multi-stakeholder perspectives, knowledge, and solutions. In summary, it requires prioritizing an integration process where the entire higher education institution and all socially responsible education programs (HEI-RME) review how their practices map with already established initiatives and how their values align with proven traditions of discernment and consciousness raising.

This study reviews select international initiatives which can help facilitate and institutionally integrate effective processes to include sustainability paradigms and translate them into actions and programs for the better preparation of our students for the 21st century. Sustainability should no longer be an added adjective to the “business as usual.” The sustainability paradigm requires us to revisit our core values and educational mission into new dimensions and perspectives for global, social, political, economic, community, natural, and environmental responsibilities. These strategic integrations help institutions avoid a piecemeal approach by adopting proven methods relating to sustainability and responsible management education.

In academia, there is a general agreement about the importance of sustainability/sustainable development, global/social responsibility, and social innovation/impact, but the integration into curricula and core activities of MBAs, MPAs, MNAs, and other professional management degrees has been slow, fragmented, and sporadic. The UNESCO’s Education for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Global Compact, and its Principles of Responsible Management Education are important international frameworks that have proven to be instrumental in promoting a more effective integration of sustainability in management education. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate a roadmap on how to integrate sustainability at the institutional level and at the personal level. They invite HEI-RMEs to advance their own process to making a stronger commitment (beyond just a signature) with formal reports of impact practices shared among stakeholders. Without these active and institutional levels of participation, these initiatives risk failing as another “greenwashing” (in reference to sustainability), “blue-washing” (in reference to the United Nations), or “rainbow-washing” (in reference to the colorful SDGs) (Gutierrez, Montiel, Surroca, Tribo, & Josep, 2021).

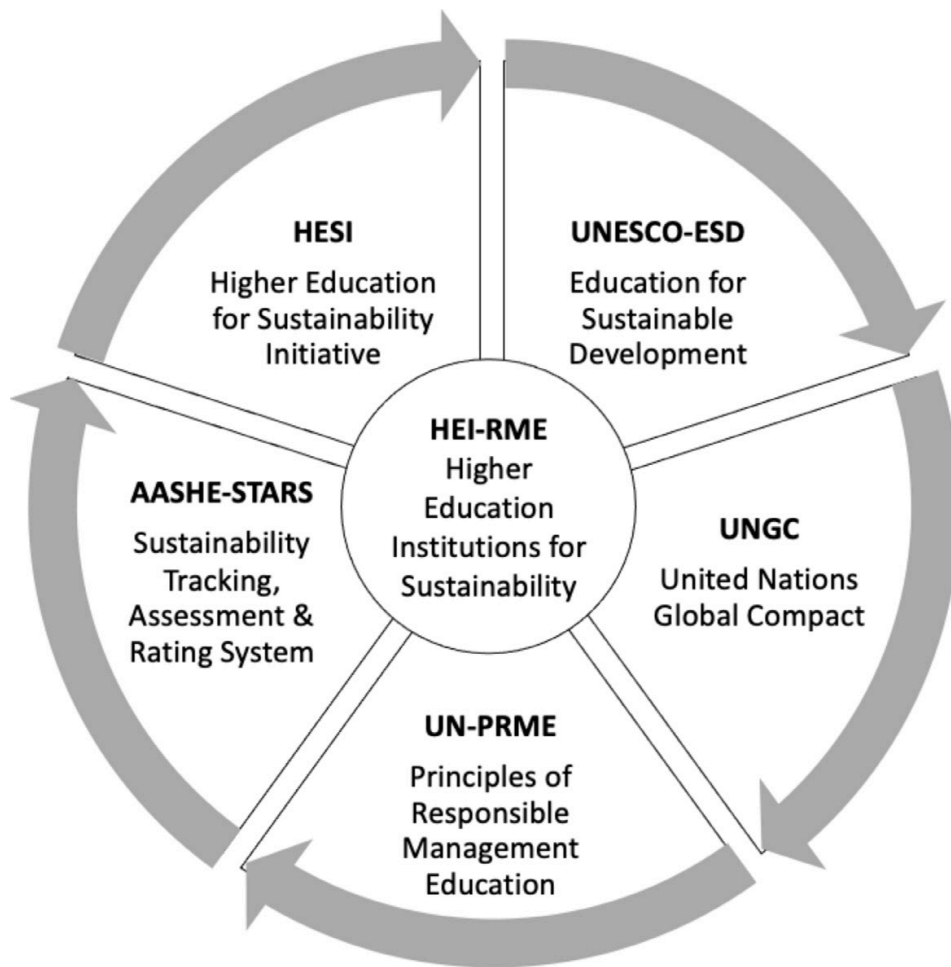


Figure 1: Broadening Horizons: Initiatives to Help Integrate Sustainability into Higher Education Institutions and Management Education

Higher education institutions dedicated to responsible management education (HEI-RMEs) can use these initiatives to go broader and create their own strategic process for integrating sustainability with their core educational mission and values as well as integrating it across disciplines, colleges, and programs. These initiatives could help initiate, expand, or deepen the process of sustainability integration. They can make the integration process less cluttered and confusing (Storey et al., 2017), avoid “impact washing” (Lashitew, 2021), and overcome “silo-challenges” (van Hall, 2018). They also contribute to the standardization of RME and HEIs in a way that helps foster leadership and organizational paradigms shifts for mindset transformation and revolutionizing sustainability education (Ivanova & Rimanoczy, 2022). Unfortunately, not many schools know about them. While they are popular with some faculty, scholars, and professionals, these paradigms are still not widely known or integrated in the strategic priorities of many HEIs and Jesuit business

schools worldwide. Value-based HEIs such as Jesuit Colleges and Universities have their value-oriented mission, which allows them to lead the way. “If we, participants in Jesuit HEIs, think and act regarding sustainability as we have solidarity and poverty, gender and diversity, that is, as ways of being and knowing that are integral to a full human experience, then our universities will be all the richer for our work and accomplishments” (Smythe, 2012). We argue that the adoption and integration of the standards provided and represented by these initiatives can significantly advance the integration of sustainability in management education by breaking away from the ‘business-as-usual,’ go beyond a ‘green-patchwork’ approach, and renew a sense of wonder, devotion and discovery centered around deeper and more spiritually centered leadership consciousness (Sfeir-Yunis & Tavanti, 2020).

SEEKING NEW MANAGEMENT EDUCATION PARADIGMS

New technologies are radically transforming the world of business, government, and societal relations. To keep pace, business and management education needs new standards to educate future leaders who can change the world for the better. Some have argued that we need to find our metaphorical North Star such as the 2030 Agenda and the solid frameworks of the United Nations’ SDGs (Davis, 2018). While most curricula are still organized around old paradigms of efficiency (strongest, biggest, fastest), younger generations reflect and demand new paradigms for effectiveness (purposeful, innovative, impactful), integrated learning ecosystems, leadership mindsets, and competencies relevant to sustainability values and global social responsibility (Bratianu, Hadad, & Bejinaru, 2020). Scholars have argued how business education must evolve not only by integrating CSR and multi-dimensional ethical leadership into their curricula, but also by fostering a change in mindset within the business school (Wolfe & Werhane, 2010). Some schools have already begun transforming their business as-usual curricula by focusing more on new integrated models where sustainable, social, and global value creation are at the core, not just profit-maximization (Arevalo & Mitchell, 2017). For MBAs and other management and business degrees, integrating sustainability is more than revising the curriculum and having relevance to the community (Weybrecht, 2017). It is about adopting new paradigms and seeking systems change solutions for the whole HEI with its values, community (stakeholders-local) it represents, and the bigger picture of worldwide (international-global) commitments.

It is commendable that the International Association of Jesuit Universities (IAJU) has promoted a Working Group of business education leaders who have advanced new inspirational paradigms for Jesuit business education inspired by the United Nations' SDGs and Pope Francis' Encyclical *Laudato Si'*. While cognizant of the vulnerability, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) of our time, the radical transformations of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), and of the urgencies created by the COVID-19 pandemic, they also recognize the moral, social, and global responsibility towards more value-based, sustainable, and inclusive solutions for our communities and stakeholders (IAJU, 2020). Their visionary concerns reflect the paradigm shifts needed for HEIs in business, management, and across other disciplines (Gleason, 2018). Fr. Michael Garanzini (2020: 25–27) expands on the needs for new paradigms by explaining what the document describes as “hungers” for integrated knowledge, a moral compass, community, and global paradigms among others. The actualization of these paradigms is a challenge that, to be fully integrated and articulated into the mission and values of the university, needs to be part of a larger institutional commitment and process.

How can we promote a systemic shift in management education? How can we educate and equip the next generation of leaders with appropriate skillsets and mindsets for our common future? Some academics argue that HEIs should assume a leadership role in search of a sustainable future by incorporating sustainability holistically and strategically through key paradigms and “sustainability action archetypes” (Sanches, Campos, Gaio, & Belli, 2021). The Deans and other Jesuit academic leaders of this working group acknowledge how corporations worldwide are changing the way they do business pushed by new policies and frameworks for sustainability reporting in the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) annual Communication of Progress (COP); the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI); the environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) and the Human Rights Reporting and Assurance Frameworks Initiative (RAFI) following the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNHRC, 2011). These international initiatives represent important actionable paradigms that can inspire HEIs to translate these inspirations into actualizations (Ang, 2021) and further integrate sustainability into their curricula offerings, pedagogical approaches, and leadership skills along with local/global stakeholder engagement (Stoner, 2019).

Over the last two decades, many undergraduate, graduate, and executive business and management programs have introduced modules, courses, and components having to do with sustainability. They did this often responding to growing demands from students, business organizations, government agencies, and accrediting agencies like the Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD)'s Quality Improvement System (EQUIS), and the Association of Master of Business Administration (AMBA). Yet, the lack of standardization, coordination, and understanding of the personal, professional, systemic, social, economic, and political—beyond environmental—dimensions of sustainability have often generated incoherent and patchy integration practices (Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015). This could be a result of taking a “green-only approach” or not fully understanding the concept of ‘sustainability’ and ‘sustainable development’ beyond Brundtland's needs-based approach or Elkington’s Triple Bottom Line (Sfeir-Younis & Tavanti, 2020). It may also be caused by the lack of widely adopted standardized matrixes with measurable outcomes and comparable priorities. Many business practices and management programs still follow old paradigms dominated by materialistic, individualistic values and shareholder primacy. Sustainability education represents a paradigm shift with the growth of sustainable innovations, green economy, social entrepreneurship, social businesses, benefit corporations, and impact investing. But how can we promote systemic integration of sustainability into management education while avoiding greenwashing and a piecemeal approach? What perspectives will help us to self-realize the deeper spiritual values of sustainability in management education?

INTERNATIONAL PARADIGMS FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

There are several new and emerging paradigms that promote sustainability and global responsibility in business and higher education. The most important have emerged in the last two decades promoted by the United Nations (UN) and civil society associations. Among them are the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s education of sustainable development (ESD) and the Education Sustainable Development Goals (ESDG). Since its inception in 2000, the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) has been instrumental to catalyze corporate leadership and multi-sector solutions toward fundamental responsibilities in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption (Orzes,

Moretto, Ebrahimpour, Sartor, Moro & Rossi, 2018). The UNDG has also endorsed the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) as a way to engage academic institutions to “transform management education and develop the responsible decision-makers of tomorrow to advance sustainable development” (PRME, n.d.a).

Other important UN related initiatives have emerged to promote Academic Impact (UNAI) and sustainability initiatives in academia as in the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI). The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) has also been instrumental to advance sustainability practices in higher education especially with the comprehensive reporting mechanism called Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). These are the main initiatives reviewed in detailed below. They are not the only ones. Other worth mentioning initiatives include the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI), The Global Business School Network (GBSN), Aim2Flourish, Sulitest, Oikos International, The Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges, and The Academy of Business in Society. Here is a brief review of the some of these initiatives and the resources and processes they provide HEIs seeking to integrate sustainability into management education. They are presented in chronological order to signify the growth of these initiatives and to consider them as recommended steps for establishing a foundation for sustainable management and business leadership education.

1. UNESCO-ESD-ESDG: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has been the leading United Nations agency on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) since the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014). It is now the main specialized agency heading the recognition of ESD as an integral element of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and a key source of all the other SDGs for 2030 (UNESCO, 2021). The ESD has a long-standing body of work carried out by universities, schools, and civil society committed to empower learners to promote a prosperous, socially just, and ecologically healthy world. These resources and recommendations are essential for understanding the beginning of sustainable development and sustainability in education and training. There are many studies that have explored how the practical application of ESD into management education

can be beneficial to integrative leadership education (Isenmann, Landwehr-Zloch, & Zinn, 2020) and promoting education for SDGs (ESDGs) beyond business as usual and inclusive of culturally diverse approaches (SDSN, 2020; Kopnina, 2020). As in the case of PRME universities and business schools, the implementation of ESD and ESG offers a better solution for adopting a “whole institution approach” while also seeking the adoption of sustainability across the curricula (SAC) as in the leadership example of Santa Clara University (2017). Before specialized focus on specific business and management content related to sustainability (e.g., sustainable marketing, sustainable finance, sustainable accounting, etc.), it is imperative to provide leadership and systems thinking education where the student understands the various definitions, pillars, and interdisciplinary principles of sustainability and sustainable development (Annan-Diab & Molinari, 2017). Moreover, the adoption and implementation of education for sustainability, for the sustainable development goals, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) is instrumental in promoting diverse, interdisciplinary, and international perspectives into teaching and learning (Peterlin, Dimovski, Tvaronavičienė, Grah, & Kaklauskas, 2018). The ESD and ESG offer comprehensive multidisciplinary paradigms and cross-sector perspectives to effectively integrate best practices and promote impactful initiatives for sustainable management education. The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) recognizes and exemplifies that by accelerating the ESG framework, HEIs could critically enhance their mission “to help students develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they will need to address global challenges as responsible professionals and citizens” (SDSN, 2020).

2. UNGC: The United Nations Global Compact started simultaneously with the first international implementation of common goals: the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000. At that time, Secretary General Kofi Annan knew that such ambitious goals to eliminate poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women would not be possible without the full participation of the business and private sector. While the consulting role of civil society (nonprofit-social-citizen sector) was always part of the inception of this important international organization in the San Francisco Conference in 1945, the formal inclusion of private sector organizations, except for ILO and UNIDO, did not receive this attention until this point. Now, corporations and other private sector organizations, along with higher education institutions can take part in the commitments, activities, reporting and programmatic initiatives of the

United Nations through this Global Compact. While not without controversies and refining mechanisms for reporting, screening, and de-listing participants, the UNGC is often regarded as the world's largest and most prominent voluntary corporate citizenship initiative (Abdelzaher, Fernandez, & Schneper, 2019). During the last two decades of activities, the UNGC has been growing steadily with more than 14,000 companies and 3,000 non-business signatories based in over 160 countries, and 69 Local Networks (UNCG, 2021). The UNGC is now the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world and a key promoter of sustainable business education. Under UNGC sponsored dialogues, the AACSB and other academic authorities in business education have argued that business schools should overhaul their mission to educate business leaders for a better world with four priorities: 1) Business schools must define their mission and impact in advancing human rights and striving for the achievement of eco-friendly goals; 2) Business schools do not exist in a vacuum and should develop work that is regionally relevant; 3) Business schools should not just teach separate sustainability courses but integrate sustainability in core business teaching; and 4) Business schools can become more impact-based and prioritize capacity to measure impact with proper, comparable, and consistent metrics (UNGC, 2022).

The UNGC made it possible for businesses to cooperate beyond international development and commit to a principle-based engagement for the respect and promotion of human rights, labor, the environment, and anti-corruption. Also, with the implementation of the SDGs in 2015, the platform expanded its commitment towards sustainability practices beyond CSR and business ethics and for accelerating progress and impact on the SDGs by 2030 (Rasche, 2020). The connections, resources, and capacity development insights provided by the UNGC give an opportunity for business educators to participate and engage with this initiative. They can do so with the support of their HEI's leadership by writing a letter of commitment in support of the Ten Principles and participating in its activities with a submission of a bi-annual Communication on Engagement (COE) (UNGC, 2021). In addition, the UN Global Compact Academy provides participants instructional resources, tools on many business topics, and open learning opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills to meet the sustainability objectives in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. PRME: The Principles of Responsible Management Education emerged in 2007 from the UNGC to channel the commitment of business and

management schools and institutions to shape the skills and mindset of future leaders as responsible decision-makers of tomorrow to advance sustainable development. PRME is a process of engagement beyond its principles and with its various collaborative activities including working groups, regional chapters, and champions (Haertle, Parkes, Murray, & Hayes, 2017). Several academic institutions have used the principled commitment of PRME to advance value-driven leadership programs beyond ethics for sustainability and social responsibility (Gentile, 2017). As a voluntary initiative with over 800 academic institutions and business school signatories worldwide, PRME has become the largest organized group that creates opportunities for promoting sustainability and global responsibility in collaboration with United Nations programs and agencies. More specifically than the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI), which was created in 2010 to advance the relations between higher education institutions (HEI) and the UN, the PRME initiative engages sustainable business and global socially responsible management education. Its website states

As a platform to raise the profile of sustainability in schools around the world, PRME equips today's business students with the understanding and ability to deliver change tomorrow. Working through the Six Principles, PRME engages business and management schools to ensure they provide future leaders with the skills needed to balance economic and sustainability goals, while drawing attention to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aligning academic institutions with the work of the UN Global Compact. (PRME, n.d.a)

The principles are a departing point for the HEI and RME program to develop their strategic priorities for sustainability along purposeful and pragmatic processes. The Six Principles include:

- Principle 1 | Purpose: We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.
- Principle 2 | Values: We will incorporate into our academic activities, curricula, and organizational practices the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

- Principle 3 | Method: We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes, and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.
- Principle 4 | Research: We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental, and economic value.
- Principle 5 | Partnership: We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.
- Principle 6 | Dialogue: We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organisations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability (PRME, n.d.b).

Like the companies reporting in the UNGC's Communication on Progress (CoP), the academic signatories report on their sustainability and social responsibilities practices in the PRME's Sharing Information on Progress (SIP). This academic sustainability reporting provides a public sharing of innovative and impactful stakeholders practices. Following the mainstreaming trajectories of CoP and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the SIP is gradually becoming the standard in academic sustainability reporting (Hervieux, McKee, & Driscoll, 2017). The strategic integration of PRME could become a driving force for change for institutions and programs (Hauser & Ryan, 2021). It can also be instrumental for educating mindsets and skill sets for sustainability management programs by promoting initiatives across courses, programs, and disciplines (Tavanti & Davis, 2018). They can also be instrumental in promoting more values-driven leadership and management education including teaching of principles and practices of anti-corruption across sectors (Tavanti & Wilp, 2019). Moreover, the business schools engaged in PRME can learn from sustainability integration best practices in the shared SIP reports while promoting collaboration between businesses—both large multinational corporations (MNCs) and small and medium enterprises (SMEs)—and business

schools that can think and operate in networks, adopt systems thinking, and advance collective progress through the notion of ‘cooperative advantage’ (Ojiambo, 2021). Engaging in the PRME events, activities, and sharing of knowledge induce a process that can help foster cross-institutional collaboration, academic entrepreneurship, and international partnerships. In addition to the PRME’s website with numerous resources for faculty, students, and administrators, Routledge has been collaborating with PRME to promote a book series that exemplifies sustainability mindsets, leadership competencies, and managerial skills necessary to educate globally responsible sustainability leaders and managers.

4. AASHE-STARS: The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education is another core framework for implementing, integrating, and benchmarking the impact of sustainability in HEIs. While not exclusive to business education, it provides its members with a comprehensive reporting mechanism, a very useful resource hub with toolkits and resource collections on all aspects of sustainability in HEIs from teaching to research, operations, and governance. AASHE began in 2005 to “inspire and catalyze higher education to lead the global sustainability transformation” (AASHE, 2021). Five years later AASHE launched the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) in its first version (1.1) that provided institutions the opportunity to benchmark their sustainability efforts across leadership, curricula, operations, research, and engagement. The STARS’ self-reporting framework is a transparent and public reporting system that links with AASHE’s activities to provide colleges and universities with conferences, resources, information, and tools to promote and integrate sustainability. Its latest version has an online reporting tool named STARS 3.0, which gives the participating academic institutions the ability to map out their SDG performance. This comprehensive reporting of STARS allows the SDG mapping to go beyond SDG 4 (quality education) and extend into other areas contributing to the “Five P’s” of People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships (AASHE, 2020). More than a hundred institutions around the world have signed the SDG Accord, a commitment to align the SDGs into education, research, leadership, operations, administration, and engagement activities. While several networks such as the International Association of Universities (IAU), Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), and the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI) are active in promoting and supporting higher education engagement with the SDGs, AASHE’s STARS is an incomparable instrument for its standardized metrics and

systematized comprehensive reporting. Studies show that HEIs' commitments to the ASHEE's STARS reporting can have a positive impact on their reputation (enrollment), finances (endowment), and performance (emissions) (Minutolo, Ivanova, & Cong, 2021). They also confirm that the STARS assessment is the most ubiquitous higher education sustainability assessments (HESAs) for benchmarking, self-assessment, and comparisons. They reaffirm a correlation between sustainability reporting's frequency and comprehensiveness with best and innovative practices in sustainability education and institution-level stakeholders' commitment for sustainability Curricula, green Operations, sustainability-related Research, and community Engagement (CORE). In addition, AASHE has created useful guides for mapping the STARS credits to the SDGs further demonstrating the impact that HEIs have into the sustainability agenda through educational and corporate-organizational outcomes. Business students, supported by faculty, staff, and administrators, have an opportunity to complete the reporting process linking sustainability practices with their studies in sustainable management education. Jesuit business schools that leverage their mission to extend their practices in coherent sustainable impact investing (Kimbrow, Mahsud & Adut, 2020) can incorporate the AASHE-STARS reporting into their own processes and institutional sustainability commitments and lead the way in the promotion of sustainable transformational solutions through integrated, standardized, comparable, and comprehensive sustainability approaches (Stoner, 2018). They can also do so by utilizing the STARS comprehensive measurements mapped with the contributions for the SDGs and demonstrate the overall HEI's impact. Beyond compiling a report from an institutional research of sustainability center, the tasks of collecting, analyzing, and reporting on the HEI's practices and performances are a participatory process involving students through project-based learning and practicum activities integrated into their learning outcomes. Adopting the AASHE-STARS reporting tool is an opportunity to nudge the entire institution into the promotion, recognition, and enhancement of sustainability practices beyond the curricula.

5. HESI: The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative began in 2012 in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). HESI connects more than 300 universities from around the world and provides higher education institutions with a network of worldwide practices and policy making resources in relation to sustainability education and the 2030 Agenda of the SDGs (United Nations, 2021). HESI represents a hub for supporting and connecting sustainable education initiatives including the United Nations Academic

Impact (UNAI) and Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI), a worldwide partnership of business schools/learning organizations with companies committed to developing the next generation of globally responsible leaders. HESI also networks with The Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF), which functions as Secretariat for signatories of The Talloires Declaration, where in 1990, over 400 college and university presidents and chancellors worldwide made a commitment toward sustainability education in teaching, research, and operations. The UN's HESI, along with many other global partners, supports the SDG Accord, the academic response launched in 2017 to support the SDGs and to provide a platform to come together in a movement for sustainability education and scaling its impact. Studies have shown the impact of HESI to transform HEIs from 'mere' catalysts of ethical and sustainable development to fully committed enablers with measurable sustainability outcomes (Moon, Walmsley, & Apostolopoulos, 2018). HESI represents a positive paradigm shift from simply promoting entrepreneurship education and education for sustainability management to implementing transdisciplinary learning, cross-sector partnerships, and eco-social leadership mindsets. Though, HESI's weak outcomes after 10 years highlights how confusing institutional structures, hierarchies, and the silos effect impede HEIs applied, interdisciplinary, and trans-disciplinary programming, research, and studies. The relevance of HESI for integrating sustainability management education goes beyond its measurable outcomes as its significance is embedded in an eco-system of higher education partnerships for the SDGs such as the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) and the Partnerships for the SDGs promoted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA). Therefore, it is recommended to become part of HESI and its correlated initiatives as they give a project-based and outcome-oriented structure that can make principles translate into practices. These can also be easily mapped into the SDGs and allow the HEIs to make clear reports on their contributions and advancements of the 2030 Agenda. This latest platform extends HESI into a thematic multi-stakeholder action network with concrete (specific, measurable, achievable, resource-based, and time-bound) deliverables contributing to the 2030 Agenda (UN-DESA, 2022).

INTEGRATING CONSCIOUS SUSTAINABILITY PARADIGMS

How can HEIs foster a process for integrating sustainability and responsible management education that is transformative for the careers, mindsets, and leadership values of our students? How can HEIs embed the wider, interdisciplinary, and global perspectives represented by sustainability education into the educational mission and values of our institutions, programs, and cultures? Joining these international initiatives is easy and often cost-free for HEIs but requires a much deeper commitment. The benefit is that the membership will help advance an institution-wide stakeholder dialogue regarding the institution's mission, curricula offering, outcomes, and cultural ethos. Without this institutional process and a system-wide dialogue among stakeholders, there is little chance to impact the education of globally responsible managers (Tavanti & Wilp, 2015) and conscious sustainability leaders (Sfeir-Younis & Tavanti, 2020). A deeper and more meaningful integration of sustainability in management education requires revising the higher purpose of the HEIs in their social-global mission and sustainability related values. Pope Francis (2015) has been a champion in promoting this awareness of social-environmental-economic and spiritual interconnectedness expressed as 'integral ecology.' Environmental education becomes critical sustainability education (Maina-Okori, Koushik, & Wilson, 2018). "[S]cientific information, consciousness-raising, and the prevention of environmental risks" also includes "a critique of 'myths' of a modernity grounded in a utilitarian mindset (individualism, unlimited progress, competition, consumerism, the unregulated market)" (Reese, 2015).

The Jesuit tradition has shaped the value leadership and social justice missions of academic institutions worldwide for nearly five hundred years. They have been instrumental in educating transformational leaders who, by personal and professional examples, highlight the core values and mission of their alma maters. Buddhist traditions have also been on the forefront of teachings that today we recognize are aligned with sustainability values such as environmental stewardship and interconnected consciousnesses. We believe these Jesuit and Buddhist paradigms are an important way to better integrate a deeper understanding of sustainability values and practices. While all academic institutions represent unique value-driven missions, the alignment and association with these large-scale initiatives for sustainability education can provide additional perspectives, practices, and impactful strategies to foster sustainability paradigm shifts in management education. Jesuit

business schools and other value-driven HEIs have the advantage of their mission and values that clearly link, embrace, and enhance these initiatives. They also have the responsibility to lead the way towards a deeper, higher purpose, conscious understanding of globally responsible management and sustainability leadership. The Jesuit tradition of discernment, contemplation, and action reflect some core Buddhist ethical values and experiences in self-awareness and interconnectedness (Becker & Hamblin, 2021).

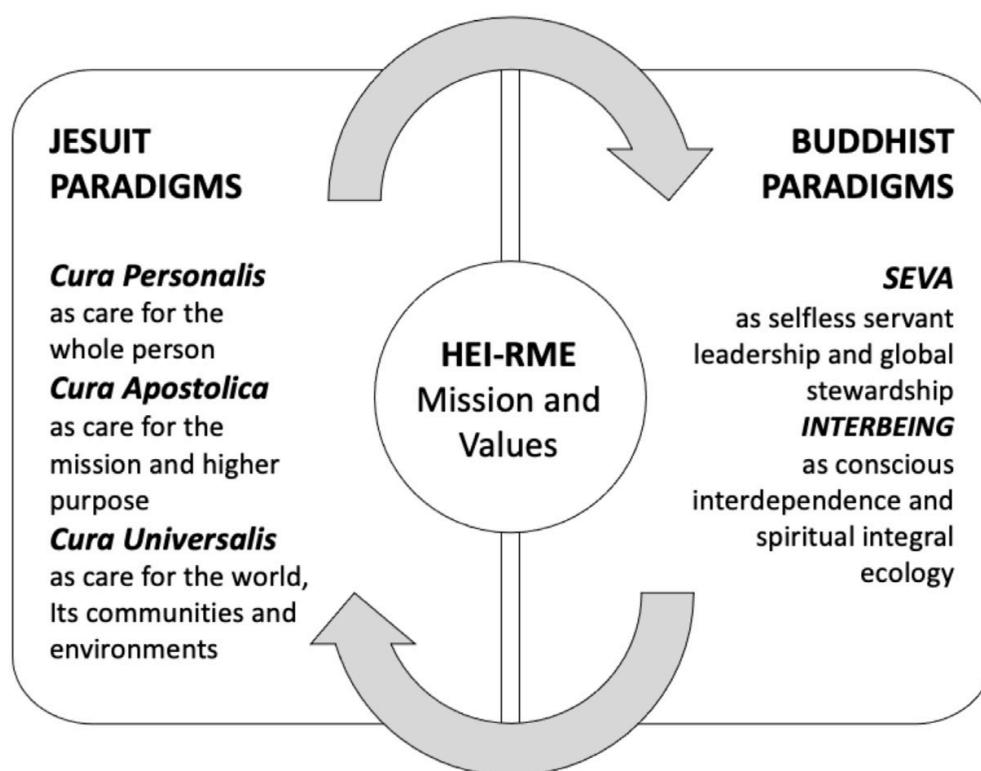


Figure 2: Deepening Understanding: Conscious Sustainability Integration Through Jesuit and Buddhist Paradigms

THE JESUIT PARADIGMS FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

The IAJU celebration of the 500th anniversary of the conversion of St. Ignatius of Loyola represents an occasion to begin a process for systemically integrating higher purpose sustainability values into management education. The Jesuit mission and the Jesuit higher education tradition is a fertile ground for providing sustainability management education with personal, collective, and systemic values. Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J. the superior general of the Society of Jesus, explained that Jesuit education is an education for “social change” where its graduates become “men and women

for others” to “humanize the world”, and to “become agents of change”, not only for themselves but also of their firms and systems (Arrupe, 1973).

The *cura personalis* and *cura apostolica*, discernments and meditations, finding God in all things and *Magis*, service rooted in justice and love, solidarity, and kinship are among the core values that all 189 Jesuit HEIs share worldwide and their leaders discern each day (Muoneme, 2017). The call for higher purpose is not just about ethical behaviors but also about becoming positive agents of change, forces for good in the world, and transformational leaders seeking social equity, environmental justice, and prosperity for the common good (Tavanti & Wilp, 2021).

Jesuit HEIs have renewed their commitment to their values-driven and higher purpose education along the four Universal Apostolic Preferences (2019–2029): A) Show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment; B) Walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice; C) Accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future; and D) Caring for our Common Home: Collaborate, with Gospel depth, for the protection and renewal of God’s Creation (Sosa, 2019). The integration of these priorities is evident in Pope Francis’s encyclical letters *Laudato Si’* (2015) and *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) where he invites us to recognize our interconnectedness between social justice (people and the marginalized in particular), care for the environmental (planet and sustainable development), and providing economic opportunities for all (prosperity and well-being). Jesuit HEIs reflect these priorities in their commitments toward social, economic, and environmental justice rooted in the spiritual discernments of deeper meaning and higher purpose (Rambla, 2015). Indeed, the Jesuit tradition has much to offer for a deeper understanding of sustainability education.

The School of Management at University of San Francisco’s initiative for the Leadership Exercises (Tavanti, 2021) and the Management Exercises (Stackman & Connor, 2016) are examples of integrating Jesuit paradigms and Catholic social teaching principles into personal and professional discernment for sustainability values in management education. As they work across diverse programs and engage students in self-reflection for their personal, interpersonal, professional, and global levels, these exercises respond to the need of breaking the silos between programs while also fostering value-leadership development. The structure of the

management exercises, in their four-step process, provides a framework for discerning the relations with ourselves (character, self-awareness, and synchronicity), with others (stakeholders, love, and solidarity), with organizations (culture, ingenuity, and subsidiarity), and with society (higher purpose, heroism, and sustainability). This model integrates management and leadership development steps with lessons, principles, and paradigms of Jesuit leadership (Lowney, 2003) and value leadership from Catholic social teaching (Tavanti, 2012).

The Exercises reflect a model that bridges Jesuit values with coherent practices in business, our society, and the world. They integrate *cura personalis* as care for the whole person with our teaching and learning for people before profit and prosperity above financial gains. They ask business students to think about their personal, interpersonal, organizational, and systemic responsibilities while also linking a concern for people (interconnectedness with others) with a concern for the environment (interconnectedness with nature). The goal is to encourage awareness and promote leadership and management practices for a virtuous (vs. vicious) cycle. *Cura personalis* is linked to the values and meanings of *cura apostolica*, which deals with persons, communities and works, at the service of the mission, the growth of our professional civic mindedness, and purposeful social-sustainable competencies (Tavanti & Vendramini, 2014). *Cura personalis* and *cura apostolica* are extended and specified by educating our students with a *cura universalis*, which fosters a mindset for the common good, global citizenship, systemic thinking, and conscious sustainability (Tavanti & Wilp, 2021). This level of leadership is about recognizing a higher level of purpose and consciousness (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019; Sfeir-Younis & Tavanti, 2020). It is about educating current and future leaders with a mindset for our common purpose, common good, and common future. Every HEI may have their own priorities to get to these levels. They will surely need to discern their mission and values.

THE BUDDHIST PARADIGMS FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Beyond the Catholic and Jesuit traditions, the Buddhist philosophy and tradition share many values for deeper discernment, integral spirituality, and ethics for sustainability (Zsolnai, 2015).

Like Jesuit paradigms, Buddhism's paradigms go beyond the social, environmental, and economic understanding of sustainability to ensure that appropriate material wellbeing are necessary pre-conditions for sustainable inner development. It promotes new and deeper perspectives that go beyond ego-centered models and even beyond eco-centered solutions to seeking what is known as Seva—selfless service as stewardship. This spiritual paradigm is an invitation to embrace a relationship of love and humility to all entities in the environment. It is not an attempt to be the master of matter, relations, and biology but as a servant of beauty, kindness, love, and wonder. The Buddhist practices and Buddha's teaching invites us to transcend the 'knowing,' 'having,' and 'doing,' to enter the 'being' and 'becoming.' Also, it is not just about 'when or what to know it' but 'how and why to know it.' The Buddhist philosophy of life reflects many sustainability leadership paradigms and promotes a multidimensional capital definition of sustainability, which recognizes financial capital at the same level as human, natural, physical, institutional, cultural, and spiritual capitals (Sfeir-Younis & Tavanti, 2020). Buddhist philosophy places importance on discernment for virtuous living based on right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration (Noble Eightfold Path).

Like Catholic-Jesuit teaching, Buddhist teachings show the path to self-realization of compassion, and, simultaneously, the commitment to the construction of a compassionate society. Buddhism is about realizing a new mindset aligned with the new paradigm shifts of our times. Key Buddhist concepts like *pratityasamutpada* (in Sanskrit), often translated as "inter-dependent co-arising" or "dependent origination," is clearly consistent with the interdependent notion of sustainable development and signifies how all things and phenomena are interdependent and arising from multiple causes and conditions (Hanh, 1998: 221–24. Like Pope Francis' notion of 'integral ecology,' Thich Nhat Hanh's concept of 'interbeing' (Hanh, 1991) provides a tool for self-realizing our interdependent, holistic, and relational identities as human beings part of nature and the universe. Thich Nhat Hanh explained this inter-existence notion this way: "Interbeing" is a word that is not in the dictionary yet, but if we combine the prefix "inter" with the verb "to be," we have a new verb, inter-be. Without a cloud, we cannot have paper, so we can say that the cloud and the sheet of paper inter-are" (Wahl, 2016).

Buddhism teaches that good business is about interdependence and counter to competition and exclusion for wealth creation. It teaches that the real essence of business is not just seeking material wealth but happiness—beyond gross domestic product (GDP) and for gross national happiness (GNH) (Rabasso & Rabasso, 2015). It teaches that business is about moral conduct and purposeful enterprises, and to not just let the market decide the outcomes of human welfare. It teaches the need for “Noble Living” as simple livelihood, self-realization of “equanimity” in contrast to our social inequalities. It teaches that wealth is to be shared and that business is an important foundation to spirituality (Mitroff, 2016). It also teaches that injustice and abuse surface out of poverty and economic deterioration.

Therefore, the Buddhist paradigms of inter-being as co-existence can be instrumental to educating students to learning about interdependence and systems thinking. They can develop a planetary consciousness where our co-existence and survival depends on the promotion of planetary economic prosperity and wellbeing within planetary boundaries. The paradigms and perspectives of Buddhist teaching are instrumental in generating value shifts in business practices while creating collective awareness and mobilizing systemic solutions.

CONCLUSION

The initiatives introduced in this study represent a roadmap for HEIs to help integrate sustainability more effectively into management education. We also made a case for educating next generation leaders with deeper, more holistic, and systemic mindsets for the common good and our common future. The Jesuit and Buddhist traditions share many insights to help us go deeper in our understanding of interdependent well-being and integrated ecological living. These organizations represent a call to urgently transform management education to make it more relevant to the most urgent global challenges and accelerate sustainable solutions through sustainability education for people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships.

All HEIs, and those committed to value and responsible management education carry a particular responsibility to advance education through the integration of sustainability into the mindset of current and future leaders, managers, citizens, and stakeholders. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its

Sixth Assessment Report (2022) highlights the urgency of integrating sustainability more effectively and across multiple sectors. They write, “This report recognizes the interdependence of climate, ecosystems and biodiversity, and human societies... and integrates knowledge more strongly across the natural, ecological, social, and economic sciences than earlier IPCC assessments” (SPM-3). They also recognize the responsibilities of educational institutions to encourage the creation of integrated solutions for climate resilient development in collaboration with governments, civil society, and the private sector.

Deans of management and business schools as well as other administrators of HEIs can integrate sustainability through the following steps:

Step 1: Start and/or review how sustainability is integrated in the HEI’s mission and values, strategic planning, and priorities for responsible management education.

Step 2: Review what commitments exist, and which others could be implemented and integrated with the various initiatives for sustainability in academia (UNESCO-ESDG, UNGC-PRME, AASHE-STARs, HESI, etc.)

Step 3: Consider the value leadership contributions, responsible management education programs, and initiatives toward deeper conversations on sustainability values bearing in mind the Jesuit and Buddhist paradigms.

Step 4: Utilize the reporting commitments linked to the sustainability initiatives to build a culture of reporting, stakeholder engagement, and organizational learning for continuous improvements and discernment on mission-related performances.

The growing emergencies due to climate change, financial crises, and social-humanitarian needs, make the responsibility of HEIs to educate sustainable and globally responsible leaders more urgent than ever before. Sustainable management education is therefore a strategic and necessary priority. In *Vision 2050: Time to Transform* (2021), The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) made a case for necessary and urgent transformations to occur in our business practices, business leaders, and business education to help us more effectively respond to the main critical challenges of our time: climate emergency,

nature loss, and mounting inequality. The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated that these challenges are interconnected, and that our systems are ill-prepared for shocks (WBCSD, 2021). Sustainable management education is an answer for the required three major mindset shifts in business leadership and practices: (1) reinventing capitalism to reward true value creation, not value extraction; (2) building long-term resilience to anticipate, embrace, and adapt to changes and disruptions; and (3) taking a regenerative approach where we go beyond “doing no harm” and build the capacity of our social and environmental systems to heal and thrive (WBCSD, 2021).

The world of organizations is changing radically, and management education has no better time to change its paradigms. Business and management should be a means to an end and our education should reflect this by thinking and acting with new models and processes. Let’s abandon the “theology of shareholder capitalism” and embrace “management’s broad purpose today is to achieve the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals” (Davis, 2018). We are now living in an Anthropocene epoch and are participating in a decisive decade where our decisions impact current and future generations (Figueres & Rivett-Carnac, 2020). Preparing our students with the skill sets and mindsets to find sustainable solutions is no longer a moral imperative but a matter of survival. Addressing the cycles of pandemics accelerated by deforestation, unsustainable development practices, and climate change is no longer necessary for our health but also our connected social and economic well-being. Sustainability can no longer be an elective in business and management education and can no longer be confined just to environmental studies. HEIs that integrate these paradigms into their strategic priorities will have a significant impact on the advancement of education for globally responsible managers and conscious sustainable development leaders.

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