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SPECIAL ISSUE ON SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION

**Leadership, Sustainability, and Innovation:
A Case Study of Toyota's Lean Manufacturing and Sustainable Practices**

Yasmine Mnassri

**Crafting Employee Engagement through
Authentic Leadership for Sustainable Business:
Evidence from Odisha's Coal Mining Industry**

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in *WALL-E* and *The Wild Robot***

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From the Desk of the **Editor-in-Chief**

Navigating the Intersection of Sustainability, Innovation, and Leadership in a Rapidly Evolving Global Landscape

In an era where environmental and social consciousness is no longer a luxury but a necessity, the integration of sustainability, leadership, and innovation has become critical for organisations aiming to thrive in an increasingly competitive and volatile world. From corporate giants like Toyota to small-scale social enterprises, sustainability is being woven into the very fabric of business models, not just as a set of external obligations, but as an essential driver of long-term success. The emerging body of research presents valuable insights into how these forces are interlinked, offering a roadmap for navigating future challenges.

The Toyota Production System (TPS) provides a prime example of how sustainability can be seamlessly embedded within a company's culture and operational systems. Yasmine Mnassri's study emphasises that sustainability does not have to be a separate or conflicting goal but can be naturally integrated into organisational structures and leadership practices. The Toyota case reinforces that sustainability is not just an environmental issue but an innovation strategy that fosters resilience and long-term profitability. As industries across the globe continue to adapt to these principles, the study calls for more research into how companies from diverse sectors can replicate Toyota's approach of embedding sustainability into their core operations.

Similarly, in the coal mining industry of Odisha, India, authentic leadership is emerging as a crucial factor in driving sustainable business strategies. The research by Dash, Mohanty and Dash highlights the positive impact of authentic leadership on employee engagement, which is pivotal for achieving higher levels of operational efficiency and creating a supportive workplace culture. By showcasing the benefits of authentic leadership, this study underscores how leadership practices that prioritise transparency, trust, and employee well-being can propel organisations toward more sustainable and socially responsible business models, even in challenging industries such as mining.

The future of sustainability is also increasingly tied to the technological advances that are reshaping industries. In this context, artificial intelligence (AI) is playing an intriguing role in managing environmental systems, as explored in Jyoti Prakash Nayak's work on eco-AI narratives in *Wall-E* and *The Wild Robot*. These narratives not only entertain but also spark conversations about the role of AI in ecological restoration. In an age of heightened concerns about climate change and resource depletion, the exploration of AI's potential to engage with sustainable development is both timely and necessary. It invites us to rethink how technology can work in harmony with nature, offering a vision where human ingenuity, through AI, helps restore and preserve the environment.

The digital revolution presents at the same time its own set of sustainability challenges. Kingsley Chibueze Osuji's examination of digitalisation points to the complexities that accompany the increasing adoption of digital technologies. While digitalisation has the potential to enhance communication, streamline business operations, and improve access to education and healthcare, it also raises critical concerns around data privacy, security risks, and the socio-political implications of pervasive digital systems. The need to tackle these challenges head-on while ensuring that digitalisation supports sustainable practices, is a critical question for policymakers, businesses, and individuals alike.

Sustainability, however, is not only about large-scale corporate practices or cutting-edge technology – it also involves the foundational health and well-being of communities. The research conducted by Isaac Dadzie and Benjamin Arhin on exclusive breastfeeding in Ghana illuminates the importance of cultural context in promoting sustainable health practices. Their study demonstrates how the use of digital platforms and community-driven programmes can overcome barriers to health education and improve maternal and child health outcomes. This approach underscores that sustainability in public health is equally about creating accessible and culturally relevant solutions that empower communities to make informed decisions for their long-term well-being.

Finally, sustainability can be achieved through innovation in waste management and product development, as illustrated in the case study of Energinee Innovations by Srivastava, Saha and Srivastava. By recycling temple waste to create eco-friendly products, Energinee Innovations not only promotes environmental sustainability but also supports skill development and social impact in local communities. This example highlights how entrepreneurship, when aligned with sustainable practices, can deliver a triple bottom line – environmental, social, and economic benefits – that help drive positive change on both local and global scales.

As these studies demonstrate, sustainability is not a one-dimensional concept. It encompasses a range of practices from corporate strategies and leadership styles to technological innovations and community-driven solutions. The key takeaway is that leadership and innovation must be seen as complementary forces that, when harnessed effectively, can drive sustainability across diverse industries and sectors. Whether it is through implementing lean manufacturing techniques, promoting authentic leadership, leveraging AI for ecological restoration, or using technology for public health, these insights point to the critical role that thoughtful leadership and innovation play in achieving a sustainable future.

The integration of these elements will require collaboration, creativity, and a shared commitment to fostering a world, where sustainability is not merely a trend but an enduring way of life. Only by blending leadership, innovation, and sustainability can organisations build resilient, future-ready systems that serve the needs of both people and planet.

I am sure this special issue of the journal on Sustainability will be a meaningful reading as well as a strong value addition for the researchers, practitioners, and academicians.

Biswajeet Pattanayak
Editor-in-Chief

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Special Issue on Sustainable Transformation

Leadership, Sustainability, and Innovation: A Case Study of Toyota's Lean Manufacturing and Sustainable Practices

Yasmine Mnassri

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Abstract

In a rapidly evolving global landscape, the integration of sustainability, innovation, and leadership has become indispensable for organisations striving to remain competitive and resilient. This paper examines the Toyota Production System, a benchmark in lean manufacturing, alongside the company's embedded sustainability initiatives and innovative practices. The study shows that sustainability does not have to be a different or conflicting goal but can be organically implanted into the culture and systems of a company. The Toyota example serves as a call to action: embedding sustainability within corporate systems and culture can drive innovation, resilience, and mutual prosperity. Future research can centre on the adoption of Toyota's sustainability strategies by other companies and also by a wide range of industries in other settings.

Keywords: *Sustainability, innovation, leadership, Toyota Production System, organisational culture*

Crafting Employee Engagement through Authentic Leadership for Sustainable Business: Evidence from Odisha's Coal Mining Industry

Anuradha Dash¹, Ayasakanta Mohanty, Ph.D.², Manoranjan Dash, Ph.D.³

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Abstract

The coal mining sector in Odisha, integral to India's energy supply, faces multifaceted challenges, including environmental, social, and economic issues. Addressing these challenges requires competent leadership capable of navigating complex dynamics. This

study examines the impact of authentic leadership (AL) on work engagement among the employees of the coal mining industry in Odisha as a sustainable business strategy. Specifically, the research aims to investigate the correlation between authentic leadership behaviour, job engagement, and industry-specific details with a sample of 300. The research design assesses multiple facets of authentic leadership and job engagement to ascertain the degrees of engagement among employees in the coal mining sector of Odisha. The results indicate that the display of authentic leadership behaviour has a beneficial effect on employee job engagement, contributing to a friendlier workplace climate and improved operational efficiency. This study highlights the importance of embracing genuine leadership qualities in the coal mining sector of Odisha. By fostering authentic leadership behaviours, organisations can establish a more encouraging, involved, and efficient workforce, ultimately leading to sustainable business strategies and enhanced employee contentment.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership, Work Engagement, Employee Engagement, Coal Mining Industry

Eco-AI Narratives: Sustainable Development Themes in *WALL-E* and *The Wild Robot*

Jyoti Prakash Nayak

Research Scholar, Department of Language & Literature, Fakir Mohan University, Balasore

Abstract

Movies have long been seen as a mirror of the society and the contemporary times. This research article explores the intersection of sustainable development and artificial intelligence (AI) within the scope of two well received narratives: the animated movies *Wall-E* (2008) and *The Wild Robot* (2024). Both the narratives present strong commentaries on anthropomorphic associations of technology and the environment, portraying AI entities as manager of ecological restoration and sustainable practices. This study analyses the narratives' central themes that include loss of environmental quality, ethical AI and the role of technology in reconstructing ecosystems by contextualising these fictional works within the contemporary discourse on AI's potential to contribute to a sustainable future.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Artificial Intelligence, Ecology, Environment

Digitalisation and Its Challenges: An Examination of Digital Sustainability

Kingsley Chibueze Osuji

Doctoral Research Scholar, Institute of International Relations and World History, Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod (UNN), Russia

Abstract

Digitalisation, the integration of digital technologies across various aspects of life, signifies the onset of a new era characterised by connectivity, innovation, and advancement. Swiftly emerging as a fundamental component of modern life, it is significantly transforming communication, business practices, education, healthcare, and numerous other sectors. At the same time, this transformation presents vast challenges. This essay argues that the challenges linked to digitalisation are not solely technological in nature; rather, they are intricately connected to social, political, economic, and philosophical factors that require immediate consideration. This paper then seeks to explore and evaluate the complex challenges at hand, while providing some suggestion for their mitigation.

Keywords: *Digitalisation, digital technology, digital society, digitisation, data privacy, security risk*

Sustainable Child Development: Promoting Exclusive Breastfeeding in Ghana to Enhance Maternal and Child Health Outcomes

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Abstract

Exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) is considered an important public health concern that aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the reduction of infant mortality and improvement of the welfare of mothers and children (UNICEF, 2014). There has not been much increase in EBF across communities because of inadequate support structures and access to needed resources. Much of the research into the possibility of promoting EBF in communities within Ghana focuses on culturally tailored and community-driven programmes to explore the use of digital platforms. This study uses a mixed-methods approach by analysing qualitative results drawn from semi-structured interviews and survey results that enlisted 87 breastfeeding mothers for quantitative findings. Findings indicate the

possibilities of using appropriate technologies in solving socio-cultural and structural barriers, empowering mothers with knowledge, and encouraging sustainable breastfeeding practices.

Keywords: *Exclusive breastfeeding, Sustainable digital health, Maternal health education, Peer support, Ghanaian communities*

Temple Waste to Sustainable Products – A Case Study

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Abstract

Energinee Innovations Pvt Ltd was founded in 2018 by Akash, a 21-year-old social entrepreneur from a small village near Jewar in Uttar Pradesh. An innovator since his school days, Akash established this enterprise with the vision of promoting environmental sustainability through eco-friendly products. Energinee Innovations recycles waste from temples in the Delhi NCR region to create eco-friendly idols. Their triple impact strategy focuses on Recycling Waste, Skill Development, and Social Impact. This case study explores the challenges faced by the entrepreneur in managing temple waste and examines the dilemma of expanding the product portfolio to include more sustainable products which can be used in daily life.

Keywords: *Reverse Logistics, Supply Chain, Temple Waste Management, Sustainability and SDG*

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