

Chapter 24

Company Involvement in Sustainable Development—Proposition of a Theoretical Framework



Aldona Glińska-Noweś , Paweł Brzustewicz , Iwona Escher ,
Yulia Fomina , Barbara Józefowicz , Irina Katunina ,
Joanna Petrykowska  and Dawid Szostek 

Abstract The idea of corporate social responsibility (CSR) responding to the challenges of sustainable development is currently being questioned, mainly due to its implied nature and alleged lack of genuine involvement of businesses in the implementation of CSR ideas. We argue that the basic requirement for genuine involvement of a company is the engagement of its employees in projects supporting sustainable development goals. Such projects can create positive social change in the organization and lead to various beneficial outcomes for the company. However, factors that trigger company willingness to conduct the aforementioned projects are still unclear. The aim of the paper is to present a theoretical framework in this regard.

Keywords Sustainable development · Social capital · ARA model · MOC mechanism · PSC model

A. Glińska-Noweś (✉) · P. Brzustewicz · I. Escher · B. Józefowicz · J. Petrykowska · D. Szostek
Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, Poland
e-mail: aldona.glinska@umk.pl

P. Brzustewicz
e-mail: pbrzustewicz@umk.pl

I. Escher
e-mail: escher@umk.pl

B. Józefowicz
e-mail: Barbara.Jozefowicz@umk.pl

J. Petrykowska
e-mail: petryko@umk.pl

D. Szostek
e-mail: dawidsz@umk.pl

Y. Fomina · I. Katunina
Dostoevsky Omsk State University, Omsk, Russia
e-mail: fomina-u-a@yandex.ru

I. Katunina
e-mail: i.v.katunina@gmail.com

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2020

A. Zakrzewska-Bielawska and I. Staniec (eds.), *Contemporary Challenges in Cooperation and Cooperation in the Age of Industry 4.0*, Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-30549-9_24

24.1 Introduction

The concept of sustainable development is a result of growing awareness of the links between environmental degradation, the depletion of non-renewable resources, the quality of life, and the well-being of societies [39]. The issues of environmental protection and social development as critical to the future of the whole humanity were recognized by the United Nations and led to the establishment of the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1983. The result of its work was a report entitled *Our Common Future* prepared by Brundtland [15], which was the first to identify sustainable development as a path to the harmonious development of societies [1]. The report defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” [15, p. 41].

The current prevailing view is that achieving sustainable development requires taking and integrating action in three dimensions: economic, environmental, and social (e.g. [3, 25, 39]). The achievement of long-term growth that will be shared by all nations and communities remains the goal of sustainable economic development. In turn, the environmental pillar of sustainable development points to the need to protect the environment and manage natural resources in a way, which allows them to be preserved for future generations. At the same time, the current approach to the protection of the environment needs to be modified: from the current focus on responding to emerging issues to anticipating and preventing the negative impact of human activities on the environment. The social dimension of sustainable development is related to improvement of the quality of life for present and future generations. Global social goals for sustainable development include eradicating poverty around the world, eliminating hunger, ensuring food security, health protection, equal access to education, and equality between women and men [66].

Sustainable development is a multidimensional concept, the implementation of which requires integration of the above three dimensions, i.e. combining economic and social development by providing access to renewable and non-renewable resources [1, 3]. This integration has to take place at all levels: global, regional, and local [33]. At the same time, achieving the goals of sustainable development requires a change in the behaviour of people, which should take place along many dimensions: consumer, corporate, institutional, social, and political. While scientific investigations may improve long-term quality of decision-making, the development of real changes in human behaviours must also take into account their emotional aspect [38].

Sustainable development will fail without engaging businesses in this process, as they shape not only economic development but also increasingly influence the quality of life of societies and the state of the natural environment. For this reason, companies are experiencing increasing social and political pressure to engage in sustainable development, especially in the environmental aspect [40, 58]. Corporate sustainability means a continuous commitment to the creation of new processes, products, and business models that contribute to improving the company’s economic, social, and

environmental performance [24]. Meanwhile, there is a discrepancy between the actions declared by companies as socially responsible and the actions undertaken [23]. Society increasingly perceives corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its slogans concerning the need for companies to implement sustainable development as distracting public attention from other, more serious problems [55]. The genuine motivation of companies in this regard, as well as the real costs and effects of such actions, is questionable [54]. The situation is made even worse by cases appalling the public such as, practicing the so-called greenwashing by an energy company advertised as an organization that uses renewable energy, while 95% of its energy comes from hard coal and lignite, or the case of a company selling the so-called road salt to bakeries [65].

Implementing sustainable development in business remains a challenge due to the fact that a large number of businesses focus mainly on profits rather than on managing stakeholder relations [44]. It remains a key challenge to involve top management, employees, and other stakeholders in this process and redesign the organization's systems to allow for planning, management, and measurement of sustainability outcomes. Only changing the company's attitude and building an organizational culture that enables the inclusion of stakeholders in these activities make a sustainable development and a significant part of business performance [27, 44].

This paper proposes a theoretical framework for company involvement in projects supporting the achievement of sustainable development goals (we propose to label such projects as the company projects for sustainable development). In our approach, we use concepts that have not been incorporated into one framework. These are as follows: the PSC (positive social change) model, the MCO (motivation—capability—opportunity) mechanism, the ARA (activities—resources—actors) model, and social capital in its three dimensions: structural, relational, and cognitive. The aforementioned concepts are first introduced. Our theoretical considerations are based on the method of analysis and criticism of the literature. Literature review leads us to proposition of five hypotheses and the overall theoretical framework, which we are going to test in the further stages of our research project.

24.2 Positive Social Change

The basic requirement for a company's true commitment to sustainable development is to change the attitudes and values of employees in a way that fosters their authentic engagement in achieving goals related to it [31, 58, 61]. Employees' values and their attitudes towards sustainable development goals affect how they perceive various activities undertaken by the organizations in that respect. Consequently, this impacts their behaviours contributing to the achievement of sustainable development goals [18, 40].

In order to identify mechanisms leading to building employee behaviours that demonstrate the internalization of values related to sustainable development, we propose to adopt the PSC (positive social change) model. Stephan et al. [57, p. 1252]

define positive social change as “the process of transforming patterns of thought, behaviour, social relationships, institutions, and social structure to generate beneficial outcomes for individuals, communities, organizations, society, and/or the environment beyond the benefits for the instigators of such transformations”. The aforementioned beneficial effects of the process, for instance, increased involvement in rational resource management, higher tolerance for social diversity, higher health consciousness, increased care for the environment, can relate to both internal (i.e. inside the organization) and external communities (society). According to the authors of the PSC concept, it primarily refers to external changes, i.e. changes in the attitude of society. However, we propose to explore the positive social change within the company, as expressed by the behaviour of employees.

Positive social change includes two levels of impact: (1) a superficial positive social change, and (2) a profound positive social change [57]. The first one assumes that the impact targets (e.g. employees) react quasi-automatically to applied external motivators (incentives and pressures) and to the changed decision context. People change their behaviour relatively quickly because of the awards (e.g. increased personal image or financial awards) or under social pressure or coercion (e.g. group pressure, conformism, and threat of negative consequences). Such a change of behaviour, though positive, is temporary, limited to the place of control and conditioned by the presence of external motivational factors. A lasting change is only possible through true internal transformation and requires close involvement of change targets. The profound positive social change is usually geared towards more complex and persistent behaviour than a superficial change. Modifying employee behaviours are based on changing their beliefs, attitudes, and values, thus are motivated by their own will.

The effectiveness of the PSC process depends to a large extent on determinants related to an organizational culture and dominant organizational climate [18, 31]. If ethical culture and climate prevail, there will be the predominance of employees' sense of concern for others, i.e. co-workers, external stakeholders, the organization, the environment, etc. The role model of organizational leaders is also crucial in this regard. Employees, who identify themselves with their leaders, are more likely to take over their values and duplicate their behaviours, including ones in the area of sustainable development [31].

In practice, there is a shortage of organizations' efforts to encourage employees to engage in sustainable development [58]. Such engagement can be optimized through appropriate employee training, which, by increasing knowledge, skills, and competencies, leads to changes in employee attitudes, motivation, and commitment to sustainable development [40, 45, 61]. Ji et al. [40] show the impact of this type of training on employee attitudes towards the natural environment. However, it is significant not only to convince employees that sustainability is beneficial for everybody [61]. Organizational conditions and processes should also be created so that they could enable employees to facilitate the integration of sustainability aspects into their actions [53, 58]. In this respect, we propose to adopt MCO: motivation—capabilities—opportunities mechanism.

24.3 MCO Mechanism

The process of change in employee behaviours towards positive social change can be analyzed based on the motivation—capabilities—opportunities model (MCO). The model has its roots in a proposition of Bailey [5] who extended Blumberg and Pringle's [10] and Vroom's [59] motivation theory that performance is the function of capacity to perform, willingness to perform, and opportunity to perform. Bailey proposes the model in reference to the high-performance work systems (HPWS). In some propositions, MCO model is presented as AMO (ability—motivation—opportunity) while ability and capability stand for equal effects [42]. MCO/AMO framework is considered as the “black box” of human resources management practices [12, 22, 28]. It means that in order to achieve high performance, employees must be able to do so, motivated and their work environment must provide supporting opportunities [4, 46]. Ability may be developed through training of different kinds; motivation is achieved by extrinsic incentives, social activities, work-life balance, or collaborative climate. Opportunity, in turn, can be created by employee involvement and empowerment, knowledge sharing or job design [46]. It is said that MCO/AMO components are complementary, i.e. they have to appear together in order to support employees' work [13]. However, specific links and relations among those components are not as yet successfully explained.

In our approach, we propose the MCO model as the explanation of how corporate projects for sustainable development may support positive social changes. Motivation can be achieved if the project is embedded in a local context, linking a project to a local community, because this will enable workers to experience problems to solve as something personally meaningful and significant [32]. Opportunity-building can be achieved through organizational practices empowering employees, showing them a wider context of social problems and making them aware of the possible impact they may make on those problems [57]. Employee capabilities are developed if through those projects they can link the problems to be solved with variety of skills, involving the right people, gaining alliances, and cohesive leadership [57]. Therefore, we hypothesize that *company projects for sustainable development lead to the creation of motivation and capabilities of employees if the nature of these projects involves actual contact between employees and the problems the project is focused on (HI)* (see Fig. 24.1). Observations of business practice lead to a conclusion that company projects for sustainable development, in most cases, take a form of corporate volunteering.

However, if projects leading to motivation–capability–opportunity mechanism are to launch in a company, there must be something triggering their appearance. We propose that such trigger is created within a company's external relations. To analyse these relation we propose to use ARA (activities—resources—actors) model.

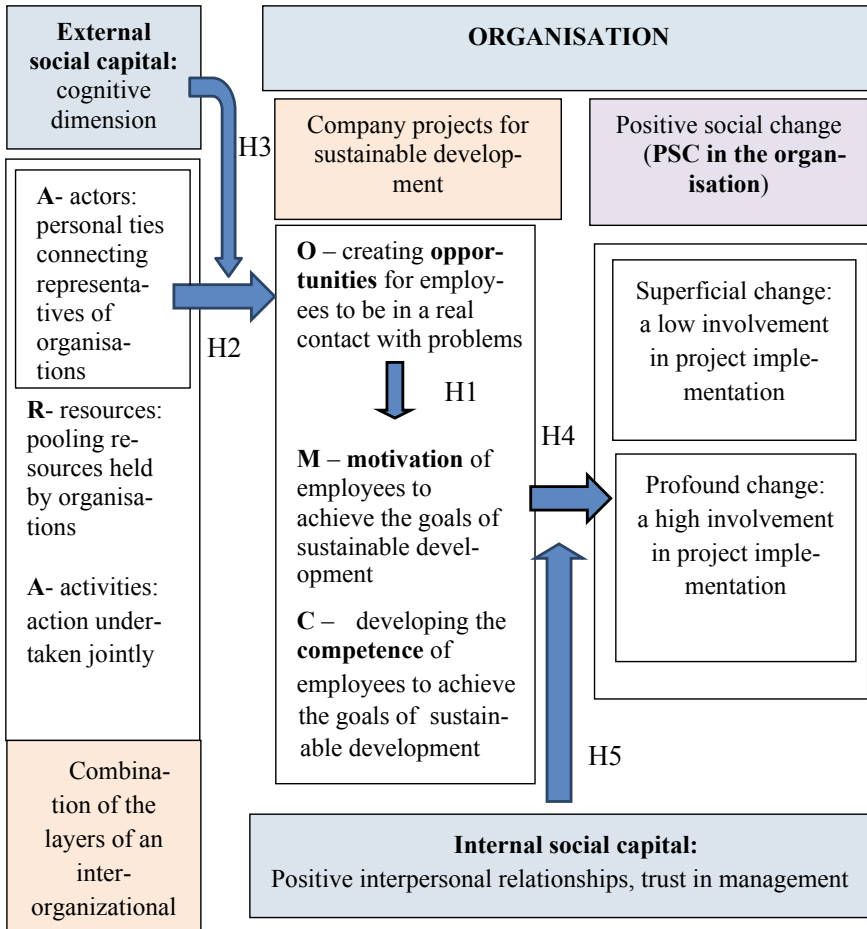


Fig. 24.1 Theoretical framework for company involvement in projects for sustainable development

24.4 Inter-organizational Relationship as a Trigger of Company Projects for Sustainable Development

Inter-organizational relationships have been extensively described in management studies since the 1980s. They are considered a fundamental factor in achieving company’s long-run success [9, 35, 48, 63]. They strengthen the competitive position of the company, mainly because of mutual learning of relationship among partners and gaining access to resources [56]. Both the research and observations of business practice show also that inter-organizational relations can give the impulse for the realization of projects for sustainable development. This is, especially, true when cooperation between an organization and its partners has been already established, i.e. it has been lasting for some time, and the satisfying results of the cooperation have

been already obtained. Existing relationships foster development of mutual knowledge and trust between partners, so that further joint projects in the field of sustainable development are being undertaken, leading to creation of strategic partnership [41].

Inter-organizational relationships can trigger or hinder process, progress and outcomes of projects for sustainable development. Therefore, failing to invest in those relationships can negatively affect the policy and implementation of such projects [37]. Furthermore, building inter-organizational relationships fosters sustainable development because such concerns as climate change and global poverty cannot be solved by companies in isolation and requires collaboration [8, 20, 36, 52]. It is also beneficial if the cooperation is established between organizations representing various sectors, including non-profit organizations [6, 41, 62]. Within such cooperation, resources owned by particular parties, such as different experience and knowledge are combined, and solving the complex problems of sustainability becomes possible and more effective. Often the scope of activities undertaken in the field of sustainable development does not coincide with the statutory activity of the company but might overlap (totally or partly) with the activities of other organizations. For this reason, cooperation brings better results than acting independently [41].

Specific inter-organizational relationships differ from each other. Moreover, each relationship evolves over time: their content, strength, and nature change in the process of interaction between parties [35]. Researchers attempting to define and operationalize inter-organizational relationships follow the approach proposed by Håkansson and Snehota. They describe inter-organizational relationships as a combination of two dimensions: substance and function. The substance of a relationship consists of three main layers: (1) activity links (i.e. the links between actions undertaken by relationship parties); (2) resource ties (i.e. the links between resources the parties possess), and (3) actor bonds (i.e. the personal ties connecting employees representing the two sides of the relations). In the ARA concept of Håkansson and Snehota, relationships are the effect of the interaction process in which the parties (actors, i.e. employees representing their organizations) interact within a relationship (undertake actions) and involve the needed resources (knowledge, tangibles, technology, etc.) in order to solve shared problems and exploit opportunities [35]. All three layers of relationships are closely interrelated, but the way they are combined, their strength and weight vary [35].

Out of the aforementioned layers, the actor bonds are considered as the basis for development of strong, active, and resourceful connections [35]. Trust and commitment between the relationship parties, necessary for the sustainability of the relationship, is neither established nor developed between the organizations involved in the relationship, but between their employees [26, 60]. In fact, employees decide how the other partner of the relationship is perceived and treated and what kind of actions is taken [34, 35]. The mutual trust of individual actors representing the relationship parties is both the effect and the foundation for its duration and development, and thus for achievement of the intended benefits [30, 43].

In sum, in our theoretical framework, we hypothesize that inter-organizational links contribute to the fact that the partner organizations are inclined to take joint action beyond the economic interest, aimed at achieving the objectives of sustainable

development in its three aspects, i.e. economic, ecological, and social. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis: *The actor bonds facilitate undertaking projects in companies that give employees the opportunity, motivation, and ability to engage in sustainable development (H2)* (see Fig. 24.1).

The discussion presented above suggests also that inter-organizational relations lead to common projects for sustainable development if the relation is supported by social capital, including mutual trust and positive interpersonal relationships. The next section elaborates this issue.

24.5 Social Capital in the Process of Undertaking the Company Projects for Sustainable Development

Bourdieu [14] defines social capital as the aggregate of the actual or potential resources, which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. In a similar way, social capital is defined by Nahapiet and Ghoshal [50], who concerns this notion as the sum of actual and potential resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the network of relationships possessed by individuals or social units. Coleman [19], in turn, considers social capital to be an important resource that influences the ability of people to act and defines it as a set of attributes of a social organization such as trust, norms, and interpersonal relationships that enhance their collective action by allowing them to achieve certain goals that would be impossible to achieve otherwise [19].

There are two main sources of social capital: internal and external (e.g. [2, 16, 17, 21, 49, 51]). Internal sources of social capital involve the team's internal social structure that defines relationships among team leaders, team members, and subgroups [17]. Internal social capital refers to the symptoms of various links and relationships within the organization, developing teamwork, climate for collaboration, knowledge sharing, conflict resolution, etc. In this context, the organization is a relatively dense network that builds common standards and goals within organizational culture as well as understanding of employees' roles and behaviours [7]. In contrast to internal sources, external sources highlight the extended social structure that outlines extrinsic linkages to other social units located outside the boundary of focal group [17]. External social capital refers to the quality of the organization's links with other market players such as customers, suppliers, partners, as well as with local and regional political bodies and representatives of the public [7]. Similar to internal social capital, external social capital determines the development of goals and standards of inter-organizational cooperation, and thus its effectiveness.

Characteristics of social capital can be categorized into three dimensions: structural, relational, and cognitive [50]. The structural dimension refers to the properties of the social system and the network of relations as a whole. It refers, e.g. to a general pattern of bonds among actors, network configuration, relationship density, and

structural gaps in the network. The relational dimension, in turn, describes the type of personal relationships that have evolved during the interaction. Key aspects of this dimension include trust and credibility, respect, responsibilities, expectations, and identity [50]. The cognitive dimension is related to a system of meanings, values, and norms and their mutual understanding. It translates into a common vision and goals shared among relationship partners which strengthen the relation [47]. In case of common projects for sustainable development which go beyond economic interest, the cognitive dimension of social capital seems to be crucial. Without societal cohesion and focus, it is very difficult to make significant positive changes [64]. Therefore, we pose the following hypothesis: *Inter-organizational relationships are an impulse for companies to implement projects for sustainable development if the bonds connecting the actors of the relationship create social capital in cognitive dimension (H3)* (see Fig. 24.1).

Regardless of external initiative for the projects for sustainable development, their success depends on participant engagement. For the same reasons as stated above, i.e. the importance of sharing common vision and goals, we propose that internal social capital be the factor determining employee engagement in those projects. We therefore hypothesize: *The strength of internal social capital influences the engagement of employees in company projects for sustainable development (H4)*.

The true organizational culture supporting projects for sustainable development is impossible to create without internal social capital [11]. Strong ties among individuals in a company, an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect and the willingness to make a contribution to sustainable development are particularly valuable resources. Trust in managers plays especially important role in this regard influencing employees' belief of fairness and reasonableness of undertaken activities [31]. In addition, employee engagement is enhanced by their mutual positive relationships that create sustainable energy for performing the projects [29]. We claim that: *The most important elements of internal social capital that fosters profound positive social change are (a) trust in managers and (b) positive relationships among employees (H5)*.

All in all, we propose the theoretical framework of company involvement in projects for sustainable development as it is depicted in Fig. 24.1. The framework combines all the concepts and hypothesis described above.

According to this framework, the overall process can be described as follows:

Inter-organizational relationships provide an impulse for a company to conduct projects related to sustainable development goals. It is supported by a common understanding of sustainable development values, goals, and tasks manifesting the cognitive dimension of social capital created through the relationships. The bonds among relationship actors facilitate undertaking projects in companies that give employees the opportunity, motivation, and capabilities to engage in them. However, projects for sustainable development can lead to genuine employee engagement if their nature involves actual contact between employees and beneficiaries and/or the problems being solved. Internally in a company, employee's engagement in projects for sustainable development is supported by internal social capital, notably by trust shown to managers and positive relationships among employees.

24.6 Conclusions

Our framework contributes to theory development by opening new research avenue regarding involvement of business in sustainable development. It is, especially, important that in the framework, we combine concepts and constructs that are already operationalized or can be operationalized. The main limitation of the study is general and theoretical nature of our proposal, which requires more in-depth elaboration. Nevertheless, we consider the framework as a good base for further empirical research which can result in theory development, as well as in useful managerial implications. The acquired knowledge can provide business people with practical guides for successful implementation of projects for sustainable development, including how to motivate employees to reach profound positive social change in the company.

We also would like to note that we have already started a research project aimed at the framework verification (the project funded by the National Science Centre, Poland, on the decision number DEC-2017/25/B/HS4/01113). In our research plan, we assume conducting qualitative and quantitative studies of selected companies in order to identify the types of implemented projects for sustainable development (based on the MCO mechanism), the nature of inter-organizational relationships (based on the ARA model), and intra-organizational factors which determine genuine company involvement in sustainable development. In qualitative study, we intend to carry out in-depth individual and focus group interviews with people responsible for sustainable development projects and with employees involved and not involved in these projects, as well ethnographic study (observation and description of employee behaviours in the work environment). In quantitative study, we are going to conduct standardized (face-to-face or telephone) interviews using a questionnaire based on the results of qualitative research. The results will help us to develop, *inter alia*, a synthetic indicator based on a multi-criterion analysis method, which will transform various and most often incomparable variables describing complex phenomena into one measure (in this case: a positive social change in the organization). We hope to share soon the results of the project with the research community.

Acknowledgements The article was prepared within the project funded by the National Science Centre, Poland, on the decision number DEC-2017/25/B/HS4/01113.

References

1. Adamczyk, J., Nitkiewicz, T.: Programowanie zrównoważonego rozwoju przedsiębiorstw. PWE, Warszawa (2007)
2. Adler, P.S., Kwon, S.W.: Social capital: prospects of a new concept. *Acad. Manag. Rev.* **27**(1), 17–40 (2002)
3. Alhaddi, H.: Triple bottom line and sustainability: a literature review. *Bus. Manage. Stud.* **1**(2), 6–10 (2015)
4. Appelbaum, E., Bailey, T., Berg, P., Kalleberg, A.L.: *Manufacturing Advantage: Why High-Performance Work Systems Pay Off*. ILR Press, London (2000)

5. Bailey, T.: *Discretionary Effort and the Organization of Work: Employee Participation and Work Reform Since Hawthorne*. Teachers College and Conservation of Human Resources, Columbia University (1993)
6. Barlie, L.S.: *Alliances for Sustainable Development, Business and NGO Partnerships*. Palgrave Macmillan, London (2010)
7. Berzina, K.: Enterprise related social capital: different levels of social capital accumulation. *Econ. Sociol.* **4**(2), 66–83 (2011)
8. Beske, P., Seuring, S.: Putting sustainability into supply chain management. *Supply Chain Manage. Int. J.* **19**(3), 322–331 (2014)
9. Biggemann, S., Buttle, F.: Conceptualising business-to-business relationship value. In: 21st IMP Conference, pp. 1–3. IMP, Rotterdam (2005)
10. Blumberg, M., Pringle, C.: The missing opportunity in organizational research: some implications for a theory of work performance. *Acad. Manag. Rev.* **7**(4), 560–569 (1982)
11. Borsdorf, F.F.: Social capital as a key source for sustainable development in protected mountain areas: experiences from Großes Walsertal biosphere reserve. In: Borsdorf, A., Stötter, J., Veulliet E. (eds.) *Innsbruck Conference 2011, Managing Alpine Future, II*, pp. 427–439. Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna (2011)
12. Bosellie, P., Dietz, G., Boon, C.: Commonalities and contradictions in HRM and performance research. *Hum. Resour. Manage. J.* **15**(3), 67–94 (2005)
13. Bos-Nehles, A.C., Van Riemsdijk, M.J., Kees Looise, J.: Employee perceptions of line management performance: applying the AMO theory to explain the effectiveness of line managers' HRM implementation. *Hum. Resour. Manage.* **52**(6), 861–877 (2013)
14. Bourdieu, P.: The forms of capital. In: Richardson, G. (ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Greenwood Press, New York (1986)
15. Brundtland, G.H.: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future (1987). <http://www.un-documents.net>. Last Accessed 4 Mar 2017
16. Burt, R.S.: Structural holes versus network closure as social capital. In: Lin, N., Cook, K.S., Burt R.S. (eds.): *Social Capital: Theory and Research*. Transaction Publishers, New York (2001)
17. Chang, KCh., Wong, J.H., Lin, Y., Li, YCh., Chen, H.G.: External social capital and information systems development team flexibility. *Inf. Softw. Technol.* **53**(6), 592–600 (2011)
18. Cirnu, C.E., Kuralt, B.: The impact of employees' personal values on their attitudes toward sustainable development: cases of Slovenia and Romania. *Management* **18**(2), 1–20 (2013)
19. Coleman, J.S.: Social capital in the creation of human capita. *Am. J. Sociol.* **94** (Supplement: Organizations and Institutions: Sociological and Economic Approaches to the Analysis of Social Structure), 95–120 (1988)
20. de Bruijn, T., Tukker, A. (eds.): *Partnership and Leadership: Building Alliances for a Sustainable Future*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht (2002)
21. de Gruyter, A., Chung, H. Oh, M., Labianca, G.: Group social capital and group effectiveness: the role of informal socializing ties. *Acad. Manage. J.* **47**(6), 860–875 (2004)
22. Demortier, A.L., Delobbe, N.El, Akremi, A.: Opening the black box of HR practices—performance relationship: testing a three pathways AMO Model. *Acad. Manage. Ann. Meet. Proc.* **1**, 1201–1206 (2014)
23. Doda, S.: The importance of corporate social responsibility. *J. Sociol. Res.* **6**(1), 86–91 (2015)
24. Eccles, R., Miller, G., Perkins, K., Serafeim, G.: How to become a sustainable company. *MIT Sloan Manage. Rev.* **53**(3), 43–50 (2012)
25. Elkington, J.: *Cannibals with forks. The Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business*. Capstone Publishing Ltd., Oxford (1997)
26. Escher, I., Glińska-Noweś, A., Brzustewicz, P.: Znaczenie osobistych więzi partnerów relacji biznesowej na etapie jej kończenia. *Organizacja i Kierowanie* **2**(176), s. 269–283 (2017)
27. Galpin, T., Whittington, J.L., Bell, G.: Is your sustainability strategy sustainable? *Creating Cult. Sustain.* **15**(1), 1–17 (2015)
28. Gerhart, B.: Human resources and business performance: findings, unanswered questions, and an alternative approach. *Manage. Revue* **16**(2), 174–185 (2005)

29. Glińska-Neweś, A.: *pozytywne relacje interpersonalne w zarządzaniu*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń (2017)
30. Glińska-Neweś, A., Sudolska, A., Escher, I.: *Więzi osobiste jako komponent relacji biznesowych w ocenie reprezentantów polskich przedsiębiorstw*. *Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu* **444**, 140–149 (2016)
31. Godkin, L.: Mid-management, employee engagement, and the generation of reliable sustainable corporate social responsibility. *J. Bus. Ethics* **130**, 15–28 (2015)
32. Grant, A.M.: Relational job design and the motivation to make a prosocial difference. *Acad. Manag. Rev.* **32**(2), 393–417 (2007)
33. Grudzewski, W.M., Hejduk, I.K., Sankowska, A., Wańtuchowicz, M.: *Sustainability w biznesie czyli przedsiębiorstwo przyszłości*. Wydawnictwo Poltext, Warszawa (2010)
34. Halinen, A., Salmi, A.: *Managing the informal side of business interaction: personal contacts in the critical phases of business relationships*. In: 17th IMP Conference, pp. 1–20. IMP, Oslo (2001)
35. Håkansson, H., Snehota, I.: *Developing Relationships in Business Networks*. Routledge, London (1995)
36. Hartman, C.L., Hofman, P.S., Stafford, E.R.: Partnerships: A Path to Sustainability. *Bus. Strateg. Environ.* **8**(5), 255–266 (1999)
37. Herriman, J., Storey, H., Smith, P., Collier, G.: Working relationships for sustainability: improving work-based relationships in local government to bring about sustainability goals. *Commonwealth J. Local Gov.* **10**, 116–133 (2012)
38. Hoffman, A., Bansal, P. (eds.): *Oxford Handbook on Business and the Environment*. Oxford University Press, New York (2011)
39. Hopwood, B., Mellor, M., O'Brien, G.: Sustainable development: mapping different approaches. *Sustain. Dev.* **13**, 38–52 (2005)
40. Ji, L., Huangb, J., Liuc, Z., Zhua, H., Caia, Z.: The effects of employee training on the relationship between environmental attitude and firms' performance in sustainable development. *Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manage.* **23**(14), 2995–3008 (2012)
41. Karwacka, M.: *Siła współpracy. Relacje przedsiębiorstw z organizacjami pozarządowymi w kontekście społecznej odpowiedzialności biznesu*. Nomos, Kraków (2016)
42. Knies, E., Leisink, P.: Linking people management and extra-role behaviour: results of a longitudinal study. *Hum. Resour. Manage. J.* **24**(1), 57–76 (2014)
43. Krot, K., Lewicka, D.: Innovation and organisational trust: study of firms in Poland. *Int. J. Innov. Learn.* **10**(1), 43–59 (2011)
44. Laszlo, Ch.: *Firma zrównoważonego rozwoju*. Wydawnictwo Studio Emka, Warszawa (2008)
45. Liu, Z, Li, J., Zhu, H., Z., Wang, L.: Chinese firms' sustainable development—the role of future orientation, environmental commitment, and employee training. *Asia Pac. J. Manage.* **31**, 195–213 (2014)
46. Marin-Garcia, J.A., Martinez Tomas, J.: Deconstructing AMO framework: A systematic review. *Intangible Capital* **12**(4), 1040–1087 (2016)
47. Moran, P.: Structural vs. relational embeddedness: social capital and managerial performance. *Strateg. Manage. J.* **26**, 1129–1151 (2005)
48. Morgan, R.M., Hunt, S.D.: The commitment—trust theory of relationship marketing. *J. Mark.* **58**(3), 20–38 (1994)
49. Muniady, R.A/L, Al Mamun, A., Mohamad Mohd, R., Yukthamarani Permarupan, P., Zainol, N.R.B.: The Effect of Cognitive and Relational Social Capital on Structural Social Capital and Micro-Enterprise Performance, October–December, pp. 1–9 (2015), <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015611187>. Last Accessed 4 May 2017
50. Nahapiet, J., Ghoshal, S.: Social capital, intellectual capital, and the organizational advantage. *Acad. Manage. Rev.* **23**(2), 242–266 (1998)
51. Labianca, H., Oh, G., Chung, M.: A multilevel model of group social capital. *Acad. Manag. J.* **31**(3), 569–582 (2006)
52. Pero, M., Moretto, A., Bottani, E., Bigliardi, B.: Environmental collaboration for sustainability in the construction industry: an exploratory study in Italy. *Sustainability* **9**(1), 1–25 (2017)

53. Polman, P., Bhattacharya, C.: Engaging employees to create a sustainable business. *Stanford Soc. Innov. Rev.* Fall, 34–39 (2016)
54. Prior, D., Surroca, J., Tribo, J.A.: Are socially responsible managers really ethical? Exploring the relationship between earnings management and corporate social responsibility. *Corp. Gov. Int. Rev.* **3**(16), 160–177 (2008)
55. Roszkowska, P.: Rewolucja w raportowaniu biznesowym. Interesariusze, konkurencyjność, społeczna odpowiedzialność. Difin, Warszawa (2011)
56. Shaladi, B.: Business relationship development and the influence of psychic distance. *Innov. Mark.* **8**(3), 73–80 (2012)
57. Stephan, U., Patterson, M., Kelly, C., Mair, J.: Organizations driving positive social change: a review and an integrative framework of change processes. *J. Manag.* **42**(5), 1250–1281 (2016)
58. Temminck, E., Mearns, K., Fruhen, L.: Motivating employees towards sustainable behaviour. *Bus. Strateg. Environ.* **24**, 402–412 (2015)
59. Vroom, V.H.: *Work and Motivation*. Wiley, New York (1964)
60. Weck, M., Ivanova-Gongne, M.: The importance of cultural adaptation for the trust development within business relationships. *J. Bus. Ind. Mark.* **28**(3), 210–220 (2013)
61. Wolf, J.: Improving the sustainable development of firms: the role of employees. *Bus. Strateg. Environ.* **22**, 92–108 (2013)
62. Yaziji, M., Doh, J.: *NGOs and Corporations. Conflict and Collaboration*. Cambridge University Press, New York (2009)
63. Zakrzewska-Bielawska, A.: The relationship between managers' network awareness and the relational strategic orientation of their firms: findings from interviews with polish managers. *Sustainability* **10**(8), 1–20 (2018)

Online Sources/Netography

64. Social Capital. Sustainable Jersey Sustainability Summit, Conference material underwritten by "The Master's Program in Sustainability Studies at Ramapo College of New Jersey. http://www.sustainablejersey.com/fileadmin/media/Events_and_Trainings/Add_Event/2013/Sustainability_Summit/Sustainability_Briefs/Social_Capital_FINAL_9_10_13_.pdf. Last Accessed 2 Jan 2019
65. Społeczna odpowiedzialność biznesu w polskich realiach. Teoria a praktyka <http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/publikacje/raport-spoleczna-odpowiedzialnosc-biznesu-w-polskich-realiach-teoria-a-praktyka/>. Last Accessed 25 Oct 2018
66. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>. Last Accessed 3 May 2017