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EXAMINATION OF THE INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES EMPLOYEES' OPINIONS ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Carmen Mihaela Olteanu

Lecturer, PhD, "Spiru Haret" University of Bucharest

Abstract: The matter investigated in this paper operates within the investigations promoted by the "Environmental psychology", discipline that emerged and developed in the last decades of the 20th century. Numerous researchers underline the importance of the change of environmental social representations, opinions, attitudes and behaviours, to the end of optimizing them to ensure an economic development in harmony with nature, expressing their optimism related to the contribution that Environmental psychology can bring in this sense.

In the sphere of environmental psychology, which we perceive as a discipline bordering social psychology and organizational psychology, there are preoccupations related to the study of the psychosocial and psychological variables in different social economic contexts, influencing the pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours.

In the past decades, the problem of environmental strategies and the behaviour of industrial companies' employees for the environmental protection, setting out from a proper comprehension of the notion of sustainable development, has been approached by numerous international organizations as well as by numerous researchers.

Keywords: Environmental Psychology, ambience, sustainable development, New EcologicalParadigm Scale

1. Introduction

Many researchers (Fluckiger, Klaue, 1991; Moser, 2000) demonstrate the importance of changing the environmental social representations, opinions, attitudes and behaviours, to the end of optimizing them to ensure an economic development in harmony with nature, expressing their optimism related to the contribution that Environmental psychology can bring in this sense.

In connection with these concerns of we would also like to mention Clayton and Brook's study (2005) 'Can Environmental Psychology help to save the World?' as well as Moran's book (2006) 'People and Nature: An Introduction to Human Ecological Relations'.

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Bonett (2002) demonstrates the importance of the citizens' education for sustainable development.

Among the publications promoting studies regarding the environmental attitudes and behaviours, setting out from a proper comprehension of the notion of sustainable development, we mention: the "Journal of environmental psychology", "Environmental Education Research", "Environment and behaviour", "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology".

In a treaty of Environmental Law, Duţu (2007) examines the role of institutions, legislation and policies to protect the global environment and Capron and Quairel-Lanoizelle (2007) analyze corporate social responsibility through the psychosocial and economic factors related to sustainability and sustainable development. Boiral (2006) underlines the fact that the relationship between the natural environment and the economy is bi-univocal (<http://vertigo.revues.org./3386>).

According to some researchers (Boiral, 2004; De Causans, 2010) it is important to analyze the **ambience** of the industrial enterprise, stressing that it is made up of the ensemble of the organizations and the external factors of a different nature: political, legal, socio-economic, technological, etc, which can manifest nationally and internationally. They directly and indirectly influence the activity of a business enterprise.

The **ambience** can be analyzed or characterized based on the following aspects:

As a source of constraints, the ambience has a strong influence on the enterprise. The sources of constraints may come from outside (customers, suppliers, the state, shareholders, banks, etc.), but also from the so-called global phenomena (inflation, economic downturn or growth, various political, social, etc phenomena).

The complex character of the ambience refers to the number of elements and their degree of complexity.

The random change character of the ambience is determined to a large extent by the technological advances, but there may be changes due to legislation, politics or other events that cannot be foreseen.

The character of relativity exists because each enterprise has its specific ambience (depending on the size of the company, its activity, the local, national or international importance of the enterprise, etc); hence, it should be identified, analyzed and used.

The dynamic character refers to the changes of its components that occur at different rates. When the pace of changes is slow and relatively predictable, certain stability is considered to exist; instead, when the pace of changes is rapid and relatively difficult to predict, it is considered a situation of instability.

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The diversified nature of the ambience is given by the existence of a set of component elements belonging to different fields, such as the economic, social, technological, political, cultural one.

In recent decades, *the issue of ecological strategies and of the behaviour of employees in industrial enterprises for environmental protection*, based on a proper understanding of the concept of sustainable development, has been addressed by numerous international organizations (UN, the European Commission, UNESCO, etc) and many researchers. In 2001, the European Union Commission developed the ‘Green Paper: Promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility’.

Berger-Douce (2006) studied the pro-ecological attitudes and behaviours of small and medium enterprises, and Craig and Dibrell (2007) examined the relationships between innovation, economic performance and compliance with environmental values in large enterprises.

In 2007, in France, a ‘barometer’ was made regarding the opinions and the strategies related to *sustainable development in enterprises in the Parisian region* (<http://www.crocis.ccip.fr>). Moreover Cabagnols and Le Bas (2006), based on an investigation, analyzed the determinant factors of the social responsibility behaviour in industrial enterprises.

2. Research Objectives, Hypotheses and Methodology

The objective of the study: To identify the economic-environmental opinions, attitudes, strategies and policies of the managers and employees of industrial companies concerning environmental protection.

Research hypothesis: It is presumed that, at the present date, there is an average level of awareness of the need to act upon the economic and environmental opinions, attitudes, strategies and policies in the industrial companies concerning environmental protection.

Instruments of analysis to be used in the research: ECO-BALANCE questionnaire and NEP scale (New Ecological Paradigm).

a) The Eco-balance questionnaire of environmental opinions and attitudes of the company employees, elaborated by us targets the following aspects:

- Actions for raising environmental awareness and environmental education;
- Opinions on the impact of the environment protection measures on the company development in the current competition context;
- Opinion on the impact of an “Environmental Charter” of the company;

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- Attitude towards the financing of environmental policies and measures taken within the company;
- Opinion on environment protection objectives and action compatible with the company development;
- Responsible behaviour towards environmental protection of the company's leadership and of the employees.

The evaluation of each item will be performed in relation to the degree of agreement/disagreement, on a 5 point scale: greatly agree (5); mostly agree(4); moderately agree (3); slightly agree (2); barely agree (1).

- b) The content of the NEP scale items refers to:
- the limits of demographic and economic growth;
 - fragility of the natural balance;
 - likelihood of an environmental crisis;
 - anti-anthropocentrism (opinions and attitudes concerning the view that “man is the master of nature and nature must satisfy his needs).

The answers of the participants compliant with the odd items and the answers in disagreement to the even items will indicate a pro-environmental standpoint.

The participants in the investigation:

In this study a number of 30 professionally active persons are going to take part, from various economic sectors. Their ages are between 20 and 67.

3. Conclusions Regarding Project Management Issues

The matter investigated in this study make us recall Toffler's affirmations in this remarkable book *"The shock of the future"* (1978. p. 431), which shows that “the old policy, in association with which the options took into account the immediate economic advantages, proves to be hazardous, unclear and unbalanced. Today, to be able to make a choice in the technological field, we need much more subtle criteria. We need such criteria not only to prevent avoidable disasters but to help us discover future opportunities. Faced for the first time with an excessive technical variety, society must now chose its machines, procedures, technologies and systems in bulk, rather than one by one. It must make a choice, just like an individual choosing a lifestyle. It must make super decisions related to its future”.

What is important is that the managers and employees of the companies to consider that the compilation and, in particular, the enforcement in the production process of the impositions of an environmental charter within the company would constitute the ideal manner to obligate the staff to respect and protect the natural environment. This aspect makes us recall Toffler's

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affirmation in his work “*The third wave*” (1983. p. 617): “ As the main organizer of the economic production, the company is the key “producer” of environmental impact. If we want to continue the economic growth– or even just survive– future managers will have to assume responsibility for transforming environmental impacts from negative into positive...Thus, the company will become an environmental institutions rather than just an economic one”.

This study clearly demonstrates the need for and the utility of researches in the field of environmental psychology, which we comprehend as a discipline that borders social psychology and organizational psychology. There is focus on the study of the psychosocial and psychological variables, which, under different social economic contexts influence the pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours.

In the past decades, the issue of environmental strategies and the behaviour of employees of the industrial companies to the end of protecting the environment, setting out from the proper understanding of the notion of sustainable development, has been approached by numerous international entities (UN, European Committee, UNESCO etc.) and numerous researchers.

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