

Chapter 1

The Use of Sustainable Business Model Archetypes in the Design of Circular Business Models in the Digital Economy

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ABSTRACT

Archetypes of sustainable business models can be used to the elaboration of archetypes of business models that combine the assumptions of sharing economy and circular economy as part of their categorization. The chapter presents the assumptions of conceptualization and operationalization of potential model solutions in the field of using archetypes of sustainable business models in the design of circular business models in digital economy. The chapter has an epistemological character described in ontological, epistemological, and methodological categories, but also with the use of an axiological sense. The aim of the chapter is to develop and indicate the principles of designing business models based on the concepts of sharing economy and circular economy using archetypes of sustainable business models in range of digital environment of business.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7850-5.ch001

INTRODUCTION

The conceptualization and operationalization of Sustainable Business Models is based on the assumptions of the joint examination of the Triple Bottom Line concept and the techniques of configuring an effective and efficient resource structure of business model components.

The concept of sustainability, widely explored in science in recent years, can play an important role in shaping and adjusting these innovative business models. As regards the concept of sustainability, the key role is played by a longer perspective of studying business, which, in the context of the dynamic development of new technologies, can lead to a number of problems.

Generally, in theory and practice, several approaches to sustainability can be distinguished:

The classic approach broadly described in the literature and well-recognized as the Triple Bottom Line (Elkington, 1999). This approach is often used by mature companies which create the strategy based on stakeholders analysis and corporate social responsibility (Wang, Sarkis, 2017, p. 1607-1616). Their business model incorporates a balance of ecological, social and economic factors. In their strategy of competitive advantage these companies apply the triple bottom line rules for example by including ecologically friendly products into their offer, undertaking activities for positive impact on environmental protection, and striking a balance between all stakeholders interests. There are different aspects which are described in the range of classical approaches to sustainability, for example: typology (Bergman, Bergman, Berger, 2017), aspect of life cycle of enterprises (Jabłoński, Jabłoński, 2016), rules for corporate social responsibility (Mourougan, 2015), and green supply chain (Fahimnia, Sarkis, Davarzani, 2015, pp.101-114).

The second approach is based on assumptions, for example of S. Schaltegger et al, who say that: ‘The value proposition must provide both ecological or social and economic value through offering products and services – business models for sustainability describe, analyze, manage, and communicate (i) a company’s sustainable value proposition to its customers, and all other stakeholders, (ii) how it creates and delivers this value, (iii) and how it captures economic value while maintaining or regenerating natural, social, and economic capital beyond its organizational boundaries (Schaltegger, Hansen, Lüdeke-Freund, 2015).’ In this holistic approach ‘no sustainable value can be created for customers without creating value to a broader range of stakeholders’. This also includes a management approach which aims at achieving success in a fair manner for employees. This topic is widely developed in the literature (Lüdeke-Freund, 2010), (Schaltegger, Lüdeke-Freund, Hansen, 2016), (Boons, Montalvo, Quist, Wagner, 2013).

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