Part A – Assessment of Business Sustainability Reporting

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**Starbucks and Amazon.com Inc. core business activities**

Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc., are American companies that operate in different industries. The two companies perform various business activities to achieve their core objectives in their respective industries. Starbucks operates in the retail coffee and snacks store industry where many other companies deal with the same products as the company itself (Cohen, 2017). The main products of Starbucks include beverages such as brewed coffee, Italian-style espresso among others; food products such as sandwich, ice cream and salads; non-food items such as coffee makers and mugs.

On the other hand, Amazon.com Inc. is an American multinational technology company headquartered in Washington. The company operates in cloud computing and consumer electronics industries where the level of competition is relatively highly high due to the existing of many firms in the sector (Cohen, 2017). The core business Amazon.com Inc. main focuses on cloud computing, electronic commerce and artificial intelligence.

Besides, both Starbucks and Amazon.com Inc., are American companies with different core business activities because they operate in various industries. To begin with, Starbucks has a long value chain model that illustrates its core business activities. The company has both primary events and secondary business activities. The core business activities of Starbucks are inbound logistics (Hartman, Rubin & Dhanda, 2017). The main activities involve in here include appointing coffee buyers to select the most exceptional coffees products from their producers to ensure quality assurance. Also, the company engages in outbound logistics which involve selling out their products to achieve their sales volume targets. Other core businesses of the company are marketing and sales, international, market operations, service provision and support activities like offering management activities to different departments of an organization.

On the other side, Amazon.com Inc. mainly deals with customers' satisfaction services. Some of the fundamental business models of the company are customer segmentation which involves appealing to the whole market to meet their need rather than targeting any demographics. Also, the company offer value proposition which entails the provision of convenience, brand recognition and competitive services to their clients at affordable prices (Hartman, Rubin & Dhanda, 2017). Furthermore, channels provision is another critical business activities of Amazon.com Inc. where the company manages different versions of its websites to provide quality service to their customers. This is one of the business activities that generate for the company a reasonable amount of profits.

**Similarities and differences between social reporting of issues for both Starbucks and Amazon**

Generally, there are many difference and similarities on social reporting issues for both Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc. First, both companies are much concern with sustainability issues to ensure that they comply with sustainability regulations. For instance, the management of the companies gives appropriate direction to ensure their employees comply with the international sustainability bodies to avoid facing the wrath of the law (Hartman, Rubin & Dhanda, 2017). Also, the management of both Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc. have set a reliable internal control system to guide operation all employees of their companies to increase compliance with the regulations. Also, both companies appropriately address sustainability issues that may arise from their activity. The main reason why both companies encourage these practices is to build a good reputation with the public to increase their performance in the industries they operate. To ensure transparency and accountability, both the two companies report to relevant authorities the vital information as needed by those legal authorities. However, the volume of data reported to those authorities defers because the companies operate in different industries and perform various types of business activities.

On the other hand, there are also significant differences on how the two companies handle their issues because they have different core business activities which makes them address their problems based on how they arise (Hartman, Rubin & Dhanda, 2017). For instance, Starbucks mainly deals with the production of quality products, therefore, in case a decrease in quality assurance, the management usually deal with such issues internally to cover external reactions that might affect the performance of the company in the market. In such a case, the top management of the address the issue internally to enhance quality improvement to the required standards but give a report about such matters to protect the value of the company.

On the other side, Amazon.com Inc. mainly deals with cloud computing activities. As such, any breakdown of the operating system will be realized by any users of the company services (Hartman, Rubin & Dhanda, 2017). Therefore, if the management of the company realizes any issue which is likely to affect operations of the systems, the company always notify their clients to show a sign of concerns and is committed to serving their clients diligently. In doing so, the company help to keep a good relationship with their clients to ensure that they retain their clients.

**Sustainability Development Goals of Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc.**

Both Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc. are American companies with many subsidiary branches in different parts of the world. In the United States, both the state and the federal government have set sustainability goals that should be achieved by all companies and business entities that operate within its territories. Some of these goals are global sustainability goals while some are locally adopted policies (Veal, 2017). The primary purpose of these goals is to help to reduce the rate of environmental pollution across the world. Besides, some of these goals tend to improve the quality of life of users of the companies’ products.

First, the most appropriate sustainability development goals that the companies should adopt is responsible for consumption and production. The primary aim of such objectives is to achieve sustainable management and the proper use of natural resources. Generally, both the two companies' core business activities have direct effects on the environment (Veal, 2017). Also, the management of the company use some naturally available resources to facilitate their production activities. Therefore, it is prudent for the management of the two companies to maintain responsible consumption and production while performing their operations to help in environmental conservation.

Sustainable cities and community is another sustainability goals that both Starbucks and Amazon.com Inc. should adopt. Adopting these sustainability goals will help to reduce adverse per capita environmental effects of major cities and town. It should entail paying attention to environmental pollutions and waste management to help to create a friendly working environment for all employees (Veal, 2017). Since the companies carry out some business activities that have a direct effect on the environment, it is essential for the management to remain vigilant to minimize the rate of environmental pollutions.

Furthermore, reducing inequality is another essential sustainability goal that should be practised by the management of the two companies. It involves the equal provision of opportunities to all groups of people regardless of ethical background, gender or race. Interestingly, both the two companies have been practising these sustainability goals through the provision of equal employment opportunities based on merits to reduce inequalities within their companies. The latter has helped to improve the performance of the companies since employees feel comfortable thus making them to perform their duties correctly.

**Sustainability phases of Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc.**

Commonly, sustainability goals have different phases depending on the activities to be carried out to achieve the intended objectives. Both Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc. are in various stages of sustainability the depending the goals to achieve (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). First, Starbucks Corporation is on the reinvention and regeneration sustainability phase when coming to responsible consumption and production. Even though the management has experienced significant challenges in reaching this phase using the existing business models, they have tried to achieve this sustainability goal to help in the proper mobilization of natural resources. On the other hand, Amazon.com Inc. has attained the second sustainability phase which is the competitive advantage. In this phase, the management has of the company are trying to encourage responsible consumption and production to ensure the proper use of natural resources. But the company faces, stiff competition from companies that operate in the same industry as Amazon.com Inc.

On the other hand, both the two companies have reached the reinvention and regeneration phase on sustainable cities and communities goals. This sustainability goal has a direct effect on the performance of both companies. It mainly concerns promoting corporate social responsibility to show how a company pay attention to members of society. Therefore, both companies have achieved this goal to improve public reputation in the community to increase their competitive advantage in the market (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). Consequently, achieving this sustainability goal has to make the companies have significant market share in the industry they operate due to the outstanding quality of their products and services. Typically, when companies put cooperate social responsible first while performing their business operations, the communities around them remain loyal and consistent to consumer their products. Similarly, this has helped both Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc. to improve their performance in their respective industries.

**Social reporting off Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc**

In most case, social reports provided by companies depends on the nature of their activities and core values. Some companies have limits on social reporting about issues that affect their operation due to the consequences that they might cause. To start with, transparency is one core value of Starbucks Corporation (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). The company annually and periodically report about the quality of their products and services to build a good relationship with their customers. The practice of disclosing all relevant information about their product to help in decision making by their users. The move to disclose all information about their products reflect transparency which is one of the core value of the company that determines the management should perform their duties. Also, the top management of the company also reports to the relevant authority their performance as required by the law of the United States. Honouring the duties to disclose their performance to proper authorization is a reflection of the company's values of respect and accountability which governs how the company performs its activities.

Conversely, Amazon.com Inc. has different values that govern its operations. Also, the management of the company provides a social report differently compared to Starbucks that reflect their core values (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). Most frequently, the top management of the company offers social stories about the flow of their customers. In case the senior management of the company realizes any complication in quality delivery, the description of such issues to consumers of their products to reduce inconveniences that may arise to make their client find alternatives. This periodic reporting to update customer direct reflect the company's core value of customer obsession that aims at ensuring a good relationship with its customers.

**Reflection from group discussion**

Sustainability Development Goals are set by both the federal and states governments to guide how the company perform their activities. The group discussion mainly discussed the sustainability development goals of Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc. that have been put in place and achieved to ensure the smooth running of business activities of the two companies (Coombs, 2014).

The core business activities of both Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc. improve my understanding of the variety of products and services that the two companies offer or sell. As a result, I understand the key activities that each of these companies does. Also, the discussion was used because group members have different opinions that represented different thoughts (Coombs, 2014). These though have enabled by to understand how companies and government institution come up with sustainability goals and how to apply them to get the intended results. For instance, the key sustainability goals of the companies that were discussed by group members enabled me to know sustainability phases that sustainable development goals must go through to make them successful. The main points that were discussed in the group challenged my previous understanding of sustainability issues. As a result, I now know all processes involved in developing sustainability issues as well as how they have implemented the management of different companies to achieve their organizational goals. Also, I have learnt about sustainability goals that both Starbucks Corporation and Amazon.com Inc. have put in place to ensure the smooth running of their business activities.

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