

Approaches to Research and Academic Communication

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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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SECTION 1 Literature Review

I Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), as Stojanovic, Mihajlovic & Schulte (2016) notes, is a new practice in business that emphasises the idea of ensuring a company fulfils not only its economical goal but also its social and environmental consequences. The idea has been noted to have extended beyond the sphere of businesses alone to almost many other sectors to show the importance of its ideals, as those sectors equally have both the social and environmental impact on the society; and must, as a matter of necessity, observe the responsibilities that come with it.

Organisations cannot be separated from the society as they operate within its confines. The society is not restricted to the primary area of operation of the business but also include its wider coverage even global. For this reason, Asongu (2007) asserts that organisations must give back to the society from which they have taken much. This is the bedrock of corporate social responsibility. In carrying out its social responsibility, an organisation can decide the extent of stakeholders that CSR will be applied to.

The sustainable development Unit (SDU, 2007) reiterated the definition of CSR as given by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. CSR is the ongoing commitment of businesses towards ethical behaviour, economic development and improving the lives of their work force, their families, local community and society

Meanwhile, as Hartmann (2011) notes, food sector has a strong interdependence relationship with not only the economic but also social and environmental life of a society, hence, has high relevance to CSR. Hence it is the aim of this essay to provide the ontological, conceptual, epistemological and ethical analysis of CSR with a focus on the food sector. As Hartmann (2011) notes, present-day companies admit responsibilities for some environmental effect generated by the operations of their business, thus, make attempts improve their method of operations with the aim of lessening the painful and increasing the positive impact of their businesses on the society the damage. But it is believed that it is not yet clear whether companies take up these responsibilities as a matter of duty, dignity or legal compulsion. However, an academic journey into some extant literature can help solve the curiosity. Hence the methodology of this essay will be based on literature review of previous works on CSR.

The essay shall examine CSR as a corporate strategy and equally reflect critically on various views that have been presented on the topic.

II Ethical basis for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR is commonly used term in the recent time business discussion, yet there has controversies on what it entails. However, as defined by ISO 26000 (as cited in Hartmann, 2011) an ethical dimension to CSR will make us understand that it is an emphasis on a company's responsibility concerning the effect its business decisions and activities has on the society and the environment it operates in. This responsibility is observed as the moral duty of the company to contribute to the development, health and welfare of the society. This is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour and is integrated throughout and practiced in an organization's relationships.

This definition, as Hartmann (2011) notes, underlines the basic ethical principle that "ought implies can.". In other words, for every opportunity the society affords an organisation there is a corresponding ethical responsibility. He equally noted the controversies that have been generated among the economists from the issue of whether business first obligation is to engage in CSR. While CSR is an attempt to reduce the pains of the people in a business environment, there is the controversy whether this should be the priority of a business organisation. It is argued that only the government of a country has the mandatory duty to promote good and wage war against evil.

Like the popular saying "the business of a business is business." So, as Friedman (20) as cited by Hartmann (2011) a foremost apologist of the neoclassical view, the sole social responsibility of a business organisation is to increase the profits its business, so far this is carried out without any violation of the law of the land it operates in. Thus, from a principal-agent principle, CSR is argued to be merely amoral headache to shareholders because it is a waste of resources by the organisation's management.

III Justification for CSR

In a response to the criticism against CSR, scholars have tried to come up with an economic justification of CSR. It is argued that justification can be provided for CSR from even the standpoint of profit maximisation when we do not restrict our view of what could serve as the standard motivation for major stakeholders like consumers, company workers, or investors to pure pecuniary rewards but also integrate the non-pecuniary rewards (Hartmann 2011). This

approach is termed the “business case of CSR” or “strategic CSR”(ibid.). In such instance, a company practising CSR can get their economy boosted through consumers’ willingness to pay higher prices for such quality services or the company can even attract the interest of a shareholder clientele who considers a company with ethical conduct as more attractive (ibid.).

In addition, considering Fuller’s (2013) as cited by Goel and Ramanathan, (2014) conception of CSR, one would agree that CSR is even the like a life to the sustainability and developmental of a business organisation. To him, CSR a fee a company pays back as right for the returns generated from the wrongs it has committed. Hence, “the revenues collected by taxes associated with sin and exploitation are often earmarked for restoring health and the environment, if not offering outright incentives for the manufacture of more salutary products” (49). In other words, even if “business is the business of business”, it is worth noting that a business cannot survive without consumers, resources and the society. So, a business as a matter of duty must make positive impact on the environment it operates in, as this is the most appropriate way to ensure conditions for better business.

IV Ontological explanation of CSR

Providing an ontological basis for CSR, Pavlík et al. (2010) as cited by Sommerauerova, Chocholac, & Hyrslova (2016) identifies three pillars which serves as the bases for the phenomenon, these includes an economic pillar, an environmental pillar, a social pillar. The first, economic pillar is a focus on the obligation a company has towards the market, consumers, retailers and its other partners in the business. The second, environmental pillar identifies the obligation a company has to the surroundings it operates in. What is most important in this aspect is the effect a company’s business activities always have on the environment. And a company is expected to work towards the promotion of safety and reduction of hazard in the environment. The third, social pillar is a focus on the duty a company has towards its workers and also the local community wherein the company’s business activities is carried out.

These three pillars will secure not just the societal comfort from the company but also the company’s economic life, profit. As Pavlík et al. (2010) as cited by Sommerauerova, Chocholac, & Hyrslova (2016) has noted, a company must emphasize basic principles and business activities. A business organisation, on the aspect of economy, needs to pay adequate attention to the quality and safety of the products and services it offers. It is noted that the company equally needs to work with principles such as “suitable management, customer

relationship, transparency of their activities, an anticorruption attitude, innovation, sustainability of products, ethics in marketing communication etc” (100).

On the aspect of environment, it has been noted that a company needs to focus on specific efficient use of natural resources, while not lagging in their protection; investing in a safe technology and production that can ensure a habitable environment, while ensuring the negative impacts of their operations on the environment is reduced to a bearable minimum. Lastly, on the aspect of social, a business organisation needs to concentrate most importantly on how to ensure a safe and sustainable working condition, equal opportunities, prevention of underage or forced labour, proper education training for workers, respect for human rights among others.

As it may be argued that every business organisation, as a matter of necessity, need to specify, develop and carry out its own strategy, activities and methods through which it can realise its own unique objectives in relation to CSR. However, it is worth noting that the only way a company’s plan on CSR can be a success is to ensure that its three pillars, the economic, the environmental and the social are in no way conflicting; the three must work together to ensure the success of CSR (Sommerauerova, Chocholac, & Hyrslova, 2016). In addition to this, Zadrazilova et al. (2011) as cited by Sommerauerova, Chocholac, & Hyrslova (2016) stress that in fact for any business organisation to be a success, it must protect religiously the supplier-customer relationship which is a major issue in the whole discussion under CSR projects. This relationship is fundamental to ensure that interests of the two parties are protected and this does not undermine the business ethics the company upholds.

V Epistemological and Evolutional Dimensions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

As noted by Herrera, et al. (2011), the contemporary discussion on CSR started when a seminal paper was delivered on its offshoot, social responsibility, by Bowen (1953) as cited by Herrera, et al. (2011). Scholars like Carroll (1979, 1999), Wartick and Cochran, (1985), Pinkston and Carroll (1996) as all cited by Herrera, et al. (2011) have thus had a series of debate in the area of management concerning the nature of topic. It is equally noted interest has been renewed on the issue by scholars and practitioners in the 21st century that include Joyner and Payne (2002), Tixier (2004), and McWilliams et al., (2006). These have attracted many theories, perspectives and terminologies that have not helped in a smooth understanding of the topic, CSR. Carrying

out a review of the literature within these periods, one would discover the development and application of a specific methodology built on Content Analysis (CA) which attempts to explain the evolution of the epistemological dimension CSR takes.

Despite the attempt to avoid the implication, and rather professing the evolutionary dimension of the CSR, Herrera, et al. (2011) re-awake the epistemological dimension of this theory for this decade as a response to the previous scholars who similarly attempt to use the results of their research to reject as a normativist orientation the theoretical implication of their theories, that is, the epistemological evolutionary dimension of CSR. The bias towards scientific rather than normative research dictates these different sets of scholars to deny the epistemological implication of their analysis. For instance, even Herrera, et al. (2011) do not deny the maxim that the data to be analysed is transformed through judgmental processes that will be classified in schemes if we have to evaluate the symbolic content of communications in a quantitative, objective, systematic and reliable manner. And as he rightly notes, in a normative epistemological approach to research, the major focus is to provide for the practitioners and professionals relevant prescriptions, that is, means, ideas, recipes for actions, which are important when we consider them from some ethical, moral, or religious viewpoint (Herrera, et al., 2011). In other words, in our research, while we deal with empirical data we collect from our findings, human interpretation judgement and prescription is always the hallmark of such research, it forms the major purpose of our study.

VI Types of CSR

Johnson et al (2014) came up with four basic types of corporate social responsibility which are Laissez-faire, Enlightened self-interest, forum for stakeholder interaction and Shaper of society. These stances represent the interest of the stakeholders, their methods and how they can be measured.

The Laissez-fair view according to Johnson et al (2013) is an extreme view which states that organisations should be left to do their business without any hindrance. Their responsibility is for the furtherance of the interest of the shareholders and the profit of the organisation which if not pursued can affect the long-time objective of the organisation. According to them, It is the work of the government to protect the society through setting out laws that will guide the country and organisations are not expected to do more. Managers are not expected to do more than their primary focus on the objectives of the organisations which is profit making. The

consequence of this is the fact that they may not fully understand their employee and the society they operate in.

Enlightened self-interest view on CSR is for organisation to look in-depth at the long-term management of the financial benefit for the shareholders. The justification for this is that CSR can be done in such a way that it makes good sense to the suppliers and the customers for the long-term success of the business without presuming that the organisation will go bankrupt in the future. The value of the shares of the shareholders can be increased by working together with the local communities and suppliers, supporting both skilled and unskilled workers and education for the majority of the workers. With this workers can take ownership of their work while this corporate philanthropism or welfare provision can be regarded as a meaningful expenditure. The managers that work in organisations with enlightened self-interest view of CSR have responsibilities to the organisation and to the stakeholders.

On the view on forum for stakeholders' interaction, the organisation will have multiple stakeholders' interests and expectation. The stakeholders will not influence the purpose of organisation and expectations. The organisation should be viewed in a pluralistic way where it is not only concerned with the financial value but also in the three-dimensional value; the environment protection, social responsibility and the economic value. Companies with this view might avoid to buy and sell products that can damage the environment like Sainsbury's does.

Further discussion

Recently, there have been failures and scandals relating to corporate social responsibilities of many companies in the news. The regulatory body for the government on environmental issues determines the extent to which organisations must go for the betterment of the society while the stakeholders expect them to exceed these demands or responsibilities.

According to the World business council for sustainable development, corporate social responsibility is the responsibility of organisations to behave in an ethical manner, adding value to the economy, the employees, their families and the society in which they operate. From this, corporate social responsibility focuses on organisation's exceeding its social and legal requirement. The encyclopaedia (2007) sees CSR as the perception of organisations in different sectors including those in the food retail, having obligation towards the interest of

the staff, customers, shareholders and communities. They need to be aware of the effects their operations have on the environment which emphasises the need to not only comply with legislation as a statutory requirement but to take this as their obligations. Businesses have values that must be shared with the society which is what leads to mutual agreement. (Porter and Kramer, 2006)

VII Recent issues in CSR

There has been an increased emphasis on sensitivity, environmental issues and ethical issues resulting from the role businesses are playing in the society recently. Some of these issues stem from environmental damage caused by the likes of oil companies, mistreatment of workers and the issue of ethics. In the UK and European Union countries, governments have regulations, laws and standard that govern businesses on environmental and ethical issues.

As stated by Freeman and Liedtka (1991), corporate social responsibility has its roots in the write up of Andrew Carneige and others. Carneige founded a steel company and later developed two basic principles for effectiveness of capitalism.

The first principle is charity which states that the fortunate should help those that are less privileged and this include the unemployed, the disabled, elderly, the vulnerable and those that nobody cares for. Businesses can do this in partnership with the local churches, council houses or shelter houses and community centre.

The second principle states that businesses and rich individuals are expected to be stewards of their properties, holding their wealth for the society which they are to use in a legitimate way for the benefit of the society. They can increase the wealth of the society through careful investment of the resources in their custody.

These ideas became very popular over the years as many multinational companies in several countries worldwide tried to collaborate with the government interventions and regulations to bring about societal change in developing the community.

Freeman and Liedtka (1991) pointed out the unpopular argument by Friedman (1962) that companies should only care for their economic interest alone and anything that could encourage CSR will be defined as morally wrong. Friedman questioned the adoption of CRS and postulated that it was the legitimate right and duty of any democratic government to address the wellbeing of its citizens. Friedman insisted that businesses should be solely

concerned with economic issues like supply and demand, while the government's duty is to create legislations to regulate its citizens and businesses.

Murray (2003) found out in public discourse on CSR that there has been a public debate that focus on multinational economic behaviour and the treatment of workers in manufacturing factories like textiles, clothing and footwear. This brought extreme exploitation of the vulnerable workers in relation to their living wages and working in dangerous conditions. This aspect of CSR was the focus by the media and brought to the Global attention the idiosyncratic way some organisations treat their low skilled workers in the production line. Rowe (2005) supports this by ascertaining that organisations do not have genuine reasons for CRS but engage in it in order to avoid compulsory regulation by the government.

SECTION 2

A detailed analysis of Hartmann, M. (2011) Corporate Social Responsibility in the Food Sector

Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) according to Business Dictionary as cited by Sommerauerova, Chocholac, & Hyrslova (2016) is the sense of responsibility an organisation has towards the society and environment wherein the company operates. A company shows this act of social responsibility through the process of reducing waste and pollution; through their act of respect towards the people of the society in which they operate; the company equally gives back to such society by contributing to its educational and social programs; also by developing adequate returns on the resources employed. This type of responsibility as characterised in CSR is of great significance to a food retail company, which has a very significant effect and a great reliance on the social and economic conditions of the society where it operates. Part of the reasons for this effectual relationship and reliance are in the fact that the food sector greatly impact and strongly relies on both the natural and human resources. And on the fact that the society always needs to and is mostly conscious of what goes into their mouth, given that this forms their good health and consequently makes up their fundamental needs (Hartmann 2011).

As Hartmann (2011) has noted, a significant attention has been given to how the safety and quality of food in its production, processing and distribution affects the environment, especially in the researches that bothers on agricultural economic. However, he notes that enough attention has not been given to the scientific discussion of the term, CSR in relation to the food retail companies. Hartmann attempted this scientific discussion, while he provides a link between the issues about the food sector and the rich body of literature on CSR. So, the aim of this essay is to attempt a critical examination of Hartmann's discussion and evaluate some methodological, epistemological, and ethical issues that may arise from the discussion.

II Hartmann's Empirical Evidence and its Importance for the Food Retailers

While a neoclassical scholar like Friedman (1970) as cited by Hartmann (2011) frowns at the ontological nature of CSR, seeing it as a mismanagement of resources on the part of the managers that constitute nothing but moral hazard to shareholders, Hartmann through an empirical analysis attempts an economic justification of CSR. Issue about profits for the company that is considered to be the weakness of CSR is shown to rather be an advantage for the company. Hartmann (2011) points out the years of empirical attempts to address the question surrounding the ontological nature of CSR in relation to the business aspect of a company's life. Using Frooman (1997), Margolis et. al. (2007) and two others' mathematical meta-analyses results as an evidence, he argues that corporate financial performance (CFP) has an effective connection with CSR. The meta-analyses provided by Frooman's (1997) as cited by Hartmann (2011), for instance, rest the studies on over two dozen of events. These events show the reactions of stock market to a socially irresponsible or illegal behaviour from a company. It is found that such behaviours rather impoverish the pockets of the company's shareholders by reducing their profits.

What is discovered from these analyses has to do with the relationship between "doing good" and "doing well", that is, the two must not be seen as antithetical to each other. In other words, a company choice of "doing good" does not necessarily come at the expense of "doing well." But she notices that some methodological issues that contribute to the discrepancies of results reveals that if a company chooses to be "doing good" does not necessarily translate to 'doing well.' This changes discussion from the question of "whether" to "when" is a company "doing well" through "doing good"? in other words, is "doing good" an automatic prerequisite for "doing well"? This shows nothing to disprove the CSR-CFP relationship but to show that "doing good" is a necessary, perhaps not sufficient condition for "doing well." This is because,

there may be other factors to aid the “doing good” in transforming to “doing well” such as the company’s timing in carrying out its socially responsible activities in relation to its business activities, and studying its consumers’ views and behaviours.

Talking about the consumers’ views and behaviours Hartmann (2011) notices the importance of this to the survival and growth of a business organisation. As he rightly points out, there have been decades of researches dedicated to study how CSR influences consumers’ views and behaviour. The findings of these studies present us with the evidence that socially responsible activities from an organisation can greatly influence a reasonable amount of results that have to do with consumers. And these include consumers’ loyalty, preference and evaluation of the company’s product and services, patronage and willingness to pay (WTP). The findings further show that the strength and, in some cases, even the sign of those connections are mediated by the firm, consumers together with CSR-related factors along with the communication among those factors.

III Ethical implications

The ethical implication of this is that the amount of good conduct a company practises will determine the outcome of their growth and profits. This is because, as Hartmann (2011) points out, outcomes are weighed as profits or losses from a reference point. Besides, losses are greatly evaluated more than the same amount of profits. In other words, it is the expectation of the consumers that a company conducts itself ethically.

Table 1. Impact of CSR and product social responsibility on consumers' perception and behaviour: results of empirical research^a

Item analysed	Direct link	Indirect link or conditional support
Attitude/evaluation/reputation of company or brand	Bigne-Alcaniz <i>et al.</i> (2011); Brown and Dacin (1997) (two studies); Folkes and Kamins (1999); Klein and Dawar (2004) (two studies); Marin <i>et al.</i> (2009); Mohr and Webb (2005); Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) (two studies); Sen <i>et al.</i> (2006); Sweeney (2009)	Becker Olsen <i>et al.</i> (2006) (two studies); Folkes and Kamins (1999); Groza <i>et al.</i> (2011) (two studies)
Credibility of the company		Becker Olsen <i>et al.</i> (2006) (two studies)
Product evaluation	De los Salmones <i>et al.</i> (2005)	Barone <i>et al.</i> (2007) (three studies); Brown and Dacin (1997) (three studies)
Insurance factor	Eisingerich <i>et al.</i> (2011) (two studies); Klein and Dawar (2004) (two studies)	Creyer and Ross (1996)
Consumer-company identification	Du <i>et al.</i> (2007); Lee <i>et al.</i> (2011); Lichtenstein <i>et al.</i> (2004) (four studies); Marin <i>et al.</i> (2009); Sen <i>et al.</i> (2006)	
Consumer or customer loyalty	Du <i>et al.</i> (2007); Lee <i>et al.</i> (2011); Lichtenstein <i>et al.</i> (2004) (two studies); Maignan <i>et al.</i> (1999) (two studies); Sweeney (2009)	Marin <i>et al.</i> (2009); Pivato <i>et al.</i> (2008); De los Salmones <i>et al.</i> (2005); Vlachos <i>et al.</i> (2009)
Consumer trust	Pivato <i>et al.</i> (2008)	Vlachos <i>et al.</i> (2009)
Consumer satisfaction	Lev <i>et al.</i> (2010); Luo and Bhattacharya (2006)	
Product purchase intention	Creyer and Ross (1997); Maignan (2001); Mohr and Webb (2005); Pracejus and Olsen (2004) (two studies); Sen <i>et al.</i> (2006)	Barone <i>et al.</i> (2000); Barone <i>et al.</i> (2007); Becker Olsen <i>et al.</i> (2006) (two studies); Berens <i>et al.</i> (2007); Bigne-Alcaniz <i>et al.</i> (2011); Creyer and Ross (1996) (three studies); Du <i>et al.</i> (2007); Ellen <i>et al.</i> (2006); Groza <i>et al.</i> (2011) (two studies); Klein and Dawar (2004) (two studies); Lichtenstein <i>et al.</i> (2004) (three studies); Russell and Russell (2010) (three studies); Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) (two studies)
WTP	Pracejus and Olsen (2004) (two studies)	Creyer and Ross (1996) (three studies)
Sales	Lev <i>et al.</i> (2010)	
Firms market value		Luo and Bhattacharya (2006)

^aIn most studies the impact of CSR-association on various consumer related outcomes is analysed.

Table illustrating the impact of CSR and product social responsibility on consumers' perception and behaviour: results of empirical research (Hartmann, 2011: p.303).

Therefore, if it is the case that studies have provided an ample of evidence to prove that socially responsible conduct from a company can help the company accumulate general goodwill thus profits, then a food retail company as a profit-seeking business dealing with perishable products, even needs a greater amount of responsible conducts. In other words, food sector requires more integration of CSR. It has been noted that food production has been recurrently in the dock for a long period of time. There have been problem of rotten meat, dioxin or inadequate work force. And these have attracted negative attention from the people as well as leaving the whole sector at disrepute (Albersmeier and Spiller, 2009 as cited by Hartmann, 2011). So long as CSR has been shown to be capable of safeguarding against this type of

problem facing food safety, a food company needs to build a reputation for socially responsible conduct.

IV Validity and reliability

The validity of the researches Hartmann (2011) emphasises including his own findings that tend to put more pressure on food sector as requiring more socially responsible conduct may be doubted as being bias in its method of moral judgment of sectors. This is because there is sector like mining, as well as some others, that has greater effects on the environment in terms of pollution and others. However, it is worth noting that no other sector as the food sector can possibly enjoy greater interdependence relationship with natural resources and have considerable and various effects on the environment. Besides, the food sector has a connection with many societal issues. An example is animal welfare, even that of human. Before any human can have a contact with mining, food must have come in many ways. Moreover, ethical problems in relation to processes of procurement have been thoroughly scrutinized by the people due to the tendency of the abuse of power and unjust practices.

In fact, the difference in the pressure concerning the adoption and practise of CSR is not just about various sectors, it equally affects different enterprises within a sector. So, it cannot be seen as bias when there is greater concentration on food sector. Even within food sector, the size goes a long way in determining the responsibilities of a company. This is because the requirement of CSR by the society rests unevenly on a bigger food company (Hartmann, 2011). For instance, heterogeneous formation makes up the UK food sector: the primary level is atomistic, while great amount of concentration in retailing as well as the dominance of small and micro enterprises (SMEs) as regards amounts rather than output in food processing. Such heterogeneous formation has some implications: first, that the pressure from the society concerning CSR is somehow different in relation to the food chain; second, as partly because of the difference, such formation has impacts on companies' way of addressing and incorporating CSR into their programmes; and lastly, there is strong connection between such formation and differing powers of companies to get good deals for themselves in relation to the food chain (CIAA, 2010, as cited by Hartmann 2011). In all, there is tendency of conflicts to be cause by these dynamics in relation to CSR in the food sector.

Comparing his views on the large and medium scale companies, Hartmann (2011) argues that large or multinational food retail companies like Tesco, Sainsbury and others receive more attention concerning CSR in not only in the realm of research but also business and politics.

This is because such companies are regarded as the major actors in economic globalisation. They are the ones to be held accountable for whatever effects their business activities have on the society and the environment (Enderle, 2004 as cited by Hartmann, 2011). Tesco and many other large food retail companies have endured in the past some considerable losses to their products, services and their reputation in general as a result of insufficient labour welfare and/or little or no environmentally or socially responsible conducts in their home company and or subsidiaries in other countries. Meanwhile, SMEs might be different in fundamental ways from large companies such as being mostly financially and reputationally limited, having a strong connection with the local community, but do not exist without their own effects on the CSR approach. SMEs are mostly rather active in relation to CSR. Nevertheless, the type of effects they have are different and may be difficult to measure in the same manner and extent compared to a multinational. In other words, while a multinational the pressure be active in CSR starts from active consumers, NGOs and sometimes activists, for SMEs there is only an indirect influence from such sources. They majorly develop their immediate and direct pressure from their partners in food supply chain (explained further in Figure 1). (Hartmann, 2011).

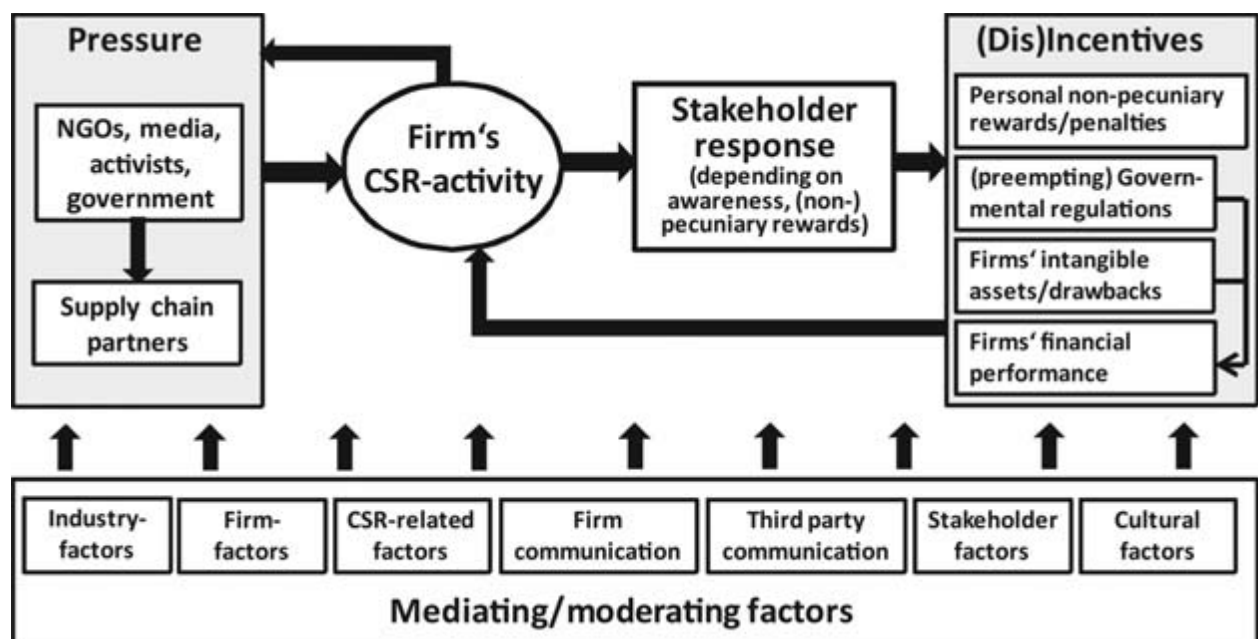


Table illustrating checklist of information concerning the comparative pressure on companies (Hartmann, 2011: p.300).

V Axiological inferences

As beautiful and plausible as Hartmann analyses are, one can argue research and the methodology is still shaped by the approach he tries to improve on. And unsurprisingly, as he notes, it is due to the methodological bias towards scientific with no recourse for the normative research. And this dictates direction of many of the scholars he alludes to that influence his work. However, in spite of its neglect, there is still undertone of epistemological implication in his analysis. And this is inherent in his prescription of the type of approach that should be adopted in addressing issues about CSR. For instance he agrees with Piacentini et al. (2000) and Heikkurinen & Forsman-Hugg (2011) as both cited by Hartmann, (2011) that in order for food companies to nullify the threats of public criticism that is born out of their (public) concerns or maximise the opportunities available there is need for a comprehensive approach to CSR. This approach, he believes, involves dealing with social and environmental issues which are pertinent to the internal and external stakeholders, and also importantly by ensuring they are well communicating internally and externally.

VI Conclusion and the further Research Needed

There has been focus on multinationals and large-scale businesses on the importance of CSR to the organisational growth due to the number of impacts their activities have on the environment. Not many are anymore denying the importance of the CSR to business. As Hartmann (2011) rightly notes, CSR ideas have indeed become an important aspect of business activities in the food sector, but with more focus on companies that has consumer brands that is of high-value. It is true this development has exposed substantial potentials to improve the behaviours of companies that deals with food in relation to their admittance of the responsibilities for the effects of their decisions and business activities that they have power to control. Therefore, this should not be a task multinational only dominate; SMEs also have similar, if not equal, role to play in integrating CSR into their activities as they even need the reputation building much more than the larger business.

However, as Hartmann (2011) rightly notes, with a special focus on the food sector, research on CSR is not yet adequate. Meanwhile, as it has been shown, the sector is marked with some special characteristic which increases the important CSR is in food business and policy arena renders makes such studies of great value. That calls for more research into the sector as it pertains to its relationship with CSR.

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