

Dissertation – Proposal
LCBB6000

The drivers and barriers of CSR practices.
The case study of Adidas

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The title of this research is *The drivers and barriers of CSR practices. The case study of Adidas*. The selected topic for this research focuses on the drivers and barriers of CSR practices. The recent period in the business environment has seen a development of the CSR concept and its importance and popularity has grown among the organisations across all sectors and industries. Nowadays the CSR concept has a top position for many organisation and occupies a central role in their values. Research Aim: To investigate the drivers and barriers of CSR practices with special reference to Adidas. The rationale for selecting this organisation as a case study for this research is connected to the high-profile of the company and the large size, being one of top players in the world for the sportswear industry. The growing expectations of the stakeholders determine the growth of CSR in a business activity like in the case of Adidas.

The research questions are formulated in order to achieve a complex and comprehensive evaluation of the CSR concept, the drivers and the barriers.

Research questions:

1. To understand CSR and its current implementation in the business environment
2. To identify the barriers faced by Adidas during the implementation of CSR practices
3. To understand the drivers experienced by Adidas CSR
4. To provide recommendations in order to improve the CSR practices

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The concept of CSR goes back to 1950's with Bowen (1953) identifying that the responsibility of organisations towards the stakeholders should go beyond the legal and contractual obligations. The CSR has initially been seen just as another tool to generate profits, but along with the development of the business environment and society's expectations the instrumental theory entails "meeting stakeholders expectations and contouring a good and positive image whilst ensuring competitive advantage" (Nazri et al, 2020).

The organisations have an obligation to ensure policies are followed whilst the decision making benefits the organisation and the society. The CSR approach is defined by the actions of the business and the perceived societal status of the stakeholders as an extra-role behaviour that will lead to economic gain but will also be desirable to the society. Barnett (2007) states that the

resource allocation process towards improving social welfare will be a facilitator strategy to efficient relationships with stakeholders. Waddock (2004) looks at the role of the organisation in the society and its important responsibility towards the community of stakeholders.

The selected organisation for this research is Adidas. Adidas is a known and trusted brand for sportswear products worldwide and is recognised for the three-stripe trademark. It started to use the Adidas brand name since 1949. The organisation is based in Germany and has its headquarters in Herzogenaurach. It has a long history, being founded in 1924 and has a current net value of more than \$14 billion USD. It has a high number of employees worldwide more than 60 000 with a strong presence online and operating more than 2 500 stores. It has registered growth lately and the motto of their business model is “nothing is impossible”. The mission of the organisation is to be the best sports brand in the world and “to offer the best service and customer experience – and to do it all in a sustainable way” (Adidas, 2023).

The CSR in Adidas is considered a very important part of the business and the organisation has great focus in having a responsible activity and sustainable. The approach of Adidas for CSR is concerned with three main areas: environmental sustainability, human rights, and employee development. Being viewed as a “team sport” the organisation is involving in their CSR efforts their employees, their consumers and the communities they get in contact with. It is considered that everyone plays an important role and is essential to work together to achieve the CSR objectives. The management in Adidas uses CSR to have a sustainable activity, to contribute to the social welfare whilst ensuring that it is in line with the stakeholder’s perspectives (Zhaoyang et al, 2020) .

Chapter 3: Research Methods and Methodology

The selected organisation for the research is Adidas, which is a leading manufacturer of sportswear products. The purpose of this research is to investigate the drivers and barriers of CSR practices with the study case of Adidas. The literature review has the aim of researching the concept of CSR and critically evaluate different approaches and theories involved in the process. The illustration of secondary data will aim to underpin theoretical practices and the primary data research will look at the CSR activity of the selected organisation Adidas. The primary data research will be in connection to the established research objectives and will make use of research instruments for an efficient and organised process. The primary data collection will ensure information is provided on the CSR concept, the CSR drivers in Adidas, the barriers in Adidas activity, the perception of Adidas stakeholders regarding their CSR activity. It is intended to collect primary data from two of

Adidas stakeholders: management and consumers. The research instruments which will be used to collect primary data will be the interview for the internal stakeholders and will be selected non-randomly a representative from Adidas management. Another research instrument used to collect primary data for this research is the questionnaire and will be used to collect data from external stakeholders represented by consumers. The usage of mixed methods of research is intended for a triangulation method of research, qualitative data through the interview and secondary data and quantitative data through questionnaire. Through this research it is intended to obtain a clear outcome regarding the CSR investigation in the selected organisation (Galbreath, 2010). The selection of the mixed methods of research will ensure a complex evaluation through descriptive data from the interview from Adidas representatives and numerical illustration from data selected from customers of Adidas who have the opportunity to provide feedback on the business activity of Adidas and its CSR practices. Therefore the data collection of qualitative data and quantitative data will ensure a wider interpretation and can give more accuracy.

The sampling process is defined as “the selection process of the participants in order to realise the collection of primary data” Scribbr (2022). The sampling process can be realised in different way. It can be realised randomly which reduces the bias and usually is realised by using computer programs. It can also be realised non-randomly which will refer to a certain segment of participants under different criteria. It is very important to ensure the selection of a representative sample for the research objectives in order to achieve relevant results for the research. A sample which is too large can lead to less accurate findings for some objectives whilst a small sample could not be defining for the purpose of the research. The qualitative data will be organised for a representative of Adidas management in order to obtain an official perspective of Adidas explaining their CSR activity. The interview questions will be formulated in connection to the research objectives and will look in finding out about the CSR drivers and barriers in Adidas. The interview will have five main questions.

Interview questions:

1. What is the main focus of Adidas regarding the CSR practices?
2. What are the most current projects of Adidas regarding the CSR practices?
3. What are the CSR drivers of Adidas?
4. What are the barriers of CSR in Adidas?
5. From your managerial experience, do you consider that CSR impacts business performance?

The quantitative data collection will be realised by using the questionnaire as the research instrument as it is the most popular method to collect data from customers. The selection sample for

addressing the questionnaire will be realised non-randomly and will be selected 3 Adidas stores from London as the research can only have access to stores from the United Kingdom. It is intended to have 20 respondents at each of the selected stores with a total of 60 respondents. The questionnaire will have 10 questions which will enquire the knowledge of the respondents on the CSR concept, the knowledge of the respondents on the CSR activity of Adidas and the recommendations for improvement as an important stakeholder of Adidas.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

In conclusion this research will be able to contribute to the understanding of the CSR concept by evaluating diverse theories through secondary data research and by understanding how organisations are putting in practices the theoretical concepts and how are implementing the CSR strategies.

Chapter 5: References and Bibliography

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