

**CRRC 2023**  
**19th Corporate Responsibility Research Conference**

**6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Theme: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Does it Make a Difference?**

Hosted by Homerton College, University of Cambridge (UK), in association with  
the Sustainability Research Institute at the University of Leeds (UK)  
and Kedge Business School (France)

**ABSTRACT BOOK**



## Table of Contents

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW .....	3
Session 1A: Management & Anthropocene (1/2).....	12
Session 1B: Consumer Behaviour.....	14
Session 1C: Circular Economy (1/2).....	17
Session 1D: Open Call (1/6).....	18
Session 2A: Management & Anthropocene (2/2).....	20
Session 2B: Corruption .....	22
Session 2C: Circular Economy (2/2).....	23
Session 2D: Open Call (2/6).....	24
Session 3A: Stakeholder Engagement (1/6).....	27
Session 3B: Business, Peace & ESG.....	29
Session 3C: CSR Communication (1/2).....	31
Session 3D: Open Call (3/6).....	33
Session 4A: Stakeholder Engagement (2/6).....	35
Session 4B: Climate Change & CSR.....	37
Session 4C: CSR Communication (2/2).....	40
Session 4D: Open Call (4/6).....	41
Session 5A: Stakeholder Engagement (3/6).....	43
Session 5B: CSR Impacts (1/4).....	46
Session 5C: Social Sustainability .....	48
Session 5D: Open Call (5/6).....	51
Session 6A: Stakeholder Engagement (4/6).....	53
Session 6B: CSR Impacts (2/4).....	55
Session 6C: International CSR (1/3) .....	56
Session 6D: Open Call (6/6).....	58
Session 7A: Stakeholder Engagement (5/6).....	59
Session 7B: CSR Impacts (3/4).....	62
Session 7C: International CSR (2/3) .....	64
Session 8A: Stakeholder Engagement (6/6).....	66
Session 8B: CSR Impacts (4/4).....	68
Session 8C: International CSR (3/3) .....	70
PARTICIPANT LIST.....	72

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

### Wednesday 06 September 2023

12:00 – 12:30	Sandwich lunch (Great Hall)
12:30 – 15:30	<b>PhD Workshop</b> (North Wing Auditorium)
15:30 – 16:30	BBQ & room check-in (Outside lawn/ Fellow's Dining Room in case it is raining)
16:45 – 17:45	Guided walking tour (meet outside Guildhall in the Market Square, Cambridge CB2 3QJ)
18:15 – 19:00	Punting (Mill Lane Station, Cambridge CB2 1RS)
19:00 –	Eagle pub visit (all welcome!) (Bene't St, Cambridge CB2 3QN)

### Thursday 07 September 2023

08:30 – 09:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Registration from 08:30</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>09:15 Welcome &amp; Conference Aims</b> (Great Hall)</p>
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09:30 – 11:00	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 1A</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Management &amp; Anthropocene</u></b> <b><u>(1/2)</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Pasi HEIKKURINEN Room: Bamford/ Skillicorn</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 1B</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Consumer Behaviour</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: William YOUNG Room: Paston Brown</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 1C</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Circular Economy (1/2)</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Frank FIGGE Room: North Wing Auditorium</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 1D</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Open Call (1/6)</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Orr KARASSIN Room: Alison Shrubsole</p>
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	<p>Corporate environmental disclosure: signalling or greenwashing? Evidence from Italy <i>(Sara Ratti, Marika Arena, Giovanni Azzone &amp; Laura Dell'Agostino)</i></p>	<p>The role of consumers' self-efficacy in biodiversity respectful consumption <i>(Outi Uusitalo, Henna Rouhiainen &amp; Mitra Salimi)</i></p>	<p>Nourishing sustainability agency: The role of participation in advancing sustainable circular economy <i>(Sirpa Kortelainen)</i></p>	<p>The explanatory power of the social pillar and the limits of its subordinate categories <i>(Michael Herold, Matthias Muck &amp; Thomas Schmidl)</i></p>
	<p>Antecedents of Sustainability Competencies: The Role of Absorptive Capacity, Place Attachment and Paradoxical Cognition <i>(Asha Nair, Tulin Dzhengiz &amp; Som Sekhar Bhattacharyya)</i></p>	<p>When consumer nationalism meets responsibility in the Global South – A cosmopolitan perspective on sustainability responsiveness of Chinese consumers <i>(Dirk Moosmayer)</i></p>	<p>Toward a typology of circular economy agency <i>(Satu Teerikangas, Tiina Onkila, Katariina Koistinen, Antero Hirvensalo, Angelina Korsunova, Marileena Mäkelä, Ari Jokinen, Milla Sarja, Mira Valkjärvi, Pekka Jokinen &amp; Noelia Reynolds)</i></p>	<p>On Valuing Women: From Instrumental to Intersectional Gender CSR <i>(Lauren Kaufmann &amp; Robbin Derry)</i></p>
	<p>Strategies and Struggles on Biodiversity in the Food Value Chain <i>(Marja Turunen)</i></p>	<p>Responsible retailer-consumer relations in the UK: Pathways to align healthy diets and sustainability standards with resilient food supply chains <i>(Steffen Hirth, Romain Crastes dit Sourd, Gulbanu Kaptan, Anne Tallontire &amp; William Young)</i></p>	<p><i>Circular Narratives: The values and narratives companies follow in the transition to Circular Economy</i> <i>(Mira Valkjärvi, Satu Teerikangas &amp; Katariina Koistinen)</i></p>	<p>The determinants of corporate charity giving in the Indonesian manufacturing sector <i>(Julien Hanoteau)</i></p>
11:00 – 11:30	<b>Coffee Break</b>			

11:30 – 13:00	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 2A</u> <b><u>Management &amp; Anthropocene (2/2)</u></b> Chair: Pasi HEIKKURINEN Room: Bamford/ Skillicorn</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 2B</u> <b><u>Corruption</u></b> Chairs: Julien HANOTEAU &amp; Aleksej HEINZE Room: Paston Brown</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 2C</u> <b><u>Circular Economy (2/2)</u></b> Chair: Frank FIGGE Room: North Wing Auditorium</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 2D</u> <b><u>Open Call (2/6)</u></b> Chair: Robert KUDLAK Room: Alison Shrubsole</p>
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	Evidence of biodiversity-promoting leadership in companies? A closer look at small-sized primary food producers <i>(Anna Hakulinen, Satu Teerikangas &amp; Marja Turunen)</i>	Pilot study of the impact of Digital Transformation on the Corruption: the case of the Greek Public Sector <i>(Stelios Zyglidopoulos, Julien Hanoteau &amp; Aleksej Heinze)</i>	Circular economy for systemic change – from the perspective of businesses <i>(Milla Sarja)</i>	Stock Price Synchronicity and Corporate Social Responsibility: A Study in the Brazilian Stock Market <i>(Romulo Alves Soares, Ana Rita Pinheiro &amp; Keysa Manuela Cunha de Mascena)</i>
	Addressing the biodiversity crisis via leadership – An interdisciplinary review, concept development & research agenda <i>(Satu Teerikangas and many others!)</i>	CSR and entanglements in the oil industry: a case study of international oil companies establishing operations in Uganda <i>(Laura Smith)</i>	Circularity Practices and Strategy Implementation: Five Cases on the Integration of Circularity in the Overall Business Strategy <i>(Arjan van Rheede)</i>	Relationships between companies' stakeholder responsibility, circular economy activities and sustainable development goals: A quantitative study <i>(Riikka Tapaninaho, Hanna Salminen &amp; Johanna Kujala)</i>
	Biodiversity and Business – A Literature Review and Future Research Agenda <i>(Satu Teerikangas, Milla Unkila, Marileena Mäkelä, Juulia Möksy, Ville Kervinen, Otto Lappalainen &amp; Marja Turunen)</i>	TBA	Paradoxical Tensions Towards Circular Economy: Evidence from a Textile Recycling Cluster in an Emerging Economy <i>(Tulin Dzhengiz)</i>	What is distinctive about research on corporate social responsibility in Latin America? <i>(Verónica González-Navarro)</i>
13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>			

14:00 – 15:30	<u>Session 3A</u> <b><u>Stakeholder Engagement (1/6)</u></b> Chairs: Johanna KUJALA & Annika BLOMBERG Room: Bamford/ Skillicorn	<u>Session 3B</u> <b><u>Business, Peace &amp; ESG</u></b> Chair: Jason MIKLIAN Room: Paston Brown	<u>Session 3C</u> <b><u>CSR Communication (1/2)</u></b> Chairs: Laura ILLIA & Philemon BANTIMAROUTHIS Room: North Wing Auditorium	<u>Session 3D</u> <b><u>Open Call (3/6)</u></b> Chair: Orr KARASSIN Room: Alison Shrubsole
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	<p>Firms' Dynamic Capabilities for Innovation Ecosystems-based CSR approaches <i>(Giulia Piantoni, Marika Arena &amp; Giovanni Azzone)</i></p>	<p>Does 'Doing Good' Really Matter? Business Engagement with Conflict Mitigation and its Effects on Stakeholder Satisfaction and Corporate Goodwill Perceptions <i>(Chiara Valentini, Juha Munnukka &amp; Hui Zhao)</i></p>	<p>Aesthetics of CSR communication and perception of ethical leadership: Impact on purchase intent in high and low rank CSR firms <i>(Barbara Fryzel, Marco Ghitti &amp; Giacomo Boesso)</i></p>	<p>The effect of SDGs on firm economic, environmental and social aspects <i>(Marco Menoni)</i></p>
	<p>Managing Partnership Portfolios for Enhanced Sustainability Performance: A QCA Analysis of Global Fashion Players <i>(Tulin Dzhengiz, Jouni Juntunen, Samuli Patala &amp; Andra Riandita)</i></p>	<p>A bibliometric and systematic approach to business for peace emerging field trends <i>(Maria Teresa Uribe Jaramillo &amp; Natalia Yakovleva)</i></p>	<p>Communicating global CSR to local stakeholders: The case of Dove and the strategic move of the #LetHerGrow campaign in Thailand <i>(Chanapa Itdhiamornkulchai &amp; Parichart Sthapitanonda)</i></p>	<p>An Integrated Process Framework of Corporate Sustainability Decision-making: A Case Study on Chinese Firm <i>(Yifeng Li)</i></p>
	<p>Drivers and Barriers to Sustainability in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): A Case Study from the Global South <i>(Alaa Zahran &amp; Shirley-Ann Hazlett)</i></p>	<p>Honesty, Unjust War Theory, and Corporate Social Responsibility: An Extended Thought Experiment <i>(Seth Hartigan)</i></p>	<p>The PLANET Framework: A holistic Integration of Sustainability into Digital Marketing <i>(Romas Malevicius &amp; Aleksej Heinze)</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Operations in the Steel Sector: A Research in the Business-To-Business Context <i>(Juliane Araújo Cardoso Costa, Lucas Lopes Ferreira de Souza, Keysa Manuela Cunha de Mascena &amp; Romulo Alves Soares)</i></p>
15:30 – 16:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>			

16:00 – 17:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 4A</u> <b><u>Stakeholder Engagement (2/6)</u></b> Chair: Adina DUDAU Room: Bamford/ Skillicorn</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 4B</u> <b><u>Climate Change &amp; CSR</u></b> Chair: Frank FIGGE Room: Paston Brown</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 4C</u> <b><u>CSR Communication (2/2)</u></b> Chairs: Laura ILLIA &amp; Philemon BANTIMAROUTHIS Room: North Wing Auditorium</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Session 4D</u> <b><u>Open Call (4/6)</u></b> Chair: Robert KUDLAK Room: Alison Shrubsole</p>
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	<p>Stakeholder theory in addressing commons <i>(<u>Lotta Sihvo Matikainen</u>, <u>Annika Blomberg</u> &amp; <u>Johanna Kujala</u>)</i></p>	<p>How can we study the intersection of CSR, Productivity and Net Zero so that it creates real world impact? <i>(<u>Alice Owen</u>)</i></p>	<p>Corporate Governance and Greenwashing <i>(<u>Erifili-Christina Chatzopoulou</u>, <u>Maria Fotaki</u>, <u>Giorgos Papagiannakis</u> &amp; <u>Stelios Zyglidopoulos</u>)</i></p>	<p>What Makes a Good Place to Work? The Effect of Internal Corporate Social Responsibility on Word-of-Mouth for Employers <i>(<u>Anna Mutter</u>, <u>Jasmin Afrahi</u> &amp; <u>Thomas Armbrüster</u>)</i></p>
	<p>Exploring how stakeholder management can deliver value to a broad range of stakeholders through sustainable business models <i>(<u>Kabelo Rathobei</u>, <u>Helena Ranängen</u> &amp; <u>Åsa Lindman</u>)</i></p>	<p>Can Money Incentivize Corporate Environmental Commitment? A Study of China's Green Loan Policies <i>(<u>Lai Yee Choy</u>)</i></p>	<p>Communicating sustainability: Values as a driver for developing sustainability marketing in SMEs <i>(<u>Mira Valkjärvi</u>, <u>Johanna Hallbäck</u>, <u>Katja Viiliäinen-Tyni</u> &amp; <u>Janne Peltoniemi</u>)</i></p>	<p>Struggling in the regime – Responsibilisation of agency for biodiversity conservation in the food system <i>(<u>Irene Kuhmonen</u> &amp; <u>Tiina Onkila</u>)</i></p>
	<p>Sustainability opportunity studies with stakeholder needs focus in research – the case of Supplementary Cementitious Materials in Sweden <i>(<u>Raine Isaksson</u>, <u>Max Rosvall</u> &amp; <u>Arezou Ahmadi</u>)</i></p>	<p>Camouflaging the Damage: The Consequences of Negative ESG Media Coverage on Earnings Management <i>(<u>Emma García-Meca</u> &amp; <u>Jennifer Martínez-Ferrero</u>)</i></p>	<p>TBA</p>	<p>Assessing the impacts of external shocks on food consumption and the sustainability of a UK and French shopping basket <i>(<u>Susan Lee</u>, <u>William Young</u> &amp; <u>Ralf Barkemeyer</u>)</i></p>
17:30 – 19:00	<b>Break</b>			
19:00 – open end	<b>Conference Dinner and Best Paper Awards</b>			

**Friday 08 September 2023**

09:00 – 10:30	<p align="center"><u>Session 5A</u></p> <p align="center"><b><u>Stakeholder Engagement (3/6)</u></b></p> <p>Chairs: Johanna KUJALA &amp; Annika BLOMBERG</p> <p>Room: Bamford/ Skillicorn</p>	<p align="center"><u>Session 5B</u></p> <p align="center"><b><u>CSR Impacts (1/4)</u></b></p> <p>Chair: Ralf BARKEMEYER</p> <p>Room: Paston Brown</p>	<p align="center"><u>Session 5C</u></p> <p align="center"><b><u>Social Sustainability</u></b></p> <p>Chair: Hugh LEE</p> <p>Room: North Wing Auditorium</p>	<p align="center"><u>Session 5D</u></p> <p align="center"><b><u>Open Call (5/6)</u></b></p> <p>Chair: Frank FIGGE</p> <p>Room: Alison Shrubsole</p>
	<p>What can Gabriel Tarde’s Laws of Imitation tell us about the processes through which social movements contest corporate social responsibility practices?</p> <p><i>(Diego Vazquez-Brust, Lutz Preuss, Natalia Yakovleva &amp; Hamid Foroughi)</i></p>	<p>Social Impact of Different Modes of CSR</p> <p><i>(Duane Windsor)</i></p>	<p>Embedding Social Sustainability using a Transactional Analysis Approach: A case of software developers</p> <p><i>(Hugh Lee, Rana Tassabehji &amp; Nancy Harding)</i></p>	<p>Perceptions of organizations as ethical leaders. A market level corporate responsibility</p> <p><i>(Barbara Fryzel)</i></p>
	<p>Multinationals and Sustainable Communities: Just Relationships?</p> <p><i>(Eduardo Ordonez-Ponce)</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Development Goals and Quality of Life: Defining a Measurable CSR Impact on Society</p> <p><i>(Kari Solomon)</i></p>	<p>Responsibility through the manager's gaze? - Why CSR needs deeper analysis of the implied manager</p> <p><i>(Susi Mikael Nousiainen)</i></p>	<p>Co-creation hacks: Supporting business development in SMEs through dynamization of transformational abilities</p> <p><i>(Anke Trischler)</i></p>
	<p>Why do sustainability schemes fail? The case of “The Complete the Cycle” programme (2011-2020)</p> <p><i>(Dejan Zec)</i></p>	<p>Beyond Corporate Social Responsibility: The Case of Structural Injustice in Global Value Chains</p> <p><i>(Harry J. van Buren III)</i></p>	<p>Ripped between idealism, norms, and conditions – Self-categorization processes of German nurses</p> <p><i>(Wolfgang Bichler-Riedl, Stephanos Anastasiadis &amp; Stefan Gold)</i></p>	<p>How to query an AI text agent and obtain ethical responses? An experimental approach</p> <p><i>(Kostantina Tzini &amp; Laura Illia)</i></p>
10:30 – 11:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>			

11:00 – 12:00	<p align="center"><u>Session 6A</u> <b><u>Stakeholder Engagement (4/6)</u></b> Chair: Ralf BARKEMEYER Room: Bamford/ Skillicorn</p>	<p align="center"><u>Session 6B</u> <b><u>CSR Impacts (2/4)</u></b> Chair: Stelios ZYGLIDOPOULOS Room: Paston Brown</p>	<p align="center"><u>Session 6C</u> <b><u>International CSR (1/3)</u></b> Chair: Lutz PREUSS Room: North Wing Auditorium</p>	<p align="center"><u>Session 6D</u> <b><u>Open Call (6/6)</u></b> Chair: William YOUNG Room: Alison Shrubsole</p>
	<p>Ambitions and Agency – exploring stakeholder relations for sustainable development in the case of Swedish cement innovation <i>(Max Rosvall)</i></p>	<p>Tokenism? Why Firms Persist in Offsetting Environmental Misdeeds by Doing ‘Good’ <i>(Jennifer J. Griffin, Andrew Bryant &amp; Vanessa G. Perry)</i></p>	<p>Corporate Social Performance, Legitimacy, and the Choice of Foreign Partners by State-Controlled Entities in the Global Extractive Industries <i>(Pavlos C. Symeou &amp; George I. Kassinis)</i></p>	<p>Fostering Sustainability-Driven Ventures: An Examination of Constraints in Accessing Venture Capital <i>(Yangyang Cheng, Andrea Fosfuri &amp; Nicola Misani)</i></p>
	<p>Disclosure of marginal stakeholder engagement activities: Local and regional public organizations in the context of a circular economy in Finland <i>(Heta Leinonen &amp; Henna Paananen)</i></p>	<p>Social life cycle assessment in the textile industry: a case study in a small company <i>(Sofia Grönqvist &amp; Thomas Zobel)</i></p>	<p>Innovation but for whose benefit and why? Investigating digital transparency tools in the global palm oil industry <i>(Rory Padfield, Adam Tyson, Chee Yee Wong, Gemma Bridge &amp; Suzana Matoh)</i></p>	<p>Corporate Social Responsibility and Board Structure: The Role of Independent and Minority Directors in Family Firms <i>(Romulo Alves Soares, Ana Rita Pinheiro, Sílvia Maria Pedro Rebouças &amp; Lucas Lopes Ferreira de Souza)</i></p>
12:00 – 13:30	<b>Lunch/ Afternoon Tea</b>			
13:30 – 15:00	<p align="center"><u>Session 7A</u> <b><u>Stakeholder Engagement (5/6)</u></b> Chair: Annika BLOMBERG Room: Bamford/ Skillicorn</p>	<p align="center"><u>Session 7B</u> <b><u>CSR Impacts (3/4)</u></b> Chair: Ralf BARKEMEYER Room: Paston Brown</p>	<p align="center"><u>Session 7C</u> <b><u>International CSR (2/3)</u></b> Chair: Lutz PREUSS Room: North Wing Auditorium</p>	

	Stakeholder Sustainability Engagement Effects in Multisided Platforms <i>(Kristina Maiksteniene)</i>	Addressing Social Incompatibility Between Luxury and Sustainability <i>(Marlena Ciszek)</i>	The Impact of Ownership Structure on Environmental Information Disclosure: Evidence from China <i>(Mengdi Wei)</i>
	Stakeholder Management, Social Justice, and the Inclusion of Marginalized People <i>(Keysa Manuela Cunha de Mascena &amp; Minelle E. Silva)</i>	Net positive impact - a useful concept, or just more sustainability noise? <i>(Hannah Birch)</i>	Re-evaluating Corporate Social Responsibility in Nigeria (a Developing Economy) through the Ideology of Institutional Economics <i>(Uchechukwu Nwoke)</i>
	Understanding Investment Decisions for Sustainable Innovations in Emerging Markets Towards Competitive Advantage – A Case Study Perspective of Managerial Stakeholders <i>(Inamutilla Kahupi, Clyde Eiríkur Hull, Natalia Yakovleva &amp; Okechukwu Okorie)</i>	The Corporate Philanthropy Marketplace and its Ideological Underpinnings: Where Corporate Community Orientation worsens Ideological Divides <i>(Muhammad Umar Boodoo)</i>	Motivations and barriers for a prosocial impact worker <i>(Felipe Brescancini)</i>

15:00 – 15:30	<b>Coffee Break</b>		
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15:30 – 16:30	<u>Session 8A</u> <b><u>Stakeholder Engagement (6/6)</u></b> Chair: William YOUNG Room: Bamford/ Skillicorn	<u>Session 8B</u> <b><u>CSR Impacts (4/4)</u></b> Chair: Stelios ZYGLIDOPOULOS Room: Paston Brown	<u>Session 8C</u> <b><u>International CSR (3/3)</u></b> Chair: Lutz PREUSS Room: North Wing Auditorium
	Stakeholder Engagement Contribution to Developing a Social Enterprise Ecosystem <i>(Keysa Manuela Cunha de Mascena, Daiane Mulling Neutzling &amp; Lucas Lopes Ferreira de Souza)</i>	Can loose coupling explain a missing link between environmental commitments and outcomes? <i>(Robert Kudlak)</i>	Complying or Committing: Purchases' Practices Surrounding Supplier Codes of Conduct <i>(Anne Jensby, Mai Skjøtt Linneberg &amp; Chris Ellegaard)</i>

	<p>Stakeholder Engagement and the Perception of Gender Diversity at a Firm's Top Management: An Investors' Perspective <i>(Mert Demir &amp; <u>Maung K. Min</u>)</i></p>	<p>Cognitive Dissonance as a Driver of Corporate Social Responsibility: A meso-theoretical model <i>(<u>Stelios Zyglidopoulos</u>, Sandra Rothenberg &amp; <u>Kostantina Tzini</u>)</i></p>	<p>Exploring transnational corporate social responsibility in context: Insights from an exemplary multinational company in the agri-food sector <i>(<u>Ralf Barkemeyer</u>, <u>Lutz Preuss</u> &amp; <u>Shilpi Banerjee</u>)</i></p>
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<p>16:30 – 17:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Conference Closing</b></p>
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## **Corporate environmental disclosure: signalling or greenwashing? Evidence from Italy**

Sara Ratti, Marika Arena, Giovanni Azzone & Laura Dell'Agostino

According to the World Economic Forum, the failure to mitigate climate change and adapt to this emergency are the two major global risks of the next decade (WEF, 2023). This awareness reflects in the fact that climate risks are gaining increasing relevance in investors' and funds' investment portfolio decisions (Krueger et al., 2020). Considering also the international policy debate that repeatedly calls for a shift towards a low-carbon economy – e.g., EU Green Deal (European Commission, 2019), and Fit for 55 (European Commission, 2021) –, the contribution of the business community to the systems transformations needed to address the climate emergency is crucial and the information regarding how companies are mitigating and transforming their business practices is in the spotlight of multiple stakeholders.

Yet, corporate environmental disclosure may be not indicative of corporate performance (Aragon-Correa, J. Alberto. Markus, Alfred. Hurtado-Torres, 2016) and with regards to the recent booming corporate green claims moved by companies, it is still unclear whether they mirror a concrete enhanced environmental performance or rather represent mere forms of greenwashing behaviours (Doan & Sassen, 2020).

The paper aims to assess whether and how Italian listed firms decouple their actual environmental performance from their environmental disclosure (Delmas & Burbano, 2011), unveiling potential corporate greenwashing phenomena. Specifically, the study addresses three research questions in relation to Italian context:

- (1) How widespread is corporate greenwashing?
- (2) Which are the main factors that influence companies in their disclosure of environmental commitments?
- (3) Which are the main factors that explain companies' propensity to greenwash?

From a theoretical perspective, greenwashing behaviours are explained commonly by socio-political theories and signalling theory. The former assumes that socio-political pressures stimulate inferior environmental performers to disclose more environmental information to gain legitimacy (Cho et al., 2012). Conversely, signalling theory predicts that superior environmental performers signal more information to their stakeholders (Giannarakis et al., 2017), while inferior ones tend to disclose less to protect their legitimacy.

As these relationships vary across different social and regulatory contexts (De Villiers & Marques, 2016), we test theoretically grounded research hypothesis among the Italian listed companies. The sample comprises 62 non-financial companies listed on the Milan Stock Exchange. Through a manual content analysis, information regarding corporate environmental commitments and performance were retrieved from companies' CEOs' letters to stakeholders and official reports issued in the period between 2018 and 2021. We also control for further firm-level economic and governance characteristics, for industry and for media attention. The analysis relied on quantitative methods, such as non-parametric statistical tests and regression models. The findings show that among Italian listed companies, firms that

disclosed more sustainability-related commitments did not outperform in terms of environmental performance compared to their counterparts. Thus, this may suggest a possible decoupling between commitments and outcomes, supporting socio-political theoretical view on greenwashing. Significant factors explaining greater corporate disclosure levels of environmental commitments were found to be the belonging to environmentally sensitive industries and the existence of a sustainability committee. When the companies disclose more “hard” facts in relation to sustainability commitments, this was explained also by a significantly higher media attention.

**\*\*\* FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ONLINE \*\*\***

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### **Antecedents of Sustainability Competencies:**

#### **The Role of Absorptive Capacity, Place Attachment and Paradoxical Cognition**

Asha Nair, Tulin Dzhengiz & Som Sekhar Bhattacharyya

Managers need to develop competencies to address the grand challenges of our time. Existing research has already demonstrated various competencies, but there have not been empirical studies that demonstrate the complexity of developing sustainability competencies. In this paper, we examine the impact of managers' place attachment, absorptive capacity, and paradoxical cognition on their sustainability competencies. We surveyed 405 managers in India using a questionnaire and analysed the relationships between these variables using PLS-SEM. Our results indicate that managers with strong place attachment, high absorptive capacity, and paradoxical cognition are more likely to possess the necessary competencies to promote sustainability in their organisations. Additionally, our findings suggest that managerial absorptive capacity is crucial in mediating the relationship between place attachment and paradoxical cognition on sustainability competencies. Therefore, our study contributes are threefold. First, we add to the literature on sustainability competencies by demonstrating the complexity of competency development. Second, we contribute to the literature on place attachment by applying this concept in the context of business organisations. Third, we contribute to the literature on paradoxes in the sustainability context by demonstrating that managers with paradoxical cognition are more likely to develop sustainability competencies.

**\*\*\* FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ONLINE \*\*\***

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### **Strategies and Struggles on Biodiversity in the Food Value Chain**

Marja Turunen

Biodiversity has become crucial for the future of humankind. While biodiversity loss (Wilson, 1988) is caused by businesses in all sectors, the production of food is one of the largest and most well-known sectors contributing to biodiversity loss worldwide (Dasgupta, 2021).

In this article, we focus on companies in the nationwide food value chain to understand their strategizing on biodiversity. We build upon strategy as practice literature (Whittington, 1996, Vaara & Whittington, 2012) framing biodiversity strategies as practice what people do in these companies. We ask, *how biodiversity is strategized in practice among food chain companies*. Methodologically, we conducted

an abductive qualitative analysis including 50 qualitative in-depth interviews of the food chain business actors throughout Finland.

Our results indicate that biodiversity leadership caused both different struggles and strategies to solve them. It turned out that the business actors had more advanced biodiversity strategies for their individual life and livelihood, whilst they had challenges in describing what biodiversity meant for their business strategy. Secondly, we found that biodiversity was addressed in a different manner by different business actors. We identified four broad categories: forerunners, enlighteners, followers, and laggards and their different strategies and struggles in biodiversity leadership in the food supply chain. Forerunners were brave and dedicated to leading biodiversity despite obstacles while enlighteners understood biodiversity, and were eager to communicate on the topic of biodiversity but missed bravery and actions, followers were short of biodiversity leadership consciousness, had challenges in understanding the opportunities of biodiversity in business and waiting for outside evidence before acting. The fourth group held a negative and passive approach to change, was least familiar with the concept of biodiversity, was struck on interpretations of limits of resources, and had considerable difficulties understanding how it affects their business. Regarding the supply chain, the most closely related companies to primary productions understood the biodiversity but had challenges because of their limited power position in the value chain. Contrary to the former group the upper-stream companies in the value chain relied upon traditional business logic and strategies and also were tend to wishful thinking/greenwashing of their biodiversity strategies, however, they were lagging in understanding biodiversity. Our results indicate that business actors vary by their comprehension of sustaining biodiversity leadership and accommodate different strategies for biodiversity in their business based on their position in the value chain. We debate that advancing biodiversity-respectful strategies by business actors were identified most among the forerunners, however, actors applied different strategies and involvement in the company. Surprisingly, also some actors in the last category were identified as potential for adopting biodiversity-respectful leadership in the future even more easily than those waiting for outside solutions.

Finally, we discuss the ways to enhance biodiversity respectful business and future research directions on strategies for respectful biodiversity practices in business.

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Session 1B: Consumer Behaviour  
Chair: William YOUNG  
Thursday 09:30-11:00

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### **The role of consumers' self-efficacy in biodiversity respectful consumption**

Outi Uusitalo, Henna Rouhiainen & Mitra Salimi

The constantly increasing production and consumption of consumer goods, and the exploitation of natural resources has resulted to deleterious impacts on environment, which is visible in the crises such as climate change and biodiversity loss. This situation has raised the concerns and consciousness among public policies, private companies, and consumer-citizens. The raising awareness, perceived risk and sense of urgency of preserving biodiversity has led to quest for methods and tools for steering human behaviour (especially consumption) to meet the ecological limits. Consumers' perception about the effect of their own environmental behaviours has been regarded as a key driver of pro environmental behaviour.

**Research Question:** This study examines the role of self-efficacy in mediating between the risk perception concerning biodiversity loss and biodiversity respectful consumption acts. The connection between consumption and biodiversity loss is seldom studied, and thus this study provides tools for business and public sector managers to understand and support biodiversity enhancing behaviours. We seek new knowledge by an empirical study highlighting the Finnish consumers' perspective.

**Theoretical Framework:** This study draws from the literature of pro environmental behaviour (PEB). The central concepts utilized are consumption behaviours at both private and public sphere (environmental citizenship, general sustainable consumption, pro environmental food choices), self-efficacy and consumers risk perceptions regarding biodiversity loss.

**Method:** The data forms a representative sample of the population of Finland (N = 1000), with quotas set to match demographics by gender, age groups and regions. An independent polling company collected the data and was directly responsible for data exclusion. Low quality responses (more than 10% missing values, or unrealistically quick completion time) were removed, with slots reopening to new participants on a rolling basis. The study took the form of an online questionnaire with questions assessing demographics, values, biodiversity risk perceptions, self-efficacy and self-reported PEB.

**Findings:** The data was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics and Amos 28 software. The results reveal interesting findings regarding the role of self-efficacy in mediating the relation between risk perception and biodiversity respectful consumption.

**Implications to CSR:** The findings help business and public sector managers to understand the important antecedents of consumers' public and private pro-environmental behaviour, especially as regards consumption connected to biodiversity. CSR managers are provided advice about possible ways to remove the constraints of pro environmental behaviours.

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## **When consumer nationalism meets responsibility in the Global South – A cosmopolitan perspective on sustainability responsiveness of Chinese consumers**

Dirk Moosmayer

The dominant lens in understanding consumer response to supply chain sustainability locates brands and consumers in the Global North, and production and sustainability violations in the Global South. **We ask how consumer perceptions of sustainability violations change, when consumption and production are both in the Global South.**

We develop a **cosmopolitan theory framework** distinguishing ethnocentrism (e.g. Riefler, Diamantopoulos, & Siguaw, 2012) from aesthetic cosmopolitanism (the experience being global) and moral cosmopolitanism (the responsibility being global) (Emontspool & Georgi, 2017). While it seems theoretically convincing that moral cosmopolitanism, i.e. feeling responsible for every human, is a core driver for Western consumers feeling responsible for workers in the Global North, this might shift in the Global South (Moosmayer, Chen, & Davis, 2019). Logically, ethnocentrism and a focus on the own country seem drivers of consumers consideration of production conditions, when production happens in the own country. Specifically, we explore how Chinese consumers differ in their response to social and environmental violations of a Chinese global brand compared to a global brand from the Global North in the smartphone market.

**Methodologically, we combine experimental group design with a discrete choice approach.** Respondents were assigned to a violation condition by either the Global North brand or the Global South brand and exposed to a related textual stimulus. Then, respondents performed a sorting task ordering smartphones with different prices, brands, colors and memory sizes by personal preference. Finally, we administered consumer ethnocentrism, aesthetic and moral cosmopolitanism scales. Performing conjoint analyses allowed quantifying the brand value. Regression analysis helped assessing the impact different violations on brand value and understanding the impact of consumer cosmopolitanism.

Preliminary analyses of **218 Chinese consumer responses** suggests that **ethnocentric Chinese consumers expect higher standards from their ‘own’ brand than from foreign players**. Increased moral cosmopolitan attitudes would result in reduced brand preference for the Global Northern brand.

We further develop the theoretical contribution with regard to the differentiated cosmopolitan thinking on which the theoretical and empirical lenses build. In addition, we elaborate on implications for a more nuanced responsibility debate that distinguishes if ‘my’ consumption causes harm primarily to ‘you’ or to ‘myself’.

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### **Responsible retailer-consumer relations in the UK: Pathways to align healthy diets and sustainability standards with resilient food supply chains**

Steffen Hirth, Romain Crastes dit Sourd, Gulbanu Kaptan, Anne Tallontire & William Young

Along with global long-term sustainability crises, the UK food supply is challenged by recent price rises and supply shortages. Disruptions disproportionately affect low-income consumers and their ability to afford healthy and sustainable diets (Lake et al. 2010; Vermeulen et al. 2012). In need to avoid future disruptions and ensure both public health and the food system’s overall sustainability, ‘business as usual’ is not an option, and the just-in-time model is increasingly questioned. Drawing on a systematic literature review on disruptions and threats to the UK food supply, this contribution identifies resilient approaches with a focus on the relationship between retailer practices and consumer food behaviour.

We first review the scales and temporal horizons in which food supply may be compromised by climate change, biodiversity decline, the post-Brexit situation and economic crises, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic. Against the background of these challenges and risks, using a ‘pathways approach’ (Leach et al. 2010), we identify ‘resilient approaches’ ascertained by the literature to achieve a more resilient food supply. We then discuss how resilient approaches can help alleviate ‘business as usual’ reactions by retailers. Short-term shocks may require swift reactions and honest communication along the supply chain. However, simple efforts to restore ‘normal’ food supply are insufficient. To ensure sustainability and resilience of the whole food system, the momentum that disruptions can create must also be used to shift practices and behaviour towards an improved state. In this context, it is important to reduce trade-offs between short and long-term needs – the imperatives to (1) *restore* access to essential foods after shocks and (2) *rearrange* practices for resilience and sustainability on the long run. We thus showcase potential levers that could help to align consumer food behaviours and retailer practices with a resilient food supply. This includes how retailers manage consumer expectations, how stakeholders communicate along the supply chain (e.g. changes to food availability), and how adaptations can be aligned with the need for systemic changes.

Finally, we discuss how the findings from this review may be employed for more practical engagement with stakeholders in retail, policy, and consumers. As part of the H3 – Healthy Soil, Healthy Food,

Healthy People project, which aims to transform the UK food system from the ground up, our future research will use scenario-building and back-casting methods to unravel a variety of possible changes to supply chains, retailer practices, and consumer food behaviour to generate a pathway to a more sustainable food system. The contribution is aimed at “Sub-theme 9: Consumer Behaviour on Sustainability Issues” while also addressing retailer practices and the sustainability of retailer-consumer relations.

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Session 1C: Circular Economy (1/2)

Chair: Frank FIGGE

Thursday 09:30-11:00

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### **Nourishing sustainability agency:**

#### **The role of participation in advancing sustainable circular economy**

Sirpa Kortelainen

This paper introduces ongoing research on role of participation to sustainability agency. The focus is on participation that is situated in place, embodied and collective. The research is autoethnographic in design and situated in a school garden in Finland. The questions asked are what the rationales behind the process of participation, and implications of participation are in nourishing sustainability agency? How collective, embodied and place situated models of participation influence participant’s sustainability perceptions that contribute to capacity to act towards sustainable future?

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### **Toward a typology of circular economy agency**

Satu Teerikangas, Tiina Onkila, Katariina Koistinen, Antero Hirvensalo, Angelina Korsunova, Marileena Mäkelä, Ari Jokinen, Milla Sarja, Mira Valkjärvi, Pekka Jokinen & Noelia Reynolds

Agency, in its many forms, is identified as a critical factor enabling sustainability transitions. All the while, the role of agency vis-à-vis the CE transition remains poorly recognized. In this paper, we explore the agency of individuals and organisations driving the circular transition. Our research approach is abductive, building upon the interdisciplinary research team’s theoretical and empirical insights in the study of CE agency in 2015–22. This leads us to 1) introduce the concept of CE agency and 2) develop a typology of CE actors and their active and relational agency at the individual, organisational, and inter-organisational levels of analysis. Theoretically, we find that the struggles experienced by active CE actors are embedded in an ongoing negotiation between agency and the surrounding structures. We therefore view circular transitions as structuration processes amid an ongoing tension between agency and structure. Where agency is active and relational, it bears the potential to shift prevailing linear-economy-biased structures toward circularity. In closing, we argue that all actors have the potential to become CE catalysts, depending on the extent to which they recognize and exercise their CE agency.

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## **Circular Narratives:**

### **The values and narratives companies follow in the transition to Circular Economy**

(Mira Valkjärvi, Satu Teerikangas & Katariina Koistinen)

The transition towards circular economy requires strong change agents and pioneering companies to lead the way (Koistinen et al., 2022). The transition towards circular economy and sustainability often starts off from a value-based discussion, both on an individual and on a company level. These values also guide how an organization builds the narrative around their operations and communications. These narratives play a key role in achieving set sustainability goals and taking part in the circular economy transition. This research aims to identify and compare the values and narratives companies utilize in their circular economy narratives. The research question of the study is “How do companies communicate Circular Economy and their core values?” Previous research suggests that business narratives utilized by CE enterprises have found value to be described as a mobile actor that gives a false sense of environmental action, while the premise of value still follows the fundamentals of a linear market (Ariztia & Araneda, 2022). In addition to looking into narratives, this research will also focus on the narratives around Circular Economy and core values of organizations rather than monetary value. This research builds upon the typical narratives identified by assessing lessons learnt from circular economy related policy narratives suggested by Leipold et al. (2023) while utilizing traditional tools of narratives within organizations (Czarniawska, 1997) and the different plot types (Booker, 2004).

Qualitative research utilizing a narrative research design is adopted in this study. The research utilizes data from semi-structured interviews and secondary sources of company websites. The data collected are the narratives built by companies both in written and oral form. The analysis of the data follows the narrative research design, by collecting the stories, analyzing the stories based on their structure and themes and rebuilding them into archetypes for comparison. As the sources of data range from multinationals to startups, the narratives will also be compared based on the size of the company. Preliminary findings show that companies that operate in Circular Economy build strong ideological narratives around their business. They tie circularity together with their existing values, which ensures that change becomes permanent. While comparing the companies based on size, we also note a clear difference in the narratives: startups often start with values already based on circular economy while larger companies rather fit in the values that already exist. The differences between plots within the narratives also become clear that they are not merely related to company size but rather the narrator themselves, ranging the storyline from tragedy to comedy.

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Session 1D: Open Call (1/6)

Chair: Orr KARASSIN

Thursday 09:30-11:00

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### **The explanatory power of the social pillar and the limits of its subordinate categories**

Michael Herold, Matthias Muck & Thomas Schmidl

The challenge of extracting the maximum potential from its human resources is central if companies want to increase their stocks returns. The social component of the ESG can create an environment that favours this task. To examine this assumption, we construct a social factor to quantify its influence in knowledge-intense stocks. Including this additional factor enhances standard assets pricing models. Additionally, our findings indicate that only the workforce category enhances the explanatory power of our self-constructed social factor and the other categories (human rights, community, and product responsibility) have contradicting influence. In fact, there is an over-representation of one category in the score. Investors can exploit this to replicate a socially oriented portfolio without knowing the superior score.

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### **On Valuing Women: From Instrumental to Intersectional Gender CSR**

Lauren Kaufmann & Robbin Derry

The fundamental logic undergirding the business case for diversity assumes rather than interrogates the premise that pro-gender CSR practices benefit women just as they advance the bottom line. In fact, recent empirical research challenges the latter, and in this theory paper, we challenge the first. We argue that instrumental approaches to gender diversity reinforce, rather than mitigate, sexism in organizational life. Then, we offer an intersectional theory of gender diversity, and we show how this framework can be applied to the context of gender lens impact investing.

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### **The determinants of corporate charity giving in the Indonesian manufacturing sector**

Julien Hanoteau

This article analyzes the determinants of corporate charity giving in the context of emerging countries. The literature has considered the potential determinants and classified them in different levels that are micro, meso, and macro (Cha & Rajadhyaksha 2021), or according to different categories of drivers that are individual, firm-, or sector-related (Gautier & Pache 2015). Individual drivers can be profit or utility maximization (Sanchez 2000; Su and He 2010), whereas firm drivers can be related to the size, intensity in advertising expenditures, or ownership structure. Sectors drivers may relate to the type of industry, and its structure (i.e., concentration) (Amato & Amato 2007). The empirical literature has investigated these determinants in the context of developed and OECD countries, whereas studies focusing on emerging countries are seldom (Cha & Rajadhyaksha 2021). This paper documents, using descriptive statistics, and analyzes, using multivariable regressions, the individual-, firm-, and sector-related drivers of corporate charity giving in the case of Indonesia, focusing on all medium and large firms of the manufacturing sector, observed during the 2000-2017 period. For this purpose, we use the annual census of manufacturing from the Indonesian national statistics agency (BPS). Every year, firms report on their expenditures in terms of “gifts, charities, and donations”, and several other items enabling us to measure individual, firm, and sector-related drivers of charity giving. The manufacturing sector is broken down into 26 subsectors corresponding to the 2-digits levels of the ISIC classification. The context of emerging countries, in terms of corporate charity giving and its determinants, can be specific due to institutional

factors, such as the weakness of some institutions (Van Cranenburgh & Arenas 2014), or firms' attitude regarding CSR activities in general. Indeed, authors explain that in emerging countries, firms, either domestic or foreign, tend to have different attitudes toward CSR activities compared to firms operating in developed countries, and this is due to a lower conceptual understanding of CSR, or a lack of knowledge and information from the field (Waagstein 2011; Kolk et al. 2018). One consequence of this being that in emerging countries, firms' expenditures for CSR activities occur relatively more in the form of charity giving (ibid). This effect could be exacerbated by regulations, such as the 2007 Indonesian corporate and investment laws N° 25 and 40, that render CSR activities and expenditures mandatory (Waagstein 2011). In this paper, we analyze whether these regulations encouraging CSR activities, have led to relatively more corporate charity giving.

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Session 2A: Management & Anthropocene (2/2)  
Chair: Pasi HEIKKURINEN  
Thursday 11:30-13:00

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### **Evidence of biodiversity-promoting leadership in companies?**

#### **A closer look at small-sized primary food producers**

Anna Hakulinen, Satu Teerikangas & Marja Turunen

While biodiversity declines at an unprecedented rate, it remains poorly considered in business and leadership research. In this paper, our focus is on primary food production, given that changes in land and sea use represent the most significant driver of biodiversity loss. We approached the research question, “*What kind of leadership is needed for promoting biodiversity in small-sized primary food production companies?*” via a qualitative abductive multi-case study. Our literature review was informed by two strands of literature: environmental leadership and green transformational leadership theory. Our empirical data consists of a multi-case study of eight small-sized Finnish primary food production companies. The analyses applied systematically combining within-case and cross-case analyses. As a result of the analysis, we identified three types of biodiversity leadership – forerunners, rule-followers, and rule-breakers. Taking a closer look, forerunners understand what biodiversity is and strive to develop their activities to promote biodiversity. Rule-followers, on the other hand, do not understand what biodiversity means, and they promote its condition only based on external instructions. And lastly, rule-breakers seem to understand how biodiversity is connected to their business, but they still decide to act in a way that undermines it. Based on the leadership shown by the forerunners, as our main contribution, we develop a biodiversity-promoting leadership framework to guide research and practice.

**\*\*\* FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ONLINE \*\*\***

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### **Addressing the biodiversity crisis via leadership –**

#### **An interdisciplinary review, concept development & research agenda**

Satu Teerikangas, Ilari Sääksjärvi, Juulia Räikkönen, Matti Salo, Outi Uusitalo, Maria Pecoraro, Tiina Onkila, Sari Puustinen, Ville Uusitalo, Marileena Mäkelä, Milla Unkila, Mia Salo, Liisa Tyrväinen, Anu Hopia, Henna Rouhiainen, Stina Svets, Miia Grenman, Irene Kuhmonen, Sanna Ahvenharju, Ville Lauttamäki, Natasha Järviö, Saska Tuomasjukka, Marja Turunen, Anu Veijalainen, Esko Sorakunnas, Roni Lappalainen, Otto Lappalainen, Aliisa Walhsten, Tommi Luoma, Anna Hakulinen, Hanna Oksanen, Juulia Möksy, Ville Kervinen, Katri Lehtovaara

In order to address biodiversity decline, international reports recommend transformative change to reform global economic systems, shifting the prevailing paradigm of economic growth and overconsumption to penalise actions that deteriorate biodiversity and to reward sustainability. Yet, little is known on how can leadership enable such transformative change. In this conceptual paper, we engage in developing the concept of biodiversity-respectful leadership. In our conceptual development, we build on an interdisciplinary perspective. Our main contribution is in proposing and outlining the need for and the contents of a potential new leadership framework that addresses the biodiversity crisis, termed 'biodiversity-respectful leadership'. To this end, our paper offers disciplinary reviews of prior research on biodiversity from the perspectives of institutions, business and consumers. Thereafter, we move toward a review of leadership research, before developing a multi-level biodiversity-respectful leadership framework. In closing, we highlight challenges in such development, while offering an agenda guiding future research.

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### **Biodiversity and Business – A Literature Review and Future Research Agenda**

Satu Teerikangas, Milla Unkila, Marileena Mäkelä, Juulia Möksy, Ville Kervinen, Otto Lappalainen & Marja Turunen

Biodiversity loss threatens the health and viability of all kinds of ecosystems and civilization, including ours, in their present form. While business activity is a key driver of biodiversity loss, to date the lack of appreciation of the connections between biodiversity and business has been lamented. In this paper we take stock of how the business and sustainability literatures, broadly defined, has addressed biodiversity. We conducted a systematic literature review for academic articles connecting biodiversity & business appearing in 74 academic journals between 1970-2022. From a total sample of 252 articles, 42 articles were selected for inclusion in the final sample. We present our findings along four themes and ten observations that recurred in our inductive analysis. Given the fragmented state of the art in current research on biodiversity and business, in guise of synthesis, we develop an integrative analytical canvas. In closing, we offer an agenda guiding future research. The main contribution of our paper is in offering academic and business readers an overview of the present state of the art of research on biodiversity in leading academic business and sustainability journals. It is our sincere hope that by summarizing the scholarly discussion thus far we can offer the next researchers a spring board from which to jump start their subsequent explorations into this critical nexus, while inspiring business practitioners toward biodiversity protection.

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## **Pilot study of the impact of Digital Transformation on the Corruption:**

### **The case of the Greek Public Sector**

Stelios Zyglidopoulos, Julien Hanoteau & Aleksej Heinze

There is an ongoing discussion in the relevant literature about the impact of digital transformation on the corruption within public sector organizations. Of course, as Silenko (2019) points out, digital transformation is not a panacea in the fight against corruption. We adopt the definitions of Mergel et al., (2019) where *digitisation* means a 1:1 process of replacing analogue with digital channels, *digitalisation* – focusing on the changes in the process and a wholistic business process re-engineering captured by the term *digital transformation*. Nevertheless, there is a general optimism in the relevant literature that increased digital transformation of the processes within public sector organizations will lead to reduced corruption. Even though the interplay between the digital transformation of processes and the corruption of public sector organizations “*remains unclear with mixed and sometimes contradictory findings reported*” (Addo and Senyo, 2020: 2). After reviewing 90 relevant published studies, Addo and Senyo (2020) point out there are numerous under-researched concerns regarding the potential links between digital transformation and corruption. In order to investigate the above issues, we chose to investigate Greece because: (1) the Greek public sector has been plagued with a relatively high level of corruption (Fleming et al., 2020) and (2) in 2019, the Greek government established a new public administration unit, the Ministry of Digital Government, whose purpose is to bring together all the critical telecommunication and information technology structures required for the provision of electronic services to the country’s citizens.

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## **CSR and entanglements in the oil industry:**

### **A case study of international oil companies establishing operations in Uganda**

Laura Smith

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the oil industry emerged in the context of increased global scrutiny of the extractive industries and changing expectations of stakeholders at the global, national and local levels. To ensure a social licence to operate, oil companies pro-actively engage in legitimacy seeking internally and externally, often through the pursuit of CSR. CSR programmes therefore serve the dual purpose of ensuring legitimacy at the global level by demonstrating companies are responsible global citizens and gaining legitimacy locally to ensure acceptance by local communities. Drawing on the organisational legitimacy literature this article explores how international oil companies operating in Uganda during the oil exploration period gain and maintain legitimacy for operations through CSR. We find that the pursuit of the social licence was only partly about pro-active measures to secure local community acceptance and approval. Rather, CSR was used to support operations and maintain detachment, with the overall goal of minimising operational and reputational risk. However, through CSR the companies became active in the process of creating entanglements to the local space. In the

context of the short-term horizons and boom-and-bust nature of the oil industry this approach to CSR can undermine the legitimacy which is crucial for an oil companies' social licence to operate.

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Session 2C: Circular Economy (2/2)

Chair: Frank FIGGE

Thursday 11:30-13:00

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### **Circular economy for systemic change – from the perspective of businesses**

Milla Sarja

To address unsustainability in our societies, significant restructuring of human-made systems must take place. This demands for systemic change, encompassing all levels of society, also companies must commit in tackling the grand challenges. The current discourse points to the direction that circular economy (CE) is the way companies could operate more sustainably and tackle unsustainable practices. Thus, this study explores system change through the lenses of leverage points and evaluates if the transformation from linear to circular economy could be made. The data consists of 68 Finnish company interviews. The findings show that some leverage points are in part, already being activated towards the transformation. For example, significant changes in regulation are taking place, affecting how companies can address the issue. At the same time, uncertainties, and lack of clarity towards CE hold companies back. Even though there are signs that the transformation is looming, it is going to take time, before CE would be the applied established practice in place.

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### **Circularity Practices and Strategy Implementation:**

#### **Five Cases on the Integration of Circularity in the Overall Business Strategy**

Arjan van Rheede

Innovative solutions how to manage the integration of circularity in the overall business strategy. The theoretical innovation is to better understand the strategizing process by using the framework of “Strategy-as-Practices (S-as-P)”. more specifically we are exploring the strategy-implementation of circular practices by managers and frontline employees. The focus of this paper is on practices aimed at circularity that lead to strategy formation and implementation, examined from the S-as-P-approach (van Rheede & Lim, 2020). Strategy formation is viewed as a social activity in which actors make sense of and enact strategies (Jarzabkowski et al., 2022; Weiser et al., 2020; Whittington, 2006) and a more integrated perspective on strategy implementation is taken (Friesl et al., 2021; Jarzabkowski et al., 2022; Kohtamäki et al., 2022). The discussion on strategy-implementation towards sustainability is not new, and has been addressing by several authors (Engert & Baumgartner, 2016; Ortiz-Avram et al., 2018), in this paper we will explicitly look at the implementation of circular strategies. The key elements of the S-as-P are Practices, Practitioners and Praxis. With S-as-P several theoretical frameworks are being used. Our approach is strongly linked to sensemaking in which strategy implementation is very much

seen as an evolutionary process that unfolds as an organization is enacting the companies 'official' strategy (van Rheede, 2022; Weick, 1995; Weiser et al., 2020), An explorative multiple case study is used looking at 3 hotels in Amsterdam. 2 luxury properties and a budget property of an mid-scale hotel chain. We started this process by looking specifically at frontline employees and their managements (2 cases) and in the next case we looks more at the role of (middle) managers and supervisors (1 case). Data is collected via interviews and observations. A lot of practices can be found that are supporting and expanding the circular strategy. Confusion on the concept of circularity (in relation to sustainability) can be seen, many front line employees (and managers) do not distinguish between circularity and sustainability and do not recognize circular practices. This is partly caused by automation or pre-established procedures that implement a certain practice. Limited initiatives of frontline employees are taking ownership and in some cases the awareness is even limited. Frontline employees lack the required knowledge or resources and have doubt whether guests are interested in these measures. Difference have been found in departments (i.e. employees) feeling supported by their manager and having own (set) circular targets vs department where this was lacking; This is either assessed as integration or limiting the integration. This hospitality sector is using a high percentage of temporarily workers (and have a high turnover), this is complicating the integration of circular practices even further. Building up the scale of created a framework to assess the level of integration circularity in the business based on both vertical and horizontal integration. The cases that have been researched are scoring on the vertical integration between moderate and full integration, but the horizontal integration is more complicated, because a departments such as front office/room division are lacking behind on the implementation part.

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### **Paradoxical Tensions Towards Circular Economy:**

#### **Evidence from a Textile Recycling Cluster in an Emerging Economy**

Tulin Dzhengiz

Existing industrial clusters, particularly those focused on recycling, play a pivotal yet often overlooked role in the pursuit of a sustainable circular economy. As this transition is riddled with tensions and contradictions, this study delves into the dynamics of a textile recycling cluster in an emerging economy context. I unveil a phenomenon of 'linear paralysis,' where the cluster's embeddedness in past linear economy practices is exacerbated by unbalanced tensions such as individual firm identity prevailing over collective, competition overshadowing cooperation, and economic concerns outweighing environmental and social considerations. The inability to balance these escalating tensions perpetuates a 'lock-in,' further impeding the cluster's progress towards sustainability. The findings underscore the necessity of addressing these paradoxes to drive meaningful transformation within existing industrial clusters and advance the circular economy agenda.

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Session 2D: Open Call (2/6)  
Chair: Robert KUDLAK  
Thursday 11:30-13:00

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## **Stock Price Synchronicity and Corporate Social Responsibility:**

### **A Study in the Brazilian Stock Market**

Romulo Alves Soares, Ana Rita Pinheiro & Keysa Manuela Cunha de Mascena

In the finance literature, studies related to CSR have become popular, with several works investigating the impact of social and environmental practices on firms' decisions and performance. Many of these papers have sought to investigate the effect that CSR practices have on financial performance. In addition, they have also sought to investigate the impact of CSR on other characteristics such as cost of capital, market value, etc.. However, the effect of CSR on stock price synchronicity remains little explored (Benkraiem et al., 2022). Stock price synchronicity (SPS) measures the proportion of systematic volatility to the total volatility of a stock in the market. One measure that is commonly used to analyze stock price synchronicity is the coefficient of determination  $R^2$  of the regression model from market returns (Roll, 1988). A high  $R^2$  indicates a high degree of stock price synchronicity with the market, while low  $R^2$  values suggest that much of the firm-specific information is embedded in stock prices. (Chan & Hameed, 2006). Previous studies suggest that companies with better CSR practices also have better disclosure practices through their socially responsible activities, and are less likely to engage in earnings management, which increases the transparency of companies' informational environment. Schiehl & Kolahgar (2021) show that firms with a higher level of CSR disclosure, have a better level of transparency, which consequently should lead to lower stock price synchronicity. In this vein, we aim to investigate whether the CSR practices adopted by Brazilian companies are able to reduce their synchronicity, thus contributing to the incorporation of company-specific characteristics in the stock price. In order to do this, we assembled a sample of 104 Brazilian companies with shares traded on the Brazilian Stock Exchange (*Brasil, Bolsa Balcão* - B3), covering a period from 2019 to 2021, totaling 312 observations. Among the 104 companies, 23 are part of the Corporate Sustainability Index (*Índice de Sustentabilidade Empresarial* - ISE), which is composed of companies with the best sustainability practices on B3. We evaluated CSR practices using CSRHub data, which was divided in three dimensions: community, employees, and environment. For each company in the sample in each year, SPS was calculated using weekly returns, following the methodology of Schiehl & Kolahgar (2021). As for our analysis strategy, we first compared the SPS of ISE companies with non-ISE, using a set of T tests. Subsequently, we verified how the three CSR dimensions evaluated may affect the SPS, through a series of regression analyses. Our results show that companies with best sustainability practices (i.e., companies in the ISE index) have lower SPS scores than non-ISE companies. Nevertheless, when we assessed how CSR dimensions may affect SPS, only employees' practices were shown to be statistically significant in reducing synchronicity.

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### **Relationships between companies' stakeholder responsibility, circular economy activities and sustainable development goals: A quantitative study**

Riikka Tapaninaho, Hanna Salminen & Johanna Kujala

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have increasingly entered business agendas. Companies are expected to address complex sustainability issues, such as resource depletion, climate change, biodiversity loss and social equity (UN General Assembly, 2015; SDG Compass, 2015). Van Zanten and von Tulder (2018) have called for more research on companies' SDG contributions. A circular economy (CE) has been acknowledged as one notable solution to address the economic, environmental and social

dimensions of sustainability (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017; Ghisellini et al., 2016) and the crucial role of stakeholders and stakeholder cooperation has been acknowledged as necessary for promoting both sustainability and CE objectives (Mhatre et al., 2021; Tapaninaho & Heikkinen, 2022). In particular, the concept of company stakeholder responsibility has been suggested to be used to understand companies' broader societal responsibilities (Freeman & Velamuri, 2006; Kujala et al., 2017). Building on stakeholder, circular economy and SDG literature, we examine how company stakeholder responsibility, circular economy activities and SDGs are connected. A quantitative study was conducted among the managing directors of the Finnish manufacturing companies. The corporate stakeholder responsibility items were based on established and validated scales used in previous stakeholder studies on Finnish managers (Kujala, 2001; 2010; Kujala et al., 2017). Since there are no established scales for the circular economy and SDGs, the items were developed based on the existing literature: 10 circular economy value retention options (R0-9) proposed by Reike et al. (2018) and the 17 SDGs (UN SDGs, 2015). The preliminary findings demonstrate that a company's stakeholder responsibility, circular economy activities and promotion of SDGs are positively and statistically significantly related to each other. Hence, a company's broader stakeholder responsibility and circular economy activities indicate stronger integration of SDGs. However, the findings show that companies have integrated those SDGs into their operations strongest which are close to their business, for example, related to economically connotated SDGs instead of broader sustainability goals related to ecologic and social welfare.

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## **What is distinctive about research on corporate social responsibility in Latin America?**

Verónica González-Navarro

There is no one definition nor a set of CSR practices that could fulfil the meaning of a business's responsibility towards its stakeholders in different societies (Brammer et al., 2012). This has encouraged scholars to identify CSR as a context-dependent construct. An explanation of the variation in CSR engagement is provided by the Comparative CSR literature. The latter investigates how and why CSR differ among countries using institutional theory to explain the different types of CSR engagement that arise as an outcome of the institutional context in which the firm operates (Matten and Moon, 2008). The above has placed an important role in formal institutions as elements that explain CSR diversity. However, recent scholarly debates have shed light on the inadequacy of this Western-developed theory to explain the meaning and practice of CSR in emerging regions such as Latin America (e.g., Banerjee (2022)). In these contexts, the existence of "institutional voids" or the weakness or absence of Western formal institutions, reduces the explanatory power of the institutional approach to CSR and encourages further research on how businesses' responsibility to address societal challenges as those presented by sustainable development, are understood and implemented in emerging settings. Considering the above, this PhD project will investigate how businesses understand CSR in a Latin American country, and how such understanding informs the strategies and decision-making processes that they pursue for sustainable development. This research will involve two phases. The first phase, currently underway and which preliminary findings are expected to be shared with the audience, relies on a systematic evaluation of academic articles and expert interviews to identify, and analyse how CSR has been understood in the context of Latin America. This will allow the unfolding of the particularities of CSR in terms of meaning, evolution, issues of focus and strategies and practices, all factors that might differentiate CSR engagement between the region and industrialised economies. The second phase will

consider Chile as a case study to examine through phenomenography how businesses operating in the country vary in their understanding of their responsibilities towards society and the environment, and what this implies for how businesses engage in sustainable development. Therefore, this project pretends to propose an understanding-based theory (Lamb et al., 2011) of CSR variation. Specifically, the identification and description of the different understandings of CSR will assist in explaining different patterns of CSR engagement. Although there might be similar CSR practices performed by businesses, the underlying process for their identification and implementation might vary as an outcome of how businesses understand CSR. This might affect the breadth and deep of such practices and therefore, the impact that these produce in society. Furthermore, unpacking these understandings and the factors that influence them has the potential to assist practitioners in the field by informing the design of managerial processes that modify how businesses understand, for example, their responsibility towards the 2030 Agenda.

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Session 3A: Stakeholder Engagement (1/6)  
Chairs: Johanna KUJALA & Annika BLOMBERG  
Thursday 14:00-15:30

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### **Firms' Dynamic Capabilities for Innovation Ecosystems-based CSR approaches**

Giulia Piantoni, Marika Arena & Giovanni Azzone

Recently, a new approach to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) grounded on the development of Innovation Ecosystems (IEs) has been experimented by few companies, with different results. This approach to CSR is particularly complex, as it requires enlarging the number of actors to involve, their needs, aims and dynamic relations. Successfully tackling this complexity means being able to properly design the IE so that it supports the promoter's CSR strategies and uncovers related new opportunities. To do so, companies need to put in place specific dynamic capabilities for setting IE-based CSR strategies. As these capabilities have not been structurally studied, yet we here investigate which capabilities are needed when a company wants to focus its CSR strategy on the development of an IE. Our research builds on the literature on dynamic capabilities and relies on it to identify sensing, seizing and reconfiguring capabilities traditionally adopted by companies for innovating sustainably or for orchestrating IEs. Grounding on this literature, we analyse an illustrative case study of a company developing an IE as part of its sustainability strategy. We specifically focus on i) the dynamic capabilities the company uses for implementing an IE-based CSR approach, ii) how it uses them and iii) which ones emerge as strategic respect to the general framework. Our findings highlight the emergence of fifteen dynamic capabilities, which are mainly issue-specific, showing that the development of an IE for implementing CSR approaches requires ad hoc capabilities other than the ones traditionally adopted.

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### **Managing Partnership Portfolios for Enhanced Sustainability Performance:**

## **A QCA Analysis of Global Fashion Players**

Tulin Dzhengiz, Jouni Juntunen, Samuli Patala & Andra Riandita

This study addresses the gap in existing literature by adopting a portfolio approach to analyze the impact of different partnership portfolio diversity configurations on firms' sustainability performance. Drawing upon data from 979 partnerships involving 35 global textile firms, we apply the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) methodology. Our findings reveal three distinct configurations of sustainability-oriented partnership portfolios that contribute to enhanced sustainability performance. Conversely, we identify two paths leading to poorer sustainability performance, attributed to the lack of diversity in these portfolios. This research enriches the literature on partnerships by emphasizing the joint impact of portfolio diversity configurations on performance, showcasing alternative paths for firms' portfolio management strategies. Moreover, we contribute to the field of sustainability-oriented partnerships by illustrating how firms can leverage diverse partnership portfolios to enhance sustainability performance through different approaches.

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## **Drivers and Barriers to Sustainability in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs):**

### **A Case Study from the Global South**

Alaa Zahran & Shirley-Ann Hazlett

Against the backdrop of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs), our understanding, interest and uptake of sustainability and sustainable business practices continues to gather pace. Whilst a little further behind other sectors, higher education institutions (HEIs) are beginning to explicitly demonstrate their commitment to societal improvement by embedding sustainability throughout their education portfolio, research, governance structures, operations and community outreach practices (Sterling, 2004, Lozano et al., 2013). As a result, there is an emerging literature that explores the role, impact, opportunities and challenges of embedding sustainability in HEIs. Scholars have identified a range of internal and external drivers that facilitate this 'journey' whilst also noting some of the inherent barriers that are stumbling blocks to integrating sustainability in HEIs (Lozano, 2006, Ferrer-Balas et al., 2009; Blanco-Portela et al, 2017). One of the most cited approaches to addressing the challenges and integrating sustainable practices is to focus on stakeholder management and engagement (as suggested by Barth, 2013, Leal Filho et al., 2022, D'Adamo and Gastaldi, 2023). Such is the impact of stakeholders, that Blanco-Portela et al. (2017) suggest that they play a double role as both the solution and the barrier to sustainability transition. To date, most of the empirical research focusing on sustainability in HEIs has centred on the global north. Yet, anecdotally, there is growing evidence that HEIs elsewhere, and, in particular, in the global south are also making concerted efforts in relation to sustainability. As Leal Filho et al (2022) and Weiss and Barth (2019) remind us, sustainability represents a critical need in a developing country context and the insights offered by HEIs in the global south represent an important extension of the current literature. This paper investigates the drivers and barriers of incorporating sustainability throughout the core business of HEIs in the global south, focusing on Saudi Arabia. Through a case study approach, the research tries to build a better understanding as to why HEIs are motivated to become a sustainable, how they deal with potential and actual barriers and the overall impact and 'success' of their sustainability efforts.

**Does ‘Doing Good’ Really Matter? Business Engagement with Conflict Mitigation and its Effects on Stakeholder Satisfaction and Corporate Goodwill Perceptions**

Chiara Valentini, Juha Munnukka & Hui Zhao

Over the past decade, the role of business in stabilizing societies, improving democratic conditions, and promoting human rights has significantly increased. Among the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the objective of Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions has emerged as a crucial yet challenging goal for organizations undertaking Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Societies expect and demand more from businesses in terms of promoting peace, avoiding conflicts, and mitigating their impacts. Consequently, there has been a growing emphasis on corporate citizenship (CC) and CSR. Corporate Conflict Engagement Actions (CCEAs) represent a diverse range of contributions made by organizations towards conflict mitigation and peace promotion. Although the business role in conflict mitigation has been recognized, with research investigating motives, actions, factors influencing organizations’ decisions in acting to reduce conflicts, CCEAs effects on stakeholders have received less attention. To advance the stakeholder perspective of CSR, this study investigates stakeholders’ satisfaction with organizations’ initiatives aiming at conflict mitigation and the effects of certain actions over stakeholder perceptions of corporate goodwill. The study aims to answer the following questions: a) Which types of CCEAs are more likely to positively impact stakeholder satisfaction? b) Which types of CCEAs are more likely to enhance stakeholders’ perception of an organization's corporate goodwill? c) What factors may mediate and moderate the relationship between stakeholder satisfaction with CCEAs and corporate goodwill?

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**A bibliometric and systematic approach to business for peace emerging field trends**

Maria Teresa Uribe Jaramillo & Natalia Yakovleva

Academic research on business for peace (B4P) has been growing for the past two decades. This emerging field that intersects business management and political sciences has received an increasing attention from scholars in the context of growing interest in corporate social responsibility and peacebuilding processes, but still there is limited knowledge on the nature of business and peace nexus in academic literature. How are business and peace connected in the academic literature? With this research question, this study aims to identify trends, concepts, and thematic clusters on the topic of business contribution to peacebuilding, tracing its past, present, and future.

The paper answers the call of major senior scholars in the business and peace field to bring forward the theoretical order of the disparate field research over a vast array of fields and contextual settings (Miklian, 2018; Miklian & Schouten, 2019; Joseph, Katsos & Van Buren,

2023). There is a need of a more comprehensive overview of existing business and peace literature, up to the most recent studies. In this sense, this paper contributes to the field through an integrative approach of the literature review by consolidating the body of knowledge up to date, with a comprehensive bibliometric review complemented by a systematic review. To the best of authors knowledge, there is no bibliometric review on B4P so far, which is also a contribution to the field through this method. The scientometric analysis is based on an analysis of 719 multidisciplinary publications on business and peace, extracted from Scopus database using the VOSviewer software for examining co-citation networks, co-authorship networks, and co-occurrences. The systematic review is based on 40 peer-reviewed articles in the most cited journals of the field, using a content analysis to classify and draw meaning from the research items with basic demographic characteristics (geographic focus, methodology, framework), key findings and future agenda.

The analysis evidence that the business for peace field (positioned as B4P) is relatively new and has not become a topic of publications in the mainstream highly ranked business management journals (with a few exceptions). The data shows high dispersion of the literature, both in terms of authors and journals focused on the topic, and still a low level of collaboration among authors that has been increasing in the past years. There is also a weak interdisciplinary engagement evidenced in publications. The study maps the taxonomy of identified clusters through the pillars and assertions of B4P, proposing a multistage, multilevel framework that features the clusters of existing research on B4P, based on their stage and level of analysis. Finally, the paper highlights an important future agenda with potential research opportunities to strengthen the linkages between business and peace.

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## **Honesty, Unjust War Theory, and Corporate Social Responsibility:**

### **An Extended Thought Experiment**

Seth Hartigan

University Business Schools have long embrace the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as one driver of their mission statements and goals, including CSR in their curriculum, and even making CSR the focal point for some undergraduate and graduate degree programs. CSR makes the greatest difference to society, however, when it is utterly lacking in a corporation's practices. The crime of ecocide (the mass destruction of the environment) must be included among the most irresponsible, indeed criminal, contemporary business practices. The recognition of ecocide during war as a crime by the International Criminal Court (ICC) has led scholars and campaigners to propose including the crime of ecocide outside of war into the subject-matter jurisdiction of the ICC. Inspired by the scholarship of Malm, this paper's research question is: can Business Schools be said to support CSR when they partner with and receive funding from socially irresponsible corporations who engage in ecocide through their actions or investments? This paper explores Business Schools' twin allegiances to, first, honesty and truth in their scholarship and in the practices of their faculty, and second, Business Schools' courting of corporate funding and partnerships, even where corporations are engaged in ongoing criminal activity. To highlight the importance of honesty in the scholarship and teaching practices of Business School faculty, this paper uses the conceptualization of honesty as formulated by Miller, in that the character of

University faculty who support CSR must be free of dishonest acts of commission (lies) and omission (silence in the face of what the consensus accepts as a lie). A novel theoretical framework concerning the measurement of socially responsible behavior by corporations is employed, combining the work of Frowe, McMahan and Quong on “unjust war theory” and applying it to the emerging international crime of ecocide outside the context of war. While traditional “Just War Theory” argues citizens may have a duty to serve in their nation’s unjust wars, “Unjust War Theory” argues all actors have a moral and legal duty not to support unjust wars. When analogized to the international crime of ecocide, this paper proposes that Business Schools can only truly embrace CSR when they partner with and receive funding from socially responsible corporations who are completely divorced from ecocide, including in their investments. Schools who maintain partnerships (e.g. student recruitment, research funding, institutional funding) with corporations engaged in ecocide violate their duty to society. The paper’s research method will be conceptual, employing philosophical thought experiments based on hypothetical practices of Business School leadership and faculty, all examples being themselves based on actual factual scenarios derived from published media or academic sources.

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Session 3C: CSR Communication (1/2)

Chairs: Laura ILLIA & Philemon BANTIMAROUTHIS

Thursday 14:00-15:30

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### **Aesthetics of CSR communication and perception of ethical leadership:**

#### **Impact on purchase intent in high and low rank CSR firms**

Barbara Fryzel, Marco Ghitti & Giacomo Boesso

Although the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication and its importance for creating behavioural outcomes is well established in the literature and the interest in the aesthetical perspective of CSR analysis is rising, the connection between aesthetical value of CSR communication and ethical perceptions of a firm as conjoint factors shaping consumer behaviour has been somewhat overlooked. This study aims at examining how CSR communication can generate aesthetical experience of interaction between firms and consumers as well as perceptions of organization being the ethical leader and whether these perceptions of ethical leadership relate to purchase intent. Conceptual framework of the paper is built upon literature which sees ethics as part of art of managing and posits that ethicality must be based upon aesthetics as a good which is intrinsic, that is good in itself and is good experience qualified with aesthetical categories (Brady, 1986). Aesthetic perception of organizational communication assumes that a criteria of beauty applies to responsible management that aims at mitigating the bad and thus ugly effects of business activities (Adler & Laasch, 2020).

Aesthetics has been shown to play a key role in creating a link between beautiful, good and decent (Hancock, 2005) and can be instrumental in fostering attitudinal outcomes. CSR communication with its’ different visual representations and subtle aesthetical connotations may create favourable company image (Richardson, 2019) and serve as aesthetic strategies to create required public impression. Given the above, investigating the effects of aesthetical interventions can be an important avenue of future research (Ladkin, 2018). As far as individual behaviour is concerned, individuals who balance ethical and aesthetical traits are well exemplified in consumers of sustainable products and advocates of more responsible and sustainable businesses (Legrand & Nielsen, 2018). They are described as ethical aesthetists who value ethical, economic and also aesthetical features in business activity and can be

alternatively described as *homo aestheticus* (Dobson, 2014). Using a sample of 519 respondents, including executive and non-executive students, we provide novel evidence that perceptions of organizational ethical leadership and aesthetic qualities of CSR communication relate positively to purchase intent. Participants were asked to assess the described CSR communication strategy using a questionnaire, which included the measures of ethical leadership (*ELQ*) and differential attractiveness (*AttDiff*), followed by a purchase intent (*PI*). To measure ethical leadership, we adopted the *ELQ* originally used to assess leadership qualities of individuals (Yukl et al., 2013). Our results show a clear and statistically significant positive relationship between ethical leadership quality and the purchase intent. Coherently, the stronger the differential attractiveness of an organization from a CSR perspective, the more likely is a purchase from that organization. We also demonstrate that in their evaluations, respondents do not discriminate between high or low position occupied by a firm in the ranking of responsible businesses. Linking the effect of aesthetical judgments with ethical leadership perceptions we contribute to the literature on CSR effects by adopting a relatively underexplored aesthetical lens of analysis.

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### **Communicating global CSR to local stakeholders:**

#### **The case of Dove and the strategic move of the #LetHerGrow campaign in Thailand**

Chanapa Itdhiamornkulchai & Parichart Sthapitanonda

Communication scholars play an important role in shaping corporate social responsibility (CSR) theories (O'Connor, 2022). The main debates from the communication perspective range from information disclosure to scrutinizing greenwashing and promoting corporate goals (Weder et al, 2019). The present research focuses on the strategic CSR communication that the local award-winning #LetHerGrow campaign that Dove, one of Unilever's global brands, implemented in Thailand. This study aims to answer two main research questions: (1) "How do Dove and Unilever strategically communicate the #LetHerGrow CSR initiative to various stakeholders?" and (2) "How do stakeholders react to the strategic CSR communication of Dove's #LetHerGrow campaign?" By adapting previous concepts and theories that were used to conduct experiments on fictitious CSR/sustainability messages: the roles of message appeals and message sources (Kapoor et al., 2021), positive vs. negative framing (Tong et al., 2020), calm vs. arousing visual CSR messages (Chung & Lee, 2019), perceived CSR motives/commitment and behavioral intentions (Chung & Lee, 2019; Kapoor et al., 2021), we extended these frameworks to qualitatively explore a real case study in detail by conducting a content analysis of Dove's #LetHerGrow campaign on corporate webpages, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube as well as stakeholders' responses to investigate the social impact. Our results showed that Dove's #LetHerGrow campaign was strategically communicated by focusing on the pain point of Thai female students throughout the campaign regarding haircut regulations at school, corresponding to SDG#3: Good Health and Well-Being (mental health), SDG#5: Gender Equality (empowering girls), and SDG#10: Reduced Inequalities (rights to choose hairstyles). By using arousing visual CSR messages of girls in school uniforms who suffer during forced haircuts in Dove's online video clip and print newspaper advertisements, Dove's communication corresponds to the guilt appeal to arouse accountability. Concurrently, Dove used positive framing to communicate the benefits of the desired goal of deregulating haircuts to trigger the hope of stakeholders in creating this social change. Regarding message sources, Dove also partnered with renowned Thai influencers who used #DovePartner to discuss this social movement with stakeholders. Our findings revealed that most comments from the

general public in response to Dove's communication on the website and #DovePartner on social media included (1) compliments of the campaign in creating social impact, (2) negative personal experiences on forced haircuts at school, (3) opinions that oppose haircut regulations due to negative effects on students' confidence and self-esteem, and (4) statements of the irrelevance of haircuts to increasing academic performance. Many consumers communicated behavioral intentions to (1) support Dove, (2) purchase Dove's products, and (3) switch to using Dove's products. To conclude, this case study of Dove's #LetHerGrow campaign demonstrates that CSR can be strategically communicated by focusing on the values shared by various stakeholders and providing virtual spaces for them to co-create a social change agenda. The communication of CSR will matter if it strategically makes a difference.

**\*\*\* FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ONLINE \*\*\***

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## **The PLANET Framework: A holistic Integration of Sustainability into Digital Marketing**

Romas Malevicius & Aleksej Heinze

How can digital marketers contribute to the effective integration of sustainability communications? We acknowledge a number of theoretical frameworks and concepts related to Sustainable Development and CSR. On the other hand, are practitioner initiatives such as the 21 benchmark attributes of the Planet Pledge (Dreblow, 2023). The key challenge for digital marketers is to recognise the main theories and apply them in their strategies and consequent practical activities. Digital Marketers are not CSR managers but still have to understand the subject matter in order to effectively help organisations to communicate around these topics and also affect positive long-term commitment towards sustainability. We review existing theories and combine key elements to help digital marketers towards a path to sustainability interaction. Existing approaches are critiqued and a new conceptual framework - PLANET framework is proposed.

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Session 3D: Open Call (3/6)

Chair: Orr KARASSIN

Thursday 14:00-15:30

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## **The effect of SDGs on firm economic, environmental and social aspects**

Marco Menoni

Since some firms characteristics (i.e. industry and year) have an asymmetric influence on various aspects of ESG (Crace, & Gehman, 2023) it is interesting to evaluate the effect of the SDGs at industry and regional level on manifold feature of corporate sustainability. The main research questions are related with the role of time in the relation between SDGs and firm sustainable performance, if there is a stable or temporary effect. How much the external context of industry and sector can influence the environmental social and economic variables at firm level. What is the optimal mix of SDGs that can promote sustainability. The main theories used in the paper are the institutional theory (Risi et al 2023) and structure conduct performance theory (Lelissa, & Kuhil, 2018). The market power in which the firm operate can have an effect on firm variables (Arianpoor & Orfizadeh, 2021) and firm sustainability

(Pogutz et al, 2011). Organization profitability can benefit from SDGs (Yang & Liu, 2023). Galeazzo et al (2023) find that firms generally improve their financial performance when they undertake the all set of SDGs or a particular subset of them. The methodology is a quantitative analysis of second order data on a sample of worldwide firms. The variables are both at firm level and at industry and regional level. Some macroeconomic variables that could influence firm performance during time are taken into account (e.g. recession). Among the main findings it is possible to evidence some drivers factors (i.e. SDGs) that can stimulate the growth of firms in a sustainable manner. Next to this aspect are shown the direct and indirect effects of the key variables in supporting the firm sustainability. The external context (e.g. industry, sector SDGs) can encourage connections and synergies among corporations that can be useful for firm sustainability. The results are interesting for scholars and for policy makers that can better understand what are the factors, and the relative proportion, that can stimulate the corporate development in a sustainable way.

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## **An Integrated Process Framework of Corporate Sustainability Decision-making:**

### **A Case Study on Chinese Firm**

Yifeng Li

The academic discussion on corporate sustainability governance (CSG) is a new phenomenon; the extant literature generally falls under two camps, one with a macro-focus on organisational drivers (Naciti, Cesaroni & Pulejo, 2021; Aguilera et al., 2021; Ludwig & Sassen, 2022) and the other focused on the micro-foundations of individual drivers (Hahn et al., 2014; Sharma & Jaiswal, 2018; Gröschl, Gabaldón, & Hahn, 2019). The ‘macro approach’ studies corporate governance (CG) components such as boards, top management teams (TMTs) and their relationship with firms' sustainability performance. The ‘micro approach’ studies how individuals' values, interests, and cognitions influence organisations' sustainability decisions. The two approaches are opposed to one another. However, macro and micro organisational variables are mutually epiphenomenal; ignoring either side may lead to an insufficient understanding of how individuals make decisions in environmental variables. Combining the two perspectives, however, helps unpack the black boxes of CSG processes. This study, therefore, integrates the macro and micro theoretical perspectives of resource dependence theory (RDT) and managerial cognition (MC) to bridge this gap. It unravels the sustainability decision-making dynamics of a Chinese mega digital platform company. The author asks two questions: 1) How do CG components at different levels, such as TMTs, managers, and employees, interact and form decisions on sustainability? 2) Do the firm's TMTs play an active and leading role in sustainability decision-making? This single case study contains 2.5 years of longitudinal process data from the case study firm. The firm is a rare case in terms of its rapid and controversial development history and the difficulty in data access. The results show that TMTs of the case study company all expressed a business case cognitive frame and are reactive in sustainability decision-making under extreme environmental dependence in China. This provides a new angle to apply RDT in CSG research: sustainability is instrumental in managing the firm's government and market dependence. This dependence is managed not by how company leaders introduce external resources, as argued by the extant literature, but by how TMTs perceive sustainability as a strategy to retain government relations and the market in China. This study establishes an integrated process framework of CSG and deconstructs the internal logic of how a firm's managers process environmental dependence information according to their cognitive frames and make decisions. This study highlights Chinese corporate leaders' reactive role under environmental dependence without attempting to confirm

or contradict previous findings. Instead, it provides a reminder reiterating Milton Friedman's 1970 essay: when examining the issue of CSG, it is essential to understand the situations faced by 'corporate men', and an integrated view serves this purpose. In addition, an integrated view helps policymakers produce more empirically significant work to facilitate sustainable transformation in China. When developing sustainability policies, it is crucial to be cautious of potential conflicts that may arise in the environment.

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### **Sustainable Operations in the Steel Sector: A Research in the Business-To-Business Context**

Juliane Araújo Cardoso Costa, Lucas Lopes Ferreira de Souza, Keysa Manuela Cunha de Mascena & Romulo Alves Soares

What are the factors that positively influence steel consumers in the context of the sustainability of operations? Organizations see sustainability as an opportunity to increase their profits and expand their markets by readjusting their production chain. But that's not all that attracts organizations to the sustainable development trend. In the B2B steel consumer segment, industries that have adapted their production chains to sustainable standards are benefiting from this choice. One of the benefits obtained is the competitive advantage of these organizations in their respective markets (Jean et al., 2016; Yu et al., 2017). Among the antecedents of green competitive advantage, there is the adoption of sustainable operations, since it was found that organizations that adopt sustainable operations perceive a greater competitive advantage (Orji, 2019). However, this adoption of sustainable operations can occur from two factors, environmental conscience of managers (Balderjahn et al., 2018) and/or obligations arising from laws and regulations (Orji, 2019). In addition, organizations that follow laws and regulations are expected to have a greater green competitive advantage (JEAN et al., 2016; Orji, 2019). Thus, this research presents the following hypotheses:

- H1: Sustainable Operations positively influences the Green Competitive Advantage.
- H2: Laws and Regulations positively influence Sustainable Operations.
- H3: Laws and Regulations positively influence the perception of Green Competitive Advantage
- H4: Environmental conscience positively influences Sustainable Operations.

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Session 4A: Stakeholder Engagement (2/6)  
Chair: Adina DUDAU  
Thursday 16:00-17:30

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### **Stakeholder theory in addressing commons**

Lotta Sihvo Matikainen, Annika Blomberg & Johanna Kujala

Contemporary societies are faced with grand challenges related to resource scarcity, biodiversity loss and climate change. Many of the challenges are related to or involve questions concerning common pool

resources, or commons. The commons include cultural, natural and societal resources that are accessible to all members of society, although are limited, and thus threatened by overexploitation. As commons are not privately owned, their maintenance, governance and conservation require the participation and inclusion of a broad number of stakeholders. As has been discussed in the literature as the ‘tragedy of the commons’, the governance of the commons is a complex task and requires negotiation of rules and principles among multiple stakeholders (e.g. Ostrom 1990). The inclusion of several stakeholders into acting collectively for the governance of the commons explicitly points to the relevance of stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984, Freeman et al., 2010) for understanding the governance of the commons. In collective action, stakeholders come together to collaboratively address a problem or issue that concerns all of them (Ostrom 1990), although in case of the commons, the long term interests of the collective may be in conflict with individual stakeholder’s short term interests (Bridoux & Stoelhorst, 2020). Starting from these premises, we conduct a literature review of academic journal articles to explore how stakeholder theory (Freeman 1984; Freeman et al. 2010) has been used in addressing the commons. This study sets out to ask: *how is stakeholder theory used in academic journal articles related to addressing the commons*. We are interested in analyzing how stakeholder theory and the related concepts have been applied to the study of commons, what are the commons addressed using stakeholder theory and what is the relation of collective action and stakeholder theory. This paper is currently in the preliminary stage as we have only started to analyse articles found in the literature search.

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### **Exploring how stakeholder management can deliver value to a broad range of stakeholders through sustainable business models**

Kabelo Rathobei, Helena Ranängen & Åsa Lindman

Businesses today are required to contribute to sustainable development (SD) through incorporating social and environmental concerns into their operations and voluntary interactions with stakeholders, a concept known as corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Dahlsrud, 2008). CSR in practice is often shown as codes of conduct, sustainability reports and community involvement (Ranängen and Zobel, 2014) and the literature on how CSR is systematically integrated is limited (Ranängen and Lindman, 2017). This has encouraged the expansion of research on sustainable business models (SBM), which factor in societal interest, environmental consciousness, and financial implications (Comin et al., 2020; Preghenella & Battistella, 2021; Schneider & Clauss, 2020). Scholars have identified the importance of stakeholders in SBM, but there is a gap in knowledge on stakeholder involvement (Attanasio et al., 2022; Bocken et al., 2019; Fiore et al., 2020; Freudenreich et al., 2019; Tapaninaho & Heikkinen, 2022). The extraction of natural resources has had a long-term social and environmental impact in many parts of the world (Moran et al., 2014) and has experienced increased stakeholder pressure over the last decades (Lindman et al., 2020). The stakeholders, needs and expectations pertaining to various sustainability aspects, are ideally taken into account and communicated by mining companies through sustainability reports and upheld through other CSR practices. As such, the mining industry has been chosen as a case study to explore how stakeholder management practices can deliver value to a broader range of stakeholders through SBM. In an ongoing research project we intend to extend SBM literature by exploring how stakeholder management practices can be used to deliver value to a broader range of stakeholders through SBM. By studying corporate sustainability reports, we aim to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: Which sustainability aspects do the mining industry regard as important?

RQ2: Which stakeholders have been prioritized in the communication?

RQ3: How do the studied companies describe their stakeholder management?

By answering these questions, the researchers hope to gain insights into how the mining industry is managing sustainability and how it communicates its CSR practices to stakeholders. Moreover, by studying previous research, we intend to answer the following research questions:

RQ4: Which steps can businesses take to effectively integrate a wide range of stakeholders in their SBM? We answer this research question by developing a conceptual framework based on previous research.

RQ5: Is the conceptual model applicable to assess and develop corporate stakeholder engagement in SBM in order to deliver value to a broader range of stakeholders?

The conference paper intends to present the findings from a content analysis of sustainability reports published by the 100 largest mining companies in the world, targeting RQ1-3. The analysis shows which sustainability aspects the global mining industry regard as important and how the importance varies across continents. Moreover, the paper presents which stakeholders that have been prioritized in the communication and how the companies describe their stakeholder management.

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### **Sustainability opportunity studies with stakeholder needs focus in research – the case of Supplementary Cementitious Materials in Sweden**

Raine Isaksson, Max Rosvall & Arezou Ahmadi

Research has a tendency of being discipline oriented with the anecdotal worst-case scenario being, knowing more and more of less and less, until finally knowing everything about nothing. Research on CSR has practical origins and it should be of help for sustainable development in organisations. Our research question is, if an improved understanding, based on a concretisation of main stakeholder values and harms with focus on vital People and Planet sustainability impacts could be a credible driver for more effective CSR research? This paper discusses CSR using the case of cement and concrete sustainability in Sweden. Our discussion is guided by the logic of a Sustainability Opportunity Study (SOS), consisting of a three by three matrix that combines the change logic of understanding, defining and measuring with the Opportunity Study logic of diagnosing, analysing and solving. The theory background is based on Total Quality Management. The preliminary answer to the research question is that CSR research could benefit from understanding the main sustainability impacts in the studied value chain and that research area choices should be done with focus on stakeholder needs in the studied system.

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Session 4B: Climate Change & CSR  
Chair: Frank FIGGE

## **How can we study the intersection of CSR, Productivity and Net Zero so that it creates real world impact?**

Alice Owen

Action for net zero, as part of a just transition, has become a significant strand of CR activity and net zero dominates a large amount of policy debate in business and in consumer affairs. In parallel, another major policy issue is productivity. The UK government is seeking to tackle a stubborn ‘productivity gap’. This paper draws on a current research project with its own central research question: How can productivity be improved in tandem with delivering net zero in an inclusive way? Several strands of research in the Productive and Inclusive Net Zero (PRINZ) project explore productivity factors by analysing how carbon intensity of sectors, levels of patents and innovation, and the levels and types of ‘green’ jobs relate to spatial and demographic distributions of jobs, skill development and ‘clean’ economic output. The project, and team, are further described at [PRINZproject.io](https://PRINZproject.io).

However, this paper’s specific enquiry is more concerned with methodology. The detailed econometric and quantitative analysis in PRINZ is coupled with a work package called “View from the Shop floor” which is intended to provide deeper insights through qualitative and case study research. This research starts in earnest in January 2024. The central question for this paper is therefore: *How can qualitative enquiry into corporate responsibility connect modelled theory and analysis with business practice?*

The core theoretical framing for productivity says that it is increased through increasing skill levels – and therefore enable higher value work- and/or through introducing more technology. Improving technology or skills should increase the value of economic output for the same labour input. The PRINZ project layers into this the additional requirements for economic inclusion and net zero. Technological change is assessed as to whether it supports radical reductions of the carbon emissions associated with each unit of economic output. Job creation and skill enhancement demanding higher wages needs to be analysed to see which communities and groups of current workers benefit. The qualitative research activity planned for PRINZ is purposive sampling of case studies which are constructed to add individual or cross-case insights to the patterns revealed through the macro- and micro- economic analysis in other parts of the PRINZ project.

This paper shares and explains the proposed sampling criteria for case study selection for comment. The criteria are location within the UK; cluster/non-cluster; type of green innovation expected; position in the supply chain between commodity and consumer. This is followed by the data sought to populate the case studies, and relevant data collection mechanisms, with the examples of arable agriculture and cement manufacture used to illustrate the proposed approach.

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## **Can Money Incentivize Corporate Environmental Commitment? A Study of China’s Green Loan Policies**

Lai Yee Choy

China, the world’s largest carbon dioxide emitter, pledged to reach carbon emissions peak by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060. To achieve this target, an annual green investment amounting to RMB 3-4

trillion is needed. China has implemented some policies that direct banks to provide corporate loans fostering environmental commitment ('green loans'). This research aims to construct an analytical framework about how to formulate effective green loan policies, and analyze to what extent China's green loan policies adhere to the ideal model. The main methodologies employed are doctrinal analysis and multi-disciplinary examination of literature in economics, finance, law, and environmental science. The current study has identified five major criteria crucial to green loan policies. First, the policies should adopt a bottom-up approach. Second, companies with superior environmental performance should have easier access to bank loans. Third, the interest charged on loans for green projects should be sufficiently lower than that on carbon-intensive ones. Fourth, banks should establish a mechanism for environmental risk evaluation. Fifth, both banks and companies should adequately disclose their environmental risk exposure. China's green loan policies generally reflect on these principles, whereas some criteria are not entirely fulfilled and the positive effect of green loans is weakened. Noticeably, the impact of green credit on improving environmental quality is insignificant in underdeveloped regions. Moreover, Chinese banks seem to be biased towards state-owned enterprises and large companies when making lending decisions. Smaller, private companies may encounter difficulty in obtaining green loans despite higher green innovation.

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### **Camouflaging the Damage:**

#### **The Consequences of Negative ESG Media Coverage on Earnings Management**

Emma García-Meca & Jennifer Martínez-Ferrero

For a European sample of analysis from 2015 to 2020, this paper examines whether media coverage of ESG misconduct reinforces accounting misbehavior and whether irresponsibility in ESG practices is related to accounting manipulation as a corporate defensive measure. We evidence that the negative coverage of ESG actions increases earnings management and enhances company incentives to restore their image and mitigate market consequences and litigation risks. Our findings note that to gain legitimacy, firms may follow avoidance strategies and redirect stakeholders' attention from negative ESG issues to other concerns to gain support and avoid disapproval.

Examining the above brings several theoretical and practical contributions to previous studies. First, little research has examined how firms react to minimize the negative consequences of media coverage of ESG misconduct or how companies act to mitigate the effects on stakeholders' perceptions. This paper goes further by examining (i) whether management teams try to avoid the severe negative consequences of negative ESG news with earnings management as a mechanism for camouflaging these ESG failures; and (ii) the institutional and board conditions that limit earnings management caused by ESG misconduct. Regarding the first issue, this paper shows how ESG failures extend to other aspects of companies, offering new perspectives on how organizations become "less sustainable" and engage in other less ethical practices after negative ESG news coverage. Thus, this paper contributes to the recent calls for more studies to better understand corporate social irresponsibility (Lange & Washbur, 2012) and, specifically, the negative consequences of ESG media coverage. This is a new phenomenon that has scarcely been examined despite being highly influential in forming and reflecting public opinion on ESG issues (Burke, 2021). This paper also contributes to the literature on corporate misconduct and the

corrective and defensive actions undertaken by firms to minimize the adverse effects of firm misconduct (Neville et al., 2019) and CEO wrongdoing (Schnatterly et al., 2018).

We also contribute to the previous literature by considering institutional factors (public enforcement and tight culture) and internal mechanisms (board effectiveness); this paper answers the recent calls for more studies to better understand these mechanisms from an external and internal perspective to prevent or reduce socially irresponsible behaviors (Minor & Morgan, 2011; Riera & Iborra, 2017). One of the main contributions of this paper is the study of the mechanisms that prevent or reduce irresponsible managerial behavior (Desender et al., 2008; Minor & Morgan, 2011; Riera & Iborra, 2017). This study is one of the first to apply a theoretical framework based on culture and legal protection to explain the strategic actions taken by management after ESG misconduct and the institutional differences among countries. We contribute to the literature by linking theory and research on media, ESG misconduct, and earnings management and highlighting a context where negative ESG news affects stakeholders' perceptions and, ultimately, earnings management. Evidence also has important implications for the investment community and regulators. It will help them better understand business practices considering stakeholders' perceptions and firm visibility after media coverage of ESG failures.

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Session 4C: CSR Communication (2/2)

Chairs: Laura ILLIA & Philemon BANTIMAROUTHIS

Thursday 16:00-17:30

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### **Corporate Governance and Greenwashing**

Erifili-Christina Chatzopoulou, Maria Fotaki, Giorgos Papagiannakis & Stelios Zyglidopoulos

In this paper we investigate whether and how corporate governance mechanisms encourage or inhibit a firm's greenwashing behavior. When properly implemented, corporate governance mechanisms can play a threefold role. They enable firms to embed sustainability principles in their strategies and operations, oversee sustainability implementation, and disclose their sustainability performance. To investigate the above research question, we focus on a specific manifestation of environmental sustainability: the environmental product innovation of firms. To measure greenwashing of environmental product innovation, we follow the process of Ioannou et al. (2022), and operationalize greenwashing as the difference between environmental product innovation policies/claims and their respective implementation levels. To conceptualize the corporate governance factors that can induce environmental sustainability greenwashing, we capitalize on the "corporate governance of environmental sustainability" framework of Aguilera et al. (2021). To explain the mechanisms through which the various corporate governance variables influence firms' greenwashing behavior concerning environmental product innovation, we will draw on the corporate governance deviance theory of Aguilera et al. (2018) along with other theoretical lenses, such as the institutional theory or agency theory. To investigate our research questions, we will use data from the Asset4 Thomson Reuters «Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Research Data» database, which provides reliable and systematic data of organizations' performance on environmental, social, and governance metrics for more than 7,000 companies worldwide, organized across ten themes. We will also use financial data from the Worldscope database. To operationalize corporate governance mechanisms, we will use the "board", "compensation", and "CSR vision and strategy" metrics of Asset 4, which portray the various governance mechanisms that firms put in place to secure that executives respect the rights and interests

of a firm's key stakeholders. To test our hypotheses, we will employ a panel data research design. We believe that exploring the corporate governance mechanisms that affect firms' greenwashing behavior on ES issues would be a very interesting line of research as it would provide significant insights to the Corporate Governance of Environmental Sustainability (Aguilera et al., 2021) and the greenwashing literature.

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### **Communicating sustainability:**

#### **Values as a driver for developing sustainability marketing in SMEs**

Mira Valkjärvi, Johanna Hallböck, Katja Viiliäinen-Tyni & Janne Peltoniemi

Organizations often take part in sustainability by acting based on their values or what is expected of them. An organization's values are those that define how they operate and communicate both internally and externally. Aligning values within the realm of sustainability is a crucial step in the sustainability transition but also a key step in planning how to communicate about sustainability (Sánchez-Chaparro et al., 2022). Yet communication about sustainability seems to be challenging for companies that are already a part of the transition. Thus, this paper aims to investigate how SMEs could better understand how their values and sustainability could be aligned together and to plan their communications and marketing accordingly. The research followed the research question of “How do SMEs align their values, sustainability and communications?” The theoretical framework of the paper follows the logic of the Triple Bottom Line regarding sustainability (Elkington, 1998). Specifically, the paper examines the TBL canvas frameworks and their use in developing SMEs values and operations towards sustainability (Joyce & Paquin, 2016). The TBL approach is combined with existing research of sustainability marketing as outlined by Kumar et al. (2013). The research method followed action research by simultaneously investigating and implementing sustainability trainings to SMEs in Finland. The researchers planned, executed, and revised a sustainability training package targeted at SMEs, with a focus on developing their sustainability actions and later based on their findings focusing on sustainability communications. The results suggest that companies require support in aligning their values to sustainability and further how to efficiently communicate about the actions they take. Based on the findings, this paper suggests a sustainability communication framework, that helps align the theoretical background of sustainability with practical application of communications.

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Session 4D: Open Call (4/6)

Chair: Robert KUDLAK

Thursday 16:00-17:30

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#### **What Makes a Good Place to Work? The Effect of Internal Corporate Social Responsibility on Word-of-Mouth for Employers**

Anna Mutter, Jasmin Afrahi & Thomas Armbrüster

Word-of-mouth for employers (WOME; i.e., employees talking positively about their employer organization) is a valuable corporate means of recruitment in times of employee shortage and wars for

talent. However, research on the determinants of WOME is fragmented, and the identification of success factors is incomplete. Based on research on word-of-mouth mechanisms, social exchange theory, and motivation theory, we elaborate a model of WOME that comprises classic factors of workplace attractiveness (monetary compensation, work environment, and workplace fun) and internal corporate social responsibility (ICSR). We define ICSR as employers' efforts to enhance employees' physiological and psychological well-being and hypothesize that ICSR exhibits the greatest explanatory power for WOME. We tested our assumption with a data set of 132,995 participants from 13 industrial sectors in Germany. ICSR proved to have a greater effect on WOME than other factors of workplace attractiveness had, which we consider a result of employees' interest in a fair exchange relationship with their employers. We discuss the results in terms of the above-mentioned theories and point out directions for future research as well as practical implications.

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### **Struggling in the regime – Responsibilisation of agency for biodiversity conservation in the food system**

Irene Kuhmonen & Tiina Onkila

Biodiversity conservation is becoming an increasingly relevant question for businesses to tackle. This is especially the case for food systems, which are a major contributor to global biodiversity loss. In this study, we explore the role of change agency in advancing conservation of biodiversity especially from the viewpoint of systemic barriers that the actors face. Our study focuses on the Finnish food system, that currently drives actors in various stages of the supply chain towards ever more cost-efficient, intensive, centralised and large-scale business models. At the same time however, there is a fundamental debate ongoing about the role of more extensive, small-scale modes of food production in biodiversity conservation. These challenges and controversies related to biodiversity require a lens towards transformative changes in food system structures and practices. This brings forth the friction between agency and structure: while farmers as primary producers are best equipped to promote biodiversity, they have been repeatedly argued to lack the power to drive a transformative change in food systems. Who, then, has the responsibility? To study this phenomenon, we ask: how the Finnish food chain actors identify the systemic challenge of Finnish food chain from biodiversity perspective? And whom do they responsabilize to act to solve the challenges? Our study is based on a view of a locked-in regime: from the environmental responsibility point of view a new systems and way of organizing is necessary to create a new type of regime. Our interest is in analyzing how this need is reflected in the way food chain actors speak of (non)conservation of biodiversity.

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### **Assessing the impacts of external shocks on food consumption and the sustainability of a UK and French shopping basket**

Susan Lee, William Young & Ralf Barkemeyer

Consumers are expected to play a pivotal role in the transition towards sustainable food production and consumption modes, driving the demand for more sustainable food products and incentivizing companies to lower the environmental impacts associated with large-scale food production. Along these lines, shoppers are becoming increasingly aware of the sustainability issues associated with their weekly shop and some more affluent shoppers have started to change their purchasing habits. At the same time, the UK has recently experienced three major disruptions to its food chain through events such as Brexit, the COVID 2019 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Such disruptions have had an impact on consumer behaviour in terms of purchasing patterns and the type of items bought. As the cost of living has risen, sustainability considerations may have been side-lined. This paper aims to investigate how external shocks (such as Brexit, COVID19, Ukraine, as well as rising energy prices and the Cost of Living (COL) crisis) impact UK food consumption as reflected in consumers' shopping baskets and explore the implications for environmental sustainability. More specifically, we also compare UK food price data with equivalent data from France to determine a potential "Brexit Effect" on food purchases and prices.

To evaluate the sustainability of food shopping behaviours, we use the environmental impact score produced by Clark et al. (2022) based on data analysis from other authors who have analysed detailed life cycle assessments of specific food products in relation to greenhouse gas emissions, land use, water stress and the concentration of plant nutrients (particularly phosphorous and nitrogen) in water bodies. The estimated environmental impacts account for the handling and delivery of products to retailers, but do not incorporate further manufacturing, packaging, and haulage which occurs after production. We use these data in conjunction with selected food items from the Consumer Price Index (CPI) shopping basket produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and used by the UK Government to ascertain the cost of living. We classify key food items according to their level of estimated environmental impact and, by implication, their sustainability, according to Clark et al. (2022), and extract their cost per unit from the CPI data, together with the price of the item sold in the supermarket on a given date. Most of the food items will contain single ingredients but others, such as pizza, will contain several items which will be accounted for in proportion to the ratio of the amount of ingredient to the whole item.

We aim to examine the extent to which these three types of external shocks have effectively created barriers on the path towards sustainable consumption, demonstrating how fluctuations in the prices of the selected food items over the period 2019 and 2023 have impacted the sustainability of shopping baskets in the UK and France. As such, we will provide quantitative data on the socio-economic effects caused by the external shocks to the food system. We shall discuss the role of Corporate Social Responsibility from a retailing perspective in relation to environmental sustainability and potential future research directions.

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Session 5A: Stakeholder Engagement (3/6)

Chairs: Johanna KUJALA & Annika BLOMBERG

Friday 09:00-10:30

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### **What can Gabriel Tarde's Laws of Imitation tell us about the processes through which social movements contest corporate social responsibility practices?**

Diego Vazquez-Brust, Lutz Preuss, Natalia Yakovleva & Hamid Foroughi

Multinational enterprises (MNEs) often face resistance from local communities over social and environmental externalities of their economic activities (Maher, Monciardini & Böhm, 2021). Conflicts

may arise when the regulation of issues of public concern brought about by the MNE is not fully codified in host country legislation or when regulation lacks enforcement, as is often the case in emerging economies (Walter & Urkidi, 2017). Under such circumstances, social movements often claim a role of public advocate, aiming to put pressure on companies to take greater account of their social and environmental externalities (den Hond & de Bakker, 2007). Social movements aim to increase issue salience: the degree to which an issue of public concern resonates with and is prioritized by decision-makers, whether corporate or government ones (Bundy, Shropshire & Buchholtz, 2013). What is less well understood, however, are the processes that cause shifts in the scale of issue salience and, ultimately, in actions against companies, in particular how localised social contestations grow into large-scale, multi-location social movements that affect business operations. In this study, we therefore pose the following research question: How do micro-interactions help issues of local concern, such as negative externalities of business operations, grow in salience to become nation-wide issues of public concern influencing public policy?

We investigate our research question by utilising 19th century French sociologist Gabriel Tarde's (2001) relational theory of society to study CSR and its contestation by social movements. We suggest that Tarde's work on micro-sociology can provide a novel theoretical perspective on the scaling-up of social movements. Although Tarde's work was dismissed by Durkheim as taking a psychological rather than a sociological perspective, he was later rediscovered and championed by sociologists like Latour and Deleuze (Borch, 2005). Applying qualitative research methods, we examine how a social movement in Argentina contested activities of foreign mining companies, including their CSR commitments. We build on 15 years of interviews and participatory research across Argentina, including repeat interviews with key informants (or in Tarde's words, actors with prestige among local communities).

We propose a three-stage process of business contestation aligned with Tarde's relational mechanisms of opposition, imitation and invention. We find that community examination of CSR practices plays a central role in the articulation of social resistance to business activities. Under certain circumstances, issues that emerge from local interactions can gain salience when new ways of CSR interpretation are introduced, cemented and increasingly imitated by other community groups until they have grown enough to have a direct impact on the scope and intent of CSR as well as on the continuity of MNE operations.

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## **Multinationals and Sustainable Communities: Just Relationships?**

Eduardo Ordonez-Ponce

Two questions guide this research: are the relationships between MNEs and communities just? and what is the relevance of justice variables in building (un)just relationships between MNEs and communities? Social and environmental justice (SEJ) requires democratic and participatory decision-making processes as fundamental elements and conditions (Young, 1990). However, due to its complexities and the unwillingness of some to contribute to its achievement, justice is not always accomplished. Despite the power imbalances between businesses, governments, and communities (Amengual, 2018), people accept decisions over their territory when resolutions are made through fair decision-making processes (Tyler, 2000). Communities expect businesses to invite them to participate, to be treated with dignity and respect, a greater share of benefits from industrial interventions, and that distributional issues are addressed as integral demands for SEJ (Prno & Slocombe, 2012; Schlosberg, 2004). To accept business activities beyond legal authorisations, communities demand legitimate projects, credible institutions and

trust-building processes (Prno, 2013; Thomson & Boutilier, 2011). Nevertheless, whether expectations are met or not when executing industrial projects, socio-environmental conflicts still arise either due to the companies' and their projects' characteristics, the communities' socio-economic attributes, or the socio-environmental features of their environment (Haslam & Tanimoune, 2016).

This research uses mixed methods focusing on the Huasco Valley, located in northern Chile and composed of four remote communities with a population of about 72,000 people. The Valley has been subject to the development of industrial projects for years (Bolados-García et al., 2021), has one of the highest GDP per capita in Chile (Oficina de Estudios y Políticas Agrarias, 2020) and many unsolved socio-environmental issues (Environmental Justice Atlas, n.d.). While emblematic mining, energy and agribusiness endeavours have been cancelled due to public pressure and the companies' poor practices, despite being legally approved, similar others have remained operating for years. Random citizens responded to our survey (96) and others (15) were interviewed across the four communities, each one relating to a particular industrial project. Just relationships between communities and MNEs was considered the DV, and victimization, lack of respect, lack of cultural recognition, unequal distribution of benefits, and unproportional distribution of benefits were the IVs.

Results show that citizens consider their relationships with MNEs to be unjust, with two relationships at a neutral level and the other two being unjust. The former refers to projects operating for years with close connections to the community, and the latter to projects not currently operating. When examining the variables proposed in the SEJ literature, results show mostly unjust assessments and a mixture of statistical weights on the neutral and unjust relationships, questioning what the literature proposes as relevant to build just relationships. Quantitative results are visually presented across four quadrants highlighting the spread of the explanatory variables, their relative weight and direction. Findings are complemented and discussed with excerpts from the conducted interviews, the projects' characteristics, the communities' socio-economic attributes, and the socio-environmental features of their environment, contributing to the SEJ literature and business and society realm.

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## **Why do sustainability schemes fail?**

### **The case of “The Complete the Cycle” programme (2011-2020)**

Dejan Zec

Sustainability, environmental, social and economic, has been accepted as a major global concern for more than 20 years. The calls for all the stakeholders to pay more attention to sustainability has gradually resulted in changing attitudes of businesses, which have begun to implement ‘triple bottom line’ principles and integrate them into their strategies and business operations. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects have become important part of corporate strategy and showcases of both corporate commitments to be more sustainable and corporate capability to interact and engage with different stakeholders in order to produce meaningful and tangible results. However, very often CSR projects fail to materialise and deliver on their promises, despite all the efforts, time, money and expertise invested in them. This paper will focus on one such project as a case study – The “Complete the Cycle” programme, designed by British pharmaceutical company ‘GlaxoSmithKline’, in cooperation with the ‘Royal Pharmaceutical Society’ (RPS), the ‘National Pharmacy Association’ (NPA) as well as ‘Recycle Now’, a recycling oriented non-governmental organization (NGO). The scheme was intended to collect and recycle plastic inhalers and ran in the UK from 2011 to 2020, at which point it

was abandoned. The paper will collect and analyse relevant sources about the project – first order sources, such as interviews with people who were involved in the project (from the company, but also from partnering organizations, pharmacies, NGO’s and users) and corporate documents, and second order sources, such as newspaper and other media articles, interviews, social media content, advertising campaigns, etc. By conducting qualitative analysis of the collected material, the paper will try to establish the timeline of the project and explain all relevant developments. Then it will focus on the barriers which ultimately led to the project failure, focusing on 5 key issues: 1) project clarity and ambiguity, 2) motives and motivation, 3) stakeholder communication and cooperation, 4) engagement in project implementation, and 5) community response.

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Session 5B: CSR Impacts (1/4)  
Chair: Ralf BARKEMEYER  
Friday 09:00-10:30

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### **Social Impact of Different Modes of CSR**

Duane Windsor

This paper’s research question concerns whether different modes, or approaches, for corporate social responsibility (CSR) have substantially different social impacts in scale or distribution. The basic expectation is yes; and likely occurring in a structured way. The author defines four modes in which CSR happens. The paper formulates a testable proposition for each mode. Reducing corporate social irresponsibility (CSIR) through voluntary responsibility actions or mandatory responsibility standards will have greater positive corporate social impact (CSI) than compliance with mandatory positive responsibility standards or voluntary positive responsibility actions. The author further formulates four axiomatic claims. The research question is important because businesses and societies are reframing voluntary versus mandatory modes of CSR. Drivers of reframing include climate deterioration, sustainable development goals (SDGs), and continuing changes in social and stakeholder expectations such as concern over perceived rising inequality. The methodology is conceptual, combining theoretical analysis of CSR modes with selected components of CSR literature. Related issues concern the relationship of stakeholder impacts to CSI and to business and human rights.

**\*\*\* FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ONLINE \*\*\***

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### **Sustainable Development Goals and Quality of Life:**

#### **Defining a Measurable CSR Impact on Society**

Kari Solomon

Despite ongoing advances from practitioners and academics, it is still unclear how different corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities affect society. This paper examines the opportunity of aligning Quality of Life (QoL) Indicators to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This examination is conducted under Stakeholder Theory, to understand context of impact, and Paradox Tension Theory, to understand how corporations prioritise sustainability objectives. A content analysis of corporate reports

and a comparative case study across two industries are used to explore social impact and performance measurement of corporate social responsibility. The two industries included in the comparative case study are Published Media, Movies & Entertainment (PUB) and Interactive Media & Entertainment Services (IMS). The findings are framed in relation to a corporation's capacity to define meaningful metrics of social impact in their sustainability practises using the Stakeholder and Paradox Tension Theories. This paper discovers a number of new trends, one of which is the use of various sustainability reporting tools to establish standardised sustainability performance metrics and define CSR strategies focused on environmental and social considerations. The social impact of corporations, the use of sustainability management tools to measure social impact, and pertinent connections between the SDGs and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) QoL categorical indicators are discussed along with their implications for future research.

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## **Beyond Corporate Social Responsibility: The Case of Structural Injustice in Global Value Chains**

Harry J. van Buren III

Is corporate social responsibility sufficient to address ethical issues in global value chains, or are other normative frameworks for business responsibility needed to address them?

Global value chains – “the set of intra-sectoral linkages between firms and other actors through which [the] geographical and organizational reconfiguration of global production is taking place” (Gibbon et al., 2008, p. 318) – are essential to businesses and to the global economy. Through the effective use of global value chain strategies, businesses can become more efficient by focusing on their core competencies while using value chain relationships to procure needed resources and to outsource other activities to more efficient firms. However, there are persistent concerns that global value chains disproportionately benefit lead firms and stakeholders who benefit from the efficiencies they generate at the expense of less-powerful stakeholders, especially employees of suppliers as well as the local communities that host supplier operations (Van Buren and Schrempf-Stirling, 2022).

While there has been extensive work on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in global value chains (Lund-Thomsen and Lindgreen, 1994), there have also been critiques of whether CSR is an adequate response to the ethical issues found within them. LeBaron et al. (2022), for example, argue that CSR-related actions and public disclosures can deflect public attention from exploitative business strategies and practices. In a similar vein, Crane et al. (2019) consider the persistent problem of governance gaps in value chains, focusing on forced labor. Kelling et al. (2021), in their study of mining in South Africa, note that community-level ethical issues have not received the attention merited within normative analyses of value chains.

One reason why CSR may not be an adequate response to the ethical challenges posed by the use of global value chain strategies is that it relies on voluntary actions by businesses that, while perhaps helpful on the margins, cannot effectively address the wider structural context in which such strategies are enacted, with a concurrent lack of salutary social impacts. Young (2006, p. 114) defines structural injustice in this way:

Structural injustice exists when social processes put large categories of persons under a systematic threat of domination or deprivation of the means to develop and exercise their capacities, at the same time as these processes enable others to dominate or have a wide range of opportunities for developing and exercising their capacities. Structural injustice is a kind of moral wrong distinct from the wrongful action of an individual agent or the willfully repressive policies of a state. Structural injustice occurs as a consequence of many individuals and institutions acting in pursuit of their particular goals and interests, within given institutional rules and accepted norms.

This paper therefore will critically analyze CSR in the context of global supply chain strategies to assess whether it is useful for addressing ethical issues in this responsibility-related domain as well as for other ethical issues for which the existence of one or more structural injustices are contributing factors.

This paper will adopt an inductive theory-building approach, using the case of artisanal cobalt (World Economic Forum, 2020) as an input for electronics manufacturing. One result of the analysis in the paper will be a set of recommendations useful for ameliorating structural injustices for businesses procuring commodities and other inputs in their value chains.

Drawing on work that connects structural injustice analysis to global value chains, the paper concludes that CSR on its own is an inadequate response to many of the ethical issues observed in them. A structural injustice perspective on global value chains pushes businesses to (1) interrogate whether their current business practices are implicitly built on – and require the existence of – one or more structural injustices, (2) shift their attention from business processes to stakeholder outcomes as the most relevant indicators of whether they are behaving responsibly, and (3) rethink how business strategies and practices might need to change to avoid contributing to extant structural injustices but rather to contribute to diminishing their harmful effects. Integrating insights from structural injustice analysis with CSR scholarship therefore is essential for the latter to remain a vibrant area of scholarly inquiry.

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Session 5C: Social Sustainability  
Chair: Hugh LEE  
Friday 09:00-10:30

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## **Embedding Social Sustainability using a Transactional Analysis Approach:**

### **A case of software developers**

Hugh Lee, Rana Tassabehji & Nancy Harding

The growing and unmet demand for coding skills is becoming critical in a world that is ever-more driven by digital technologies, embedded algorithms and artificial intelligence systems affecting all facets of everyday life. However, this skills gap is destined to continue because of the lack of sustainable employment and retention initiatives in the industry. In particular, the failure to attract and retain women working in software development has been an ongoing and corrosive problem for decades.

While the absence of women might be dismissed by some as a function of a free labour market there are serious implications of this absence/exclusion that extend beyond a numbers game and these have deep-rooted and wide-ranging consequences. Increasing the ‘meaningful participation’ of women in

technological design and development, not only makes a positive difference to workplace diversity and politics but more importantly, it positively influences the type of technology that is being created, built and used and thereby determining our future way of life (Wajcman 1991; Sanders and Ashcraft, 2019).

Appraisal theory and workplace ostracism studies offer some useful insights to better understand this issue from the perspective of those that ostracise others at work. For instance, violation of group ethos and norms, perceived threats to the group and the self often leads to the ostracism of others as a mechanism to cope with negative emotions and ‘psychological pain’ (Henle et al., 2021). In order to better understand the root cause of such individual and group level emotions and conflict giving rise to the exclusionary and toxic workplace environment we see in the software development industry, we propose a psychoanalytical Transactional Analysis (TA) approach (Harris, 1973) that is little used in the field of management and organisation studies.

TA provides a ‘comprehensive framework for understanding behaviour and interaction’ and is used as a diagnostic tool or shared framework to develop more open, empathetic and constructive communication. In this study, we conduct in-depth analysis and focus on two interviews (with Claude and Marie-Claire) from a total of 24 conducted with 12 male and 12 female software developers in Europe. We apply the TA framework to real life examples of how communications in the workplace (i) failed because of ‘crossed’ transactions resulting from individuals occupying incompatible ego states yet (ii) were effective within ‘discrete’ transactions when individuals occupied compatible ego states. We go on to explain how crossed transactions can escalate into (un)intentional injurious speech and game-playing that can ultimately lead to a complete breakdown in workplace relationships because of the perceptions of the self as ‘OK’ and the other as ‘Not OK’.

We further propose TA as a teaching and learning device for sustainable HRM to help personal/group development to alter the prevailing attitudes towards self and others, and build a culture of trust, to infuse, motivate, and moderate human behaviours such that all software developers are equally ‘OK’ in the workplace, creating a diverse and socially sustainable profession.

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## **Responsibility through the manager's gaze?**

### **Why CSR needs deeper analysis of the implied manager**

Susi Mikael Nousiainen

In my paper I pinpoint the need for deeper analysis of the *implied manager* and the *manager gaze* in CSR texts as aiming for social sustainability, intersectional (in)equalities, and inclusivity. In dialogue with the ideas of the implied reader (Iser 1978) and male gaze (Mulvey 2009), I suggest these concepts can help us to track the power relations within texts related to equity in the organisational and global level. As noted, diversity should be re-focused to develop responsibility (Tienari & Louvrier 2022). Diversity itself could include everyone equally, but as often used as the synonym for the other, it has become part of inequalising discourses. Who are those that have to get included from the outside, and who are the ones that are deciding whether to include them or not? Analysing the implied manager is needed, if we want to question the othering discourse of diversity management texts. As two examples I introduce notions about reproducing inequalities through class and racialization in the Nordic context. First, I discuss Rauna Kuokkanen’s work on conflicts on sustainability development in Sápmi, in which she has noted how the Arctic area and indigenous people are seen through a colonial gaze as making decisions at the governmental level. Second, I discuss with Niina Meriläinen’s work on the vocational

schools students in Finland. In her research, she has explained how these youth are being seen through othering frames in the Finnish media. Meriläinen claims that the othering discourse proactively excludes these youth from societal participation, and instead these youth are seen through a managerial gaze that introduces them as the becoming working class: resources for the companies. During this year this framing has taken place in Finland, for example, as the ministers have discussed reducing societal courses from vocational schools' curriculum. I think it is not effective to transform or discuss societal power structures before analysing who is the implied reader, the implied spectator, the manager subject. In this paper I encourage scholars and DEI practicants to analyse the implied manager in their texts. As power often stays hidden in the silence, bringing this implied manager into the light can help us to question him (I think "he" is the right pronoun). This may be necessary if we truly aim for a more socially sustainable and equal life, whether it is on an organisational or global level.

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### **Ripped between idealism, norms, and conditions –**

#### **Self-categorization processes of German nurses**

Wolfgang Bichler-Riedl, Stephanos Anastasiadis & Stefan Gold

Individuals strive for meaning in their personal lives and work (Bailey et al., 2019; Berkelaar and Buzzanell, 2015). Contemporarily, meaning is regularly found in employment, the so called meaning of work (Lieps Wiersma and Morris, 2009). This meaning can in turn impact an individual's motivation and work and life satisfaction when perceived as meaningful (e.g., Rosso et al., 2010; Duffy et al., 2018). Fundamentally, scholars have categorized different sources of meaning (Rosso et al., 2010) such as the self, including the general belief whether work is "a job, a career, or a calling" (Baumeister, 1991); others, including coworkers; or specific work contexts including the significance of tasks. Several mechanisms how meaning becomes meaningful and resulting outcomes have been proposed (Rosso et al., 2010). Notably, there is still debate under which circumstances meaning's pull leads to excessive behavior (Bailey et al., 2019). A particular interest has been shown in understanding the role of group memberships. Social identity research has illustrated how depending on contexts, different identities become salient and provide the individual with security and ultimately shape what is considered positive meaning (Oakes, 1987). A useful tool to evaluate social identities is self categorization theory (Turner, 1978), which states that subsequently to categorizing oneself to a group, individuals align their behavior to what is considered a prototype through a depersonalization process of the self (Turner, 1987). Lembke and Wilson (1998) have illustrated how evaluative, emotional and cognitive alignment to what is considered a group's prototype then results in teamwork and shared behavior by incrementally extenuating own goals for group aims. How such alignment influences meaning and what behavior occurs thereupon can thus illuminate sources of meaning and behavior in relation to group memberships. Shared goals, and ultimately meaning are among the most promising predictors of a strong shared identity (Oakes, 1987). Hence, a particularly interesting area for investigating meaning between individual and social identities and work context is nursing Perceptions of the profession and its meaning have been surprisingly stable over time (Kallio et al. al., 2022) and have included strong, organizational missions Idealism is still the most common reason of young people choosing nursing (Wu et al., 2015). personal sacrifice, which has received particular interest as an outcome of meaning e.g., Bailey et al., 2019) is still widespread all while working conditions have long deteriorated (e.g., Yett, 1966) and are detrimental to nurses and their patients (Aiken et al., 2012). This manuscript thus aims to contribute to the literature of meaningful work and vocational calling as well as self categorization theory by

answering the following research question: How do individual assessments of meaning interact with shared assessments and predetermined work contexts and what role does personal sacrifice play?

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Session 5D: Open Call (5/6)

Chair: Frank FIGGE

Friday 09:00-10:30

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### **Perceptions of organizations as ethical leaders. A market level corporate responsibility**

Barbara Fryzel

Organizational as well as behavioral effects of CSR have been discussed in the context of ethical leadership (De Roeck and Farooq, 2018, Choi et al., 2015) however most of the evidence focuses on individual level analysis with very little attention paid to the concept of ethical leadership demonstrated by organizations. This paper addresses this gap and looks at ethical leadership in the context of its' similarity to transformational, authentic, spiritual and servant leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2010, Kalshoven, 2010, Luthans & Avolio, 2003, Greenleaf, 2007, Ahmad et al., 2017; Brown & Treviño, 2006), analysing organizational leadership features in the static (traits) as well as dynamic (process) perspectives (Treviño et al., 2000). This qualitative, exploratory study, based on the model of moral foundations of ethicality perceptions (Fehr et al., 2015) and ethical leadership framework composed of mindfulness, engagement, sustainment and authenticity offered by Marsh (2013) uses a thematic content analysis (Vaismoradi et al., 2013) to investigate perceptions of ethical leadership as applied to organizations and to understand how stakeholders see idealized ethical leadership. Purposively selected participants were asked to write one-page texts specifying how they see organizations as ethical leaders. A sample of 48 essays was analysed using MAXQDA Standard 2022 software, using a strategy of both deductive coding based on literature and inductively emerging open coding. Standard trustworthiness criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1986) were applied. Results show that both transformational and authentic leadership styles are the closest to the idea of ethical leadership with no evidence of importance of the spiritual leadership. Interestingly, the respondents support the idea of organizations being servants for their followers, however they do not see empowerment or autonomy as its' important aspects. There is a strong emphasis on the notion of organizational integrity, additionally complimented by the inductive category of the integrity of the whole sector. There is a clear support for the importance of values in ethical leadership understood in the context of organizations being aware of own power. Exercising the influence on the followers responsibly is understood as performing CSR, taking responsibility for own mistakes, i.e. admitting them, acting upon them but also exposing the mistakes of others. Key foundations for moral behavior as applied to organizations include supporting the followers' wellbeing and loyalty to the collective. Respondents see such support in the form of helping smaller firms as well as start-ups. Ethically leading organizations should provide opportunities for the followers to grow in the market. The economic context of ethical leadership is understood as avoiding damaging competition and refraining from creating market entry barriers.

## **Co-creation hacks: Supporting business development in SMEs through dynamization of transformational abilities**

Anke Trischler

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a crucial role in fostering economic growth and innovation (Ortiz-Martínez & Marín-Hernández, 2022), they often face numerous challenges in adapting to dynamic market landscapes, govern legal requirements and embracing sustainability practices on the path to transformation in line with the EU Green Deal. “SMEs are critical to the success of the sustainability transition (...).” (European Commission, 2022, p. 101). They are to report on their transformation efforts, including risk management, latest by 2028 (Council of Europe, 2022; European Commission, 2022). Regulations on non-financial reporting affect approximately 2.6 million SMEs in Germany as being embedded in global supply and value chains (Statista Research Department, 2023) and many are not being prepared yet. The convergence of sustainable business development and simultaneous dynamization of transformation capabilities has the potential to meet these challenges and enable SMEs to master the dynamic requirements. However, there is a gap in understanding how SMEs can be effectively supported through the use of co-creational strategies (Eikebrokk et al., 2021), thus, to enhance their transformation capabilities while ensuring long-term sustainability. The research seeks to provide an approach that could assist SMEs to develop transformation abilities, to meet the dynamic non-financial reporting requirements and the expectations of their stakeholders in the context of sustainability. The study is in the subject of business and management and requires a practical problem-solving solution, aiming to provide both an academic and practical contribution. The qualitative approach offers encouraging methodological openness. Combining techniques can increase confidence in the correctness of results, so triangulation would be beneficial to increase both cross-checking of evidence and credibility (Denscombe, 2021; Flick, 2011). At this early stage of the research, it is expected to generate several benefits, such as the recognition that SMEs can play a pivotal role in supply chains by acting as key connectors and facilitators, with businesses relying on their performance and resilience. The use of co-creation in combination with existing tools such as The Sustainability Code (TSC) can encourage the engagement of stakeholders, promote knowledge sharing and create a holistic understanding of sustainable development, and foster the interaction between academia and practice, encourage intergenerational exchange, thus, prevent undesirable developments. The conference paper serves as the basis for an interactive presentation format. Participants are invited to participate in this workshop and engage in a co-creative space: CSR as Co-Creation for Sustainability and Responsibility.

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## **How to query an AI text agent and obtain ethical responses? An experimental approach**

Kostantina Tzini & Laura Illia

Starting from the premise that one cannot attribute human qualities (e.g., reflection over a decision, ethical intentions, moral awareness) to Artificial Intelligence (AI) text agents, we provocatively test ways to educate an AI text agent, such as GPT-3, toward ethical responses when confronted with ethical dilemmas. Across three studies, we compare GPT-3 to human responses and test the effectiveness of a prompt – in-context enumeration – to obtain more ethical responses. We find that, when left unchecked, GPT-3 generates more unethical responses than humans in dilemmas related to an individual’s own interest but equally (un)ethical ones in dilemmas related to organizational interests. Furthermore, in-

context enumeration results in more ethical responses for GPT-3 – but not always for humans – across those different dilemmas. These findings contribute to the debate on AI ethics, highlighting the role of AI-user interaction in mitigating ethical concerns amidst the growing use of AI text agents in business and society.

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Session 6A: Stakeholder Engagement (4/6)  
Chair: Ralf BARKEMEYER  
Friday 11:00-12:00

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### **Ambitions and agency – Exploring stakeholder relations for sustainable development in the case of Swedish cement innovation**

Max Rosvall

**Research Question:** What are the components of agency and ambition among organisations in regards to sustainability and sustainable development?

**Theoretical Framework:** The sustainability opportunity study is based on the opportunity study by Isaksson (2015) which has three steps of diagnosing, analysing and solving with the purpose of creating a sense of urgency for change. These steps of the opportunity study are combined with a common sense logic describing the process from understanding to leading change as understanding-defining-measuring-communicating-leading in (Isaksson and Rosvall, 2021), resulting in a 3-by-3 grid called the sustainability opportunity study. The latest development to the sustainability opportunity study suggests “an approach for doing an sustainability opportunity study which is needed when an organization or process lacks relevant sustainability performance indicators” - (Isaksson, Ramanathan, *et al.*, 2022, p. 1344). Here focus is on diagnosing and deriving relevant improvement potentials for organizations in relation to their sustainability performance. The exercise of deriving sustainability outcomes, indicating organizational sustainability performance, forms part the materiality analysis, which belongs to the field of accounting and reporting sustainability (Jørgensen *et al.*, 2021). The vast amount of information needed and the value-based decision needed to derive materiality has led to an understanding of the exercise as more of an art than science (Garst *et al.*, 2022), indicating the challenges in deriving one true answer and risk of getting stuck in paralysis by analysis.

The diagnosing of the sustainability opportunity study aims to derive for the organization relevant sustainability outcomes that then can be assessed for potential improvement opportunities (Isaksson and Rosvall, 2021). To increase the relevance of the prioritized outcomes for the organization, two criteria can be introduced: feasibility and desirability (Checkland and Scholes, 1999, p. 52). Feasibility regards the organization’s agency to make change happen in the larger value chain. Desirability regards the organizational ambitions towards sustainable development. With these criteria four spaces of possible process outcomes can be identified. The known and the unknown outcomes along the value chain the organization is part of. Within these two spaces two overlapping spaces of (1) outcomes that the organization has ambitions to change and (2) outcomes the organization has agency to change, create a Venn-diagram where the overlap within the known area would constitute the relevant outcomes for the organization.

**Method:** In contrast to theoretical papers that aim to introduce novel theories at the construct level (Cropanzano, 2009), conceptual papers, as underscored by Gilson and Goldberg (2015), focus on forging

connections between diverse disciplines, delivering insights at multiple levels, bridging existing theories, and broadening the scope of our thinking. Within the category of conceptual papers, typology papers offer valuable contributions through differentiation, which entails the distinction or categorization of the existing knowledge pertaining to the phenomenon, construct, or theory in question (Jaakkola, 2020). Cornelissen (2017) emphasizes that typologies provide a multidimensional perspective on the subject under scrutiny by grouping theoretical attributes or dimensions into distinct profiles, which serve as coordinates for empirical investigations. In the context of the current paper, the aim is to comprehend how an appreciation of the system of processes can facilitate the delineation of system boundaries when selecting pertinent sustainability opportunities. Considering the necessity to explore how the system of processes can support these activities, the typology approach proves especially well-suited. Through the application of a typology, we can effectively delve into and differentiate the various dimensions of the concepts of ambitions and agency in relation to the process of deriving relevant sustainability opportunities.

\*\*\* FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ONLINE \*\*\*

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### **Disclosure of marginal stakeholder engagement activities: Local and regional public organizations in the context of a circular economy in Finland**

Heta Leinonen & Henna Paananen

This study identifies and organizes the stakeholder engagement activities of forerunner local and regional public organizations in the context of a circular economy in Finland. Also, this study problematizes, increases, and broadens the understanding of stakeholder engagement activities by disclosing the marginal stakeholder engagement activities of these organizations. Thus, the research questions are: 1) *What kind of stakeholder engagement activities do local and regional public organizations recognize in the context of a circular economy in Finland?* and 2) *What kind of stakeholder engagement activities of these organizations remain marginal?*

In this study, a ‘circular economy’ refers to reducing the use of natural resources, closing material, energy, and nutrition cycles, and retaining the value of products, materials, and resources for as long as possible. The stakeholder engagement activities of local and regional public organizations anchor a circular economy in a specific context and thus, enhance social progress. Although it is acknowledged that the transition to and implementation of a circular economy is a fruitful basis for stakeholder engagement, not remotely is known how local and regional public organizations engage their stakeholders in practice to implement and advance a circular economy.

In this study, the research data were collected through 23 semi-structured interviews with seven forerunner local and regional public organizations of the circular economy in Finland from 2019 to 2022. The chosen organizations are known for their actions, plans, and dedication related to a circular economy. Thus, the organizations were considered the top informants to disclose the stakeholder engagement activities in the context of a circular economy.

The study contributes to the discussion on stakeholder engagement, and local and regional public organizations. First, the study extends the theory of stakeholder engagement activities by exploring how forerunner local and regional public organizations that operate in a circular economy collaborate with their stakeholders and how collaborative activities are advanced through real-world applications. The study builds a pattern of stakeholder engagement activities in local and regional public organizations.

Unexpectedly, the pattern has remained the same throughout the years despite both the major changes in the operating environment and annual changes in the interview format of the semi-structured interviews. Second, the study increases and broadens the practical and theoretical understandings of stakeholder engagement activities in recent years in local and regional public organizations by revealing two marginal stakeholder engagement activities: the democratization of the relations and giving voice to marginalized stakeholders.

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Session 6B: CSR Impacts (2/4)  
Chair: Stelios ZYGLIDOPOULOS  
Friday 11:00-12:00

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### **Tokenism? Why Firms Persist in Offsetting Environmental Misdeeds by Doing ‘Good’**

Jennifer J. Griffin, Andrew Bryant & Vanessa G. Perry

Offsetting is morally and pragmatically puzzling. Firms respond to environmental wrongdoing with positive actions despite ecological and economic ineffectiveness. Drawing insights from crisis management and theorizing on small firm advantages in implementation, we argue for a novel, two-stage decision process (if to invest in doing ‘good’; then how much activity to undertake) after chronic misdeeds. We find that larger firms, initially likely to invest, are less likely to take subsequent actions, what we term tokenism. Once activated, smaller firms however are more likely to have a significant number of environmental activities after misdeeds. Both extremes are problematic. Smaller firms may overinvest or not get credit for ecofriendly actions resulting in perceptions of “the juice is not worth the squeeze.” Larger firms may communicate commitments, and if imitated, boomerang back negatively on all firms as greenwashing. Implications of tokenism while simultaneously encouraging small firm experimentation are discussed.

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### **Social life cycle assessment in the textile industry: a case study in a small company**

Sofia Grönqvist & Thomas Zobel

Research Question: How applicable is Social Life Cycle Assessment (S-LCA) methodology to assess the social impacts and social performance of a product from a small clothing company?

Theoretical Framework: The main concept in this paper is Social Life Cycle Assessment (S-LCA), which assesses both positive and negative social and socio-economic aspects along the life cycle of products.

Method: Considering the nature of the study, a case study was the appropriate approach. The chosen case is a product from a Swedish made-to-measure company offering customized shirts.

Findings: The case study was performed by conducting an S-LCA following four phases: goal and scope, life cycle inventory, life cycle impact assessment and life cycle interpretation. Generic country-level data and organisation specific data were collected through questionnaires, document review and desktop screening, while two different assessment tools were tested for the different data types. For generic country-level data, a Social Hotspot Assessment framework developed for this study, was applied and evaluated. For organisation specific data the existing Subcategory Assessment Method (SAM) was subject for feasibility evaluation.

The S-LCA implementation involved several application issues that affect the perceived applicability and feasibility of the methods. Problems identified relate to the definition of system boundaries and uncertainties in the choice of appropriate and relevant indicators. The major problems refer to data collection both in terms of availability and quality issues both with regards to the inventory and assessment phase. Further, in the assessment and interpretation phase uncertainties regarding assessment criteria and aggregation of results evolved when using the framework for identifying hotspots, affecting the reliability of the results.

Despite the identified issues, it is evident that it is possible to conduct and finalise a Social Hotspot Assessment using the methodology. However, based on the reliability issues of the results and the effort it requires, it is concluded that the applied framework is not feasible for smaller clothing companies with limited resources. The assessment of organisation specific data by applying SAM is considered incomplete and identified issues reflect the incompatibility of the method and are thus not considered applicable or feasible for smaller companies.

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Session 6C: International CSR (1/3)

Chair: Lutz PREUSS

Friday 11:00-12:00

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### **Corporate Social Performance, Legitimacy, and the Choice of Foreign Partners by State-Controlled Entities in the Global Extractive Industries**

Pavlos C. Symeou & George I. Kassinis

Partner selection in IJVs is an important but understudied phenomenon, especially when viewed from the perspective of the host country partner involved (Nippa and Reuer, 2019; Sun et al., 2021a). Contrary to the existing research's assumption that international strategy decisions reflect the interests of MNEs, other organizations' interests may be equally salient (Nippa and Reuer, 2019). Understanding the perspective of the host partner, the focus of this paper, is critical because, often, it is this local actor that initiates the search for foreign partners (Shi et al., 2014), or it can dominate the partnership due to location-specific advantages (Erramilli et al., 1997). Also, the value of nonmarket strategies, including managing CSP, aimed to give MNEs a foothold in the country (Sun et al., 2021b) hinges on the local partners' perceptions.

The host country partner perspective is especially salient when the local state is that partner and when one considers SCEs' significant involvement in partnerships with MNEs (Sun et al., 2021a). SCEs often dominate their focal industries, exhibit unique institutional logics, and play a mixed role as regulators, commercial enterprises, and social contributors. Importantly, they are unique in how their sociopolitical

legitimacy is formed. This uniqueness stems mostly from the social contract between the state and the local society and from the state's distinct salient sociopolitical stakeholders.

The sociopolitical legitimacy of the state and its actors has significant implications for the success of the state's economic exchanges with foreign MNEs. We draw on neo-institutional theory (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999) and argue that in selecting an IJV partner, in addition to using other important task- or partner-related selection criteria, an SCE will evaluate partner characteristics that help enhance its legitimacy, that of the IJV, and ultimately that of the state in the eyes of salient stakeholders. One such characteristic is, as we posit, a candidate foreign partner's CSP. We consider the legitimation mechanisms bolstered by CSP and explain how particular institutional factors in the foreign country, the host country, and supranationally interact with them, influencing CSP's importance as a selection criterion.

The context of our study is the global extractive industries. They are a crucial wealth-creating instrument for resource-rich countries, which often rely on foreign partners to exploit resources. Because of the often-disruptive effects of these industries' activities on communities and the natural environment and local and international sociopolitical stakeholders' scrutiny, the foreign partner's CSP, the legitimacy of the IJV, and ultimately that of the SCE and the state may determine partnership success. We test our hypotheses using a sample of IJVs between SCEs from 48 countries and 203 foreign partners from 22 countries between 2000-2015.

Our findings suggest that an MNE's CSP can be an attractive selection criterion for an SCE because of its legitimacy effects. The SCE's evaluation of CSP as legitimacy enhancing is influenced by the level of corruption in the MNE's home country, the legitimacy of the host state, and the number of neighboring countries participating in international multi-stakeholder initiatives. Our examination represents the first, to our knowledge, attempt to study the host state's perspective in forming partnerships with foreign MNEs, considering MNEs' CSP as a selection criterion, and showing how nonmarket strategy interacts with institutional elements at the host, home, and supranational levels.

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## **Innovation but for whose benefit and why? Investigating digital transparency tools in the global palm oil industry**

Rory Padfield, Adam Tyson, Chee Yee Wong, Gemma Bridge & Suzana Match

In recent years, there has been growing interest amongst a variety of governmental, non-governmental and corporate stakeholders in the practice of business transparency and supply chain traceability. Firms across a broad range of industries and commodities have invested in innovation tools to achieve greater levels of transparency in their operations. Examples include Sime Darby's Cross Check 2.0 and Unilever's multi-data visualisation tool. But it is unclear how these tools are addressing sustainability and ultimately who or what are the beneficiaries of these innovations. Focusing on a range of businesses that either produce or source oil palm for their operations, this presentation summarises the key findings from a two-year project investigating how and why companies utilise these tools, who benefits, and to what degree they support broader sustainability efforts. We draw on the theory of sustainability orientated innovation (Adams et al, 2016) as a means to evaluate the impact of the tools on the broader environment and society. Evidence is gathered from twenty-one interviews with stakeholders working in the palm oil industry, sourcing of palm oil or involved in the agro-commodity field. Our analysis reveals that there is a spectrum of geospatial visualisation tools employed by firms in the palm oil sector.

These tools differ in the technologies used, data inputs, time perspectives and scale, type of collaborations, as well as the outcomes and level of stakeholder participation. The purpose of such tools appears varied and with limited evidence of a common and distinct end-goal. Our findings also suggest that some tools are used to meet regulatory requirements or certification standards, whilst others may be using such tools to enhance reputations, analyse risk, boost sales, or deflect attention away from negative externalities. We conclude with some recommendations on how such tools may contribute more meaningfully towards sustainability and transparency practices.

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Session 6D: Open Call (6/6)  
Chair: William YOUNG  
Friday 11:00-12:00

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### **Fostering Sustainability-Driven Ventures:**

#### **An Examination of Constraints in Accessing Venture Capital**

Yangyang Cheng, Andrea Fosfuri & Nicola Misani

This study examines sustainability-driven ventures' distinct challenges when accessing Venture Capitalists (VCs). These obstacles stem from their organizational complexity due to the dual missions: achieving both economic and non-economic objectives. We underscore one critical hurdle in particular: financing delay, given the vital role timely funding plays for early-stage startups. We theorize that VCs defer their investments in sustainability-driven ventures to mitigate uncertainty arising from organizational complexity. Employing the global-level Pitchbook dataset for empirical testing, we show that sustainability-driven ventures experience delays in securing VC funding. However, our study reveals that, in certain contexts, sustainability-driven ventures are less likely to experience these financing delays. These findings offer valuable insights that can help sustainability-driven ventures to access quicker VC financing.

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### **Corporate Social Responsibility and Board Structure:**

#### **The Role of Independent and Minority Directors in Family Firms**

Romulo Alves Soares, Ana Rita Pinheiro, Sílvia Maria Pedro Rebouças & Lucas Lopes Ferreira de Souza

In this research we investigate how the Board of Directors' (BoD) composition promotes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices in an emerging market context. More specifically, we analyze how independent directors and those not appointed by controlling shareholders (minority directors) may act differently in family-owned companies, when compared to other companies in Brazil.

One reason for the interest in studying family firms (FFs) is that governance mechanisms in such companies may differ from those in non-FFs. In FFs, ownership is concentrated within a small number of family individuals and managers who form the dominant coalition (Chrisman et al., 2018). In addition, the pursuit of family-oriented non-economic benefits can cause variations in the governance mechanisms employed by FFs (Berrone et al., 2010).

This is relevant because within corporate governance characteristics, the composition of the BoD is a key element in determining how a company engages in CSR practices (Galbreath, 2017). However, much of the literature on the relationship between the BoD independence and CSR practices is based on the idea that independent board members behave homogeneously (Fraile & Fradejas, 2014). However, when high ownership concentration is present, independent directors can be grouped into two categories: those appointed by the owners of a firm and those not appointed. Owner-appointed directors represent the interests of the controlling shareholders, while non-appointed directors represent the interests of the free float. Although all are independent and as such are responsible for monitoring executive management, when we analyze the conflict between large and small shareholders, the distinction between appointed and non-appointed directors may become crucial.

In order to test this hypothesis, we assembled a sample of 135 Brazilian companies, ranging from 2010 to 2021, and making up to 849 firm-year observations. We used CSRHub data in order to evaluate CSR practices of these companies, and segregated CSR into three dimensions: community, employees, and environment. We computed the variables regarding family ownership and BoD structure through the *Formulário de Referência*, which is the equivalent for the SEC's Proxy Statements for the Brazilian stock exchange regulator (*Comissão de Valores Mobiliários - CVM*).

Through a series of panel data regressions we first observed that FFs posed the worst performance in all three CSR dimensions when compared to non-FFs. Regarding BoD structure, we observed that the percentage of independent directors and directors not appointed by controlling shareholders did not significantly affect the CSR practices evaluated. However, when interactions between the presence of family members on the BD and the structure of this body are included, it is observed that the percentage of minority directors causes an inversion in the main negative effect of the variables. The interaction between independent directors and the presence of family relationships does not show statistical significance. These results highlight the importance of distinguishing between independent and non-appointed directors to promote CSR practices in the Brazilian context.

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Session 7A: Stakeholder Engagement (5/6)  
Chair: Annika BLOMBERG  
Friday 13:30-15:00

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### **Stakeholder Sustainability Engagement Effects in Multisided Platforms**

Kristina Maiksteniene

**Introduction.** Platforms, broadly defined as businesses that facilitate interactions among two or more independent stakeholder groups, pose specific sustainability management challenges and deserve increased attention from sustainability scholars. Several stakeholder groups are intertwined in platforms, where the behavior of one group can increase the attractiveness of a platform to the other group and invoke network effects. This research is based on the premise that stakeholder engagement for sustainability could be one such “contagious” factor, and it could generate same-side and cross-side network growth effects. To our knowledge, customer preferences to patronize platforms with sustainability-engaged stakeholders have not been investigated so far.

**Research Question:** What are the customer choice impacts of stakeholder sustainability engagement in physical and virtual platforms and how any differences in stakeholder engagement preferences can be explained?

**Method.** To answer the “what” question, a full profile conjoint analysis study has been performed that estimates the relative effects of three groups of stakeholders on potential platform customer choice to join a platform. The three analyzed stakeholder groups are platform owner (the organization responsible for the development and management of the platform itself and its ecosystem), producer side participants (individuals, communities, businesses, or entities delivering value created through the platform), and consumer side participants (individuals, communities, businesses, or entities that access the value provided by producers). The impact of stakeholder sustainability engagement on customer choice is modelled in two different types of platforms – a small size physical platform (two-sided non-digital market), and large size scalable e-platform (two-sided digital scalable market) in the same industry. Both are presented to respondents as direct platforms, i.e., they allow for direct connection between customers. For the two modelled platform types, the conjoint algorithm estimates incremental utilities that each stakeholder engagement level adds to the customer preference to join the platform. To answer the “how” question, qualitative interviews are conducted where respondents performing a conjoint task are asked to substantiate and explain their stakeholder engagement configuration choice.

**Findings.** The conjoint experiment reveals opposite preferences in sustainability engagement for three stakeholder groups: in physical platforms, producer side participants should be the ones most highly engaged in sustainability, followed by peer-consumer group. For a large size virtual platform, the platform owner should be most engaged. The qualitative part of this research provides meaningful insights and allows to propose a framework for managerial decision makers in multisided platforms.

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## **Stakeholder Management, Social Justice, and the Inclusion of Marginalized People**

Keyssa Manuela Cunha de Mascena & Minelle E. Silva

The need for the inclusion of marginalized people as part of social issue management is a topic that remains under-explored by the literature. Such inclusion could be achieved by applying the concept of social justice as a different understanding of social participation and cohesion. According to Young (2006), the concept of responsibility and justice describes political responsibility as a shared responsibility for the results and consequences of actions resulting from collective action, which is shared by every individual (Young, 2004, 2006).

Organizations that offer employment opportunities for marginalized people, attend a social issue at the same time that they need to adapt their organizations to the fair treatment of the

stakeholder engaged. In addition, by applying the concept of social justice to hiring marginalized people, different aspects of stakeholder management are involved. Employees have opportunities for recovery, growth, learning, and career. Buyers and resellers perceive value in these practices and increase their propensity to engage with the business. Suppliers recognize and value practices related to the concept of social justice. These practices are widespread in the negotiations with stakeholders and relational gains are perceived by the organization. The stakeholder relationship based on reciprocity promotes advantages for the organization that conducts its business within ethical principles and value creation (Harrison, Bosse, & Phillips, 2010; Harrison, Ho, Bosse, & Crilly, 2023).

This paper aims to answer the research question: How practices based on social justice could influence companies' relationships with different stakeholders?

The research method adopted is an exploratory case study of a Brazilian clothing company. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and observation, and an inductive content analysis was developed based on the data information. The case study has been developed starting from a clothing company that considers sustainable fashion as a core of its business.

The results present the impact of social justice can generate stakeholder affiliation, reputation, and connection with a commonly shared perception of justice. Contributions and social implications are raised through the demonstration that social justice can support stakeholder management and more companies can develop their social sustainability interest in stimulating social projects as well as providing more access from these people in the market. This paper provides an under-explored perspective by introducing social justice as one pathway to develop stakeholder management.

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## **Understanding Investment Decisions for Sustainable Innovations in Emerging Markets Towards Competitive Advantage – A Case Study Perspective of Managerial Stakeholders**

Inamutila Kahupi, Clyde Eirikur Hull, Natalia Yakovleva & Okechukwu Okorie

Investors tend to be more reserved about investing in sustainable-related products and innovations when compared to other key stakeholders such as consumers, academics, entrepreneurs, and NGOs. Given the critical role of investment in driving sustainable business growth and innovation, sustainable entrepreneurs must understand how they can gain a competitive edge with investors for their products and innovations. This study aims to investigate the perspectives of stakeholders, with a particular focus on investors, towards sustainable innovation and new ventures. This would be achieved by asking two research questions, RQ1: How are the investment criteria organized for the purpose of investing in sustainable products and innovations? RQ2: What are the primary issues related to investors' reluctance to embrace sustainability to the same extent as other stakeholders? Through a series of interviews with managerial stakeholders, we use thematic analysis and some elements from the grounded theory method to explore how stakeholders view sustainability by analyzing their perspectives, interests, and concerns. We found that each stakeholder group has distinct expectations for sustainable ventures, with investors placing a strong emphasis on profitability and overall business returns. For sustainable entrepreneurs to gain support, trust, and investment from investors, they must demonstrate that their products and innovations are not only sustainable but also financially practical. This often requires a delicate balance between meeting customer demand for sustainable products and innovations while keeping costs low enough to generate a profit for investors. Our study contributes to the knowledge of understanding the

factors that drive investment in sustainable entrepreneurship and the attainment of competitive advantage abilities from the resource-based theory (Alam et al., 2020; J. Barney, 2018; J. B. Barney & Harrison, 2020; Dong et al., 2022; Hitt et al., 2016; Hull et al., 2022; Khanra et al., 2022; Kuo et al., 2022; Le, 2022; Mehmood & Hanaysha, 2022; Shibin et al., 2020; Taylor & Taylor, 2009; Wang, 2022; Zameer et al., 2022). By illuminating the expectations of investors, we provide insights that can deepen the approach to sustainable entrepreneurship. These insights can also help entrepreneurs navigate the complex landscape of investment into sustainability and secure the finance they need to innovate and replace non-sustainable products and innovations. The findings of this study show why investors are not willing to risk their investment towards sustainability as much as other stakeholders. The paper concludes by proposing sustainable entrepreneurs build innovative partnerships with investors and financial institutions that prioritize long-term competitive sustainability and returns.

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Session 7B: CSR Impacts (3/4)  
Chair: Ralf BARKEMEYER  
Friday 13:30-15:00

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### **Addressing Social Incompatibility Between Luxury and Sustainability**

Marlena Ciszek

The luxury industry is often criticized as contradictory to the principles of sustainability and social responsibility. Previous studies show that consumers often view luxury as incompatible with sustainability (Kapferer & Michaut, 2015). While sustainability is associated with ethics and rational consumption, luxury is associated with overconsumption, pleasure and abundance (Athwal, Wells, Carrigan & Henninger, Furthermore, the conflictive ideas between luxury and sustainability are strongly linked to the social value of luxury (Wiedmann, Hennigs & Siebels, 2009) 2009). The incompatibility between luxury and sustainability exists in its social context, where conspicuous luxury consumption affects the society emphasizing social inequality. As prestige seeking customers engage with luxury consumption to display wealth and gain status, this highlights inequality in the society. Addressing this social issue, this study argues that second hand consumption in the luxury industry could be an opportunity to reconcile luxury and sustainability in the social context. Whereas buying second hand luxury goods may enable social climbing and gaining prestige, reselling such items can eliminate guilt from buying luxury. In addition, customers who buy and sell second hand luxury products have a stronger environmental perspective and are aware of sustainable benefits deriving from such consumption (Kessous & Valette Florence, 2019) This conceptual research aims to investigate social opportunities in the second hand luxury consumption. Furthermore, its aim is to understand diverse profiles of second hand luxury buyers and sellers and benefits they obtain from engaging with second hand luxury consumption including social exclusion and (de)attachment. Finally the study explores if the second hand luxury consumption empowers the social pillar of sustainability and contribute to more socially responsible consumption.

**\*\*\* FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ONLINE \*\*\***

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**Net positive impact - a useful concept, or just more sustainability noise?**

Hannah Birch

The ‘Net-positive’ concept is a natural progression of sustainability thinking, as business moves from doing less bad, to being neutral, to now striving for a restorative/regenerative impact (Danigelis, 2018). ‘Net-positive’ has become a term many businesses are using to describe their sustainability and CSR efforts, with aspirations towards having ‘net positive impact’. In 2021, Polman and Winston released a book ‘Net Positive: How Courageous Companies Thrive by Giving More Than They Take’ which aims to guide business leaders towards becoming net-positive. In a similar way, non-profit ‘Forum for the future,’ offer to guide businesses towards becoming net-positive. However, it is unclear where the underpinning theory lies and whether the movement is lead by or separate from academia.

This paper seeks to understand (1) the origin of the concept and whether the academic literature provides a clear definition that has been transferred into practice. (2) Which researchers are leading in the area and (3) is there any cross over between those researching and those applying net-positive in practice.

Where has the concept come from and is it a robust concept that can be applied to business or is it another undefined sustainability buzz word that lacks tangibility and clear scope?

### **Methodology**

Using a similar process to Omrany et al, (2022) this study uses bibliometric analysis techniques to provide a comprehensive overview of academic literature using the term ‘net positive’. With another smaller view of the term ‘net positive impact’ VOSviewer software is then used to understand key researchers and themes/disciplines alongside the SciMAT tool to allow thematic evolution to be understood.

### **Findings so far**

There are 2664 academic papers that use the term ‘net positive’ ranging from 1966 – 2023, and 91 that use the term ‘net positive impact’. Preliminary observations find that the term net-positive has transitioned throughout the academic literature, across various disciplines including mining, building and tourism. In infancy it is used as a descriptor for a linear process and then moves to being associated with Carbon in the building sector. In more recent years net- positive has evolved into a concept that includes not only environmental, but social and economic factors (triple bottom line (Elkington, J. (1998)). The next stage will be to map out and understand key researchers, followed by understanding key themes.

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## **The Corporate Philanthropy Marketplace and its Ideological Underpinnings: Where Corporate Community Orientation worsens Ideological Divides**

Muhammad Umar Boodoo

*“It is more difficult to give money away intelligently than to earn it in the first place.”*

*–Andrew Carnegie*

The field of corporate philanthropy has generally focused either on the business case – that is the strategic value of philanthropy (Luo, Kaul, and Seo, 2018; Wang, Choi, and Li, 2008) or explaining why firms engage in philanthropy (Ji, Huang, and Li, 2021; Marquis and Lee, 2013). Alternatively, research that foregrounds non-profits focuses on specific contexts, such as non-profits’ own community and

institutional setting (Berrone, Gelabert, Massa-Saluzzo, and Rousseau, 2016), or aims to generate insight about the non-profit sector in general (Gee, Nahm, Yu, and Cannella, 2023). Yet, the exchange of grants for support (Wang and Qian, 2011) implies a “matching” between donor and recipient. In this philanthropy marketplace (Wolpert and Reiner, 1984), both actors involved are important. Thus, our broad aim is to study philanthropic transactions in a contested corporate philanthropy marketplace where relational characteristics can bind or separate recipient non-profits from corporate donors.

We build on the attention-based view of the firm, which holds that firm behavior is a function of how its attention is focused, situated, and structured (Ocasio, 1997). In this paper, we are concerned with how the attention of the firm, via its foundation, is focused on the characteristics of a particular recipient of corporate philanthropy. In a donor-controlled corporate philanthropy marketplace, this focus depends on how the foundation views the claims of a particular recipient based on the latter’s positionality (Ostrander, 2007), defined as one’s social location or world view (Warf, 2010: 2257), or legitimacy vis-à-vis the foundation (Mitchell, Agle, and Wood, 1997).

In this paper, we focus on political ideology, defined as deeply held political beliefs (Gupta and Wowak, 2017), as a characteristic that can bind recipients to donors in the corporate philanthropic marketplace. We assess the social positionality of the recipient vis-à-vis the donor in this ideological space by bringing in the notion of “distance”.

Further, as philanthropy is a community-oriented endeavor by firms via their foundations, we theorize about the implications of community orientation – defined as a firm’s enhanced attention to its institutional context (Marquis, Glynn, and Davis, 2007), hence the extent to which a firm implements practices aimed at maintaining good relationships with the communities in which it operates (Bettinazzi and Zollo, 2017: 2473–2474) – on the ideological nature of the corporate philanthropy marketplace. As firms pay more attention to their institutional context, we hypothesize that the matching between donor and recipient become further ideological. Our empirical analyses, based on 215,728 grants from 166 donors to 35,173 recipients between 2010-2018, support our hypotheses.

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Session 7C: International CSR (2/3)

Chair: Lutz PREUSS

Friday 13:30-15:00

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## **The Impact of Ownership Structure on Environmental Information Disclosure: Evidence from China**

Mengdi Wei

### **Research Questions**

Does ownership structure has an impact on the environmental information disclosure (EID) among Chinese firms? If there is an impact, how does ownership structure impact on the EID? What is the impact of different types of ownership structure on the firm’s EID in China?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study employs agency theory, legitimacy theory and stakeholder theory. Agency theory conceptualized by Jensen and Meckling (1976) provides a rationale for establishing corporate governance (CG) mechanisms to resolve conflicts of interest between management and owners. EID

can reduce information asymmetry between internal managers and external shareholders, and a suitable CG mechanism can improve the quality of EID.

Legitimacy theory is based on the social contract (Naser et al., 2006). According to legitimacy theory, corporations attempt to justify their presence in society by legitimizing their activities. A firm attempts to maintain its existence and continuity by voluntarily disclosing environmental information to society in order to demonstrate that it is a good citizen.

Stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984) concerns the relationship between a business and all its stakeholders, which means that firms should focus not only on creating value for shareholders, but also on the welfare of all stakeholders and their full interaction with the environment. Firms that manage effectively for their stakeholders are sensitive to social values and expect to respect society and the environment. They tend to engage in EID activities that may target interactions with the environment and different stakeholders such as employees and several external stakeholders.

### **Methodology**

This study is purely quantitative by using secondary data from Bloomberg and China Stock Market & Accounting Research (CSMAR) from 2009 to 2019. It selects Shanghai Shenzhen 300 Index (SHSZ300) A shares with large market capitalization and good liquidity as the research sample. The sample firms cover 11 industries: financials, real estate, telecommunications, consumer discretionary, industrials, technology, health care, consumer staples, basic materials, energy, and utilities. Based on previous studies, the following model (1) is proposed to examine the relationship between EID and the four types of ownership structure:

$$EDS_{it} = c + \beta_1 OWCONCEN_{it} + \beta_2 INSTITOW_{it} + \beta_3 MANGOW_{it} + \beta_4 STATEOW_{it} + Controls_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

This study conducted Breusch and Pagan Lagrangian multiplier (LM) test, F test and Hausman test and found that the fixed effect (FE) model is most suitable for the research.

### **Findings**

This study shows that China's EID practice has increased in recent years, but the EID level is still relatively low compared to developed countries. Furthermore, the results show that ownership concentration is positively correlated with EID, while managerial ownership, institutional ownership and state ownership are negatively correlated with EID. It also finds that state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are less reliant on capital markets when financing their projects and may not have the incentive to provide environmental information to improve their image, leading to EID levels lower. While firms with lower degrees of state ownership are more likely to disclose environmental information.

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## **Re-evaluating Corporate Social Responsibility in Nigeria (a Developing Economy) through the Ideology of Institutional Economics**

Uchechukwu Nwoke

Arguably, contemporary corporate social responsibility (CSR) is regulated by a corporate governance regime firmly rooted in the Anglo-American neoliberal theory of social and economic development. This western-oriented conception of CSR applies in some developing economies (including Nigeria).

Apparently, this version of CSR leaves no room for local peculiarities and local participation by host-communities, leading to the argument that corporations in developing economies neither appreciate nor acknowledge host-communities' peculiarities and local interpretations of CSR. They focus, instead, only on CSR directives and practices from their home-countries. Existing research has shown that to a large extent, the boundary of responsibility between government and business in a developing country (like Nigeria) is a delicate one because of its peculiar background. Therefore, it is problematic and does not reflect reality to transfer strictly the delimitation of business responsibility-development relationship in a developed-country's context (neoliberal Western CSR) into the analysis of the business responsibility-development relationship in the developing economies. Consequently, part of the problem with existing considerations of the business responsibility-development relationship is that they are oftentimes reinforced by assumptions that are unsuitable for a developing-country situation. In this context, this paper aims to answer the question; to what extent can the integration of local/indigenous institutions (culture, languages, philosophies, values etc.) legitimize the CSR practices of corporations in a developing economy like Nigeria? Using the Old Institutional Economics ideology as a blueprint, this paper argues for the integration of local institutions in the formation, formulation, and implementation of the CSR practices in a developing economy like Nigeria. While adopting the doctrinal method, the paper contends that by assigning greater roles to these local/indigenous institutions, the CSR practices of corporations will be cloaked with a considerable degree of legitimacy and respectability in these regions. This in turn will lead to an effective corporate responsibility regime capable of leading to the sustainable development of these economies.

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### **Motivations and barriers for a prosocial impact worker**

Felipe Brescancini

People who intentionally work towards positive impacts that foster socio-environmental justice and benefit the common good as their greatest priority at work will be named Prosocial Impact Workers (PIW) in this research. Many forms of work may have this primary purpose, such as in social businesses, third sector organisations, prosocial, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and sustainability jobs. There is an intersection of individual motivation among these areas, which are not the most common for the workforce in Western capitalist societies. This research will conceptualise a PIW, identify the origins of their motivations and how they overcame barriers to commit to a PIW career. Interviews will be done with PIWs who are intentionally committed to such occupations in these five working areas as their main work. Thematic analysis and phenomenological analysis will be used to interpret the data collected. The findings will be a theoretical contribution to extend prosocial behaviour theory and work motivation theories across the five areas focused.

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Session 8A: Stakeholder Engagement (6/6)

Chair: William YOUNG

Friday 15:30-16:30

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## **Stakeholder Engagement Contribution to Developing a Social Enterprise Ecosystem**

Keysa Manuela Cunha de Mascena, Daiane Mulling Neutzling & Lucas Lopes Ferreira de Souza

Social enterprises (SE) or hybrid businesses aim to address two institutional logics: the commercial logic, which is the generation of profit as in traditional businesses, and the socio-environmental logic, which is the offer of a solution to some socio-environmental problem. The great challenge of this business model is to reconcile the two logics simultaneously and in a balanced way (Battilana, Obloj, Pache, & Sengul, 2022).

Despite the potential for social and economic transformation, SE is still new in the market and has many challenges to consolidate. Current discussions in this area have brought up the importance of developing a SE ecosystem, relying on the engagement of various stakeholders by assuming different roles and leveraging intellectual capital and financial investments as fundamental for SE to grow and expand their markets (Agrawal & Hockerts, 2021). While entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems are having growing attention in the literature, SE ecosystems are an emerging field.

This paper aims to answer the research question: How stakeholder engagement contributes to the development of a social enterprise (SE) ecosystem?

The research locus is the SE ecosystem, which includes SE, institutions that promote and support SE, business accelerators, financiers, and universities. The ecosystem studied is located in the city of Fortaleza, Brazil. Basic qualitative research was carried out, with twenty-two interviews with entrepreneurs and managers of organizations that compose the SE ecosystem. The interviews were analyzed following the content analysis method. The analysis categories were defined according to the study by Kujala, Sachs, Leinonen, Heikkinen, and Laude (2022), which defines the components of stakeholder engagement: moral, strategic, and pragmatic, and the contents of stakeholder engagement: aims, activities, and impacts.

The results point out that the stakeholders develop activities of stakeholder engagement at different levels. The perspective of strategic engagement is reinforced by partnerships, projects, and funding opportunities. Important challenges for the SE ecosystem are also highlighted, such as promoting knowledge about the business to the market, the integration of the organizations, and the strengthening of connections. Contributions to stakeholder engagement are highlighted by the engagement approach without a focal company but in a network perspective. Another relevant insight for stakeholder theory is the SE potential for developing short-term relationships with high reciprocity.

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## **Stakeholder Engagement and the Perception of Gender Diversity at a Firm's Top Management: An Investors' Perspective**

Mert Demir & Maung K. Min

***Research Question: What is the research question that the submission aims to answer?***

With the surge in responsible business activities, the number of women in top management positions has increased considerably around the world. While the academic literature documents a positive impact of women leaders on corporate responsibility relative to their male counterparts (Borghesi, Houston and

Naranjo, 2014; McGuinness, Vieito and Wang, 2017; Dyck et al., 2021; Monteiro, García-Sánchez and Aibar-Guzmán, 2021), the channels through which this effect occurs remain unclear. Our study sheds light on a potential channel – stakeholder engagement – through which a gender-diverse top management circle can drive corporate responsibility and firm value. Specifically, this study conducts a comprehensive analysis of stakeholder relations activities of Fortune Global 500 companies over the 2017-2021 period and examines how the perception by capital markets of a greater presence of women at the CEO, C-suite, and board levels of a company varies with the extent of its stakeholder relations.

***Theoretical Framework: What are the main concepts, models or theories used in the paper?***

We draw upon management (e.g., upper echelons [Hambrick and Mason, 1984]; stakeholder engagement [Freeman, 1984, 2008]; legitimacy [Suchman, 1995]) and psychology (e.g., gender socialization [Gilligan, 1982; Setó-Pamies, 2015]; social role [Eagly, 2013; Williams and Polman, 2015; Birindelli, Patrizia Iannuzzi and Savioli, 2019]; gender identity [Spence, 1993; McCabe, Ingram and Dato-On, 2006]) theories to explain how the extent of a firm’s stakeholder engagement influences the relationship between top management gender diversity and firm value.

***Method: Which method is used for the research work?***

The paper uses author-collected data on stakeholder engagement activities of Fortune Global 500 companies in terms of the groups of stakeholders they engaged with in the period 2017-2021. We combined this data with top management gender diversity, company ESG performance, and accounting and financial data from Refinitiv (formerly Thomson Reuters) and performed firm value regressions alongside multiple robustness checks to address our main model’s potential limitations.

***Findings: What are the main outcomes and results of the paper?***

Our findings suggest that stakeholder engagement strategy of a company significantly influences the capital markets’ attitude toward gender diversity in the top management. In detailed analysis of the scope of this engagement, we documented that gender-diverse managements diverge considerably in their choices of which stakeholder groups to engage. These choices seem to send conflicting signals to investors about the prospects of the management and company. Our results show sharp variations in the market response to gender diversity at the top management driven by its engagement with different stakeholder groups, suggesting that investors have not yet reached a consensus on (1) how to interpret the signals sent by a firm through its engagement with multiple different stakeholder groups with different (and sometimes conflicting) demands from the management and (2) how a gender-diverse firm management will address these diverging demands without compromising the firm’s future performance.

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Session 8B: CSR Impacts (4/4)  
Chair: Stelios ZYGLIDOPOULOS  
Friday 15:30-16:30

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**Can loose coupling explain a missing link between environmental commitments and outcomes?**

Robert Kudłak

Growing concerns regarding environmental degradation boosted consumers’ demand for green products and services, followed by companies’ efforts to express their attentiveness to environmental issues

(Delmas and Burbano, 2011; Whelan and Kronthal-Sacco, 2019). While the number of corporate claims concerning the greening of their performance skyrocketed, the evidence of actual environmental improvements remains scarce and ambiguous (Devinney, 2009; Lim & Tsutsui, 2012; Kudlak et al, 2022). As a consequence, scholars, consumers, and non-governmental organizations started to demonstrate their skepticism concerning the gap between the corporate commitments to the environmental goals and the substance of their environment-oriented activities and outcomes (TerraChoice, 2009; Walker and Wan, 2012; Prasad and Holzinger, 2013; de Jong et al., 2020). It is frequently claimed that this gap results from corporate hypocrisy and deliberate decision to benefit from a quickly growing market segment for green products and services. Hence, scholars started to pay more attention to greenwashing, its drivers means and types (Lyon and Maxwell, 2011; Walker and Wan, 2012; Siano et al., 2017).

While it is hard to deny that greenwashing might be strategic and motivated by a willingness to capitalize on a growing market for environmentally responsible behavior, performance, and products, scholars started to offer alternative explanations of such behavior. For instance, Kim et al. (2018) offered a multi-stage theory of ethical accounting in which they suggested that corporate behavior, often seen as a manifestation of hypocrisy, might stem from differences in individuals' access to information. These differences create cognitive distortions concerning self and others' behavior and its assessment. Other scholars highlighted that certain non-motivational factors, such as regulatory context, market pressure, organizational inertia, and bounded rationality, can influence the propensity to engage in deceitful environmental activities (Delmas and Burbano, 2011; Lyon and Montgomery, 2015). These considerations suggest that although greenwashing might be driven by hypocrisy, we should be open to other explanations that do not refer to corporate deliberation and deception.

This paper seeks to offer such a possibility by using the idea of loose coupling to explain a weak (or lack of) connection between corporate environmental commitments and outcomes (Glassman, 1973; Weick, 1976). While companies are often treated and analyzed as rational and calculated bureaucracies, well integrated, and driven by authority and plans, in fact, they consist of subassemblies that are simultaneously coupled and responsive but also hold a certain degree of physical or functional separateness or independence. This suggests that specific organizational units or operations operate independently of the administrative mechanisms. Such loose coupling isolates an organization from the external environment and gives the external stimuli only limited access to the system, allowing an organization to persist. In addition, the loose coupling can be seen as a passively maintained, inherent feature of organizations, implying that it is not purposefully designed and represents the structural rather than human side of companies (Kezar and Eckel, 2004). Such an understanding of organizations indicates that a misalignment between environmental commitment and outcomes is a consequence of loose coupling caused by, among others, causal indeterminacy, fragmented external environment, and fragmented internal environment.

**\*\*\* FULL PAPER AVAILABLE ONLINE \*\*\***

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## **Cognitive Dissonance as a Driver of Corporate Social Responsibility:**

### **A meso-theoretical model**

Stelios Zyglidopoulos, Sandra Rothenberg & Kostantina Tzini

We draw on Social Issue Life Cycle theory (Mahon and Waddock, 1992) and Upper Echelons theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984) to theorize the crucial role of top management team (TMT) executives in the evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Our proposed theoretical model spans different levels – societal, firm, and individual. We argue that when a gap is developed between societal expectations and the firm’s position on a social issue, individual executives find themselves in a state of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957); in trying to reduce their cognitive dissonance, these executives opt from a variety of behavioral responses that eventually shape the evolution of their firms’ CSR and consequently impact society.

Our work points to the fact that CSR decisions are taken not by organizations but rather by individual executives within them. Whereas multiple studies have tried to explain and understand the drivers and evolution of CSR, we still lack a comprehensive framework of how the cognitions, motivations, and behaviors of key corporate decision makers influence the choice and adoption of CSR.

Our research complements the instrumental, relational, and moral motivations that Aguilera et al. (2007) identify as driving individual employees in pushing for CSR initiatives. Here, we focus specifically on TMT executives and highlight the role of their perception, motivation, and behavior in what Aguilera et al. point out as the pressing question of “what catalyzes organizations to engage in increasingly robust CSR initiatives” (2007:837). Furthermore, we highlight that TMT executives – flawed and rationally bounded human beings (Hambrick, 2007) – have their own shortcomings and restrictions in the way they perceive and act upon social issue gaps, explaining much of the variability of CSR evolution across different firms.

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Session 8C: International CSR (3/3)

Chair: Lutz PREUSS

Friday 15:30-16:30

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### **Complying or Committing: Purchases’ Practices Surrounding Supplier Codes of Conduct**

Anne Jensby, Mai Skjøtt Linneberg & Chris Ellegaard

Organizations are increasingly expected to demonstrate how they take responsibility for their actions (Matos et al., 2020) through the increasing demand of consumers, regulators, and a variety of other stakeholders. In academia and practice alike, there is growing support for the notion that “a company is no more sustainable than its supply chain” (Krause et al., 2009, p. 18) implying an interrelated shared responsibility and that great risks to the reputation of firms stem from the supply chain. This demonstrates a huge challenge to firms, as they are required to assume accountability for the unsustainable practices of the entire supply chain, creating an “extended responsibility” (Bostrom, 2015), or “chain liability effect” (Hartmann & Moeller, 2014), and ultimately, the unsustainable behavior of suppliers, and suppliers’ suppliers, imposes great risks for the focal organization (Hajmohammad & Shevchenko, 2020), jeopardizing the operations and reputation of the buying firm (Villena & Gioia, 2018). Wellknown examples of violations and scrutiny include the collapse of the Rana Plaza building in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2013 (O’Connor, 2014) or Chinese sub-suppliers using lead paint for children’s toys (Story, 2007). More recently, IKEA was scrutinized for being associated with a textile supplier linked to forced labor conditions in Belarus (Abdelilah & Schmidt, 2022). This suggests a need for further exploration of how monitoring policies and practices towards sustainability - such CoC - are employed by the individuals in the organization in their interaction with suppliers. Organizational

members such as buyers have values, perceptions, relations, and past experiences with suppliers that may influence the relationship with their suppliers as buyers communicate their monitoring practices and demands. Suppliers willing to engage in and commit to sustainability and not merely comply may therefore effectively benefit from a supplier CoC and monitoring-based governance. This emphasizes a need to understand when and how buyers work with the CoC viz-a-viz suppliers – how do they achieve commitment or compliance. This points to a rare micro-level study examining the relating of individuals in the organization to the suppliers rather than the organization as a whole. Subsequently, the research question is: How do individual purchasers practice and implement CoC with suppliers?

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### **Exploring transnational corporate social responsibility in context: Insights from an exemplary multinational company in the agri-food sector**

Ralf Barkemeyer, Lutz Preuss & Shilpi Banerjee

The urgent need for a transition to more sustainable production and consumption patterns poses a range of serious management challenges for large multinational companies (MNCs). The coexistence of sustainability challenges that are primarily global in nature and those that are highly context-specific prevent a 'one-fits-all' approach to international CSR, and requires more complex, tailor-made corporate responses. At a conceptual level, a 'transnational' approach is widely seen as the gold standard of international CSR (Arenas & Ayuso, 2016; Bondy & Starkey, 2014; Husted & Allen, 2006), prescribing a networked organizational structure to deal with these multiple challenges. However, this conceptual clarity does arguably not feed through into actual corporate practice, where a diversity of corporate approaches can be observed. This situation clearly implies that implementing a transnational approach throughout an organization is not a trivial task. In this paper, we provide a contextualized explanation of the functioning of this organizational structure. We focus on the case of one particular company in the agri-food industry that comes close to having implemented a transnational approach to CSR. Based on a series of in-depth interviews with organizational members at various levels and with outside stakeholders as well as the analysis of corporate and external documents, we find a number of structural features to be crucial for the workings of the transnational CSR approach. These include cross-cutting committees, a linchpin function of middle managers and a hybrid approach that embeds both the business case and the societal case to international CSR in a variety of ways into the structure of the organization. Building on our analysis, we discuss our findings in light of the extant international CSR literature and develop implications for public policy and corporate practice. Our study contributes to the existing literature on international CSR by providing a contextualized explanation of the functioning of the transnational organizational structure in practice.

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