

EXPLORATORY STUDY ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MANAGEMENT MODELS. CASES OF ORGANIZATIONS FROM ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE, QUEBEC, CANADA

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Abstract

This paper presents the preliminary results of a larger research project, which focuses on the study of the link between the organizational social responsibility (SR) models, and the employee organizational identification process. Using an exploratory qualitative methodology by case study, we first proposed to identify organizational SR models, using an original research model, which we called "integrative model". It was built following an exhaustive literature review on theoretical models that deal with the subject of the organizational social responsibility (i.e., those of Carroll, Pasquero and ISO26000). The partial research results allowed us to identify an organizational SR management model that we called "Ethical and "good citizen" model". In this model, we were able to observe firstly that the participating organization demonstrated the desire to honor its status as a public institution and demonstrated consistency in its actions of social responsibility. Thus, it put respect for laws and rules at the forefront, in addition to paying particular attention to ethics. It also provided responsible human resources management and paid particular attention to its involvement in the surrounding community. The economic results were important, but only as a means to achieve its mission and not as an end in itself.

Key words: organizational social responsibility, ethical and good citizen model, responsible human resources management

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Introduction

Nowadays, social responsibility has become an increasingly present concern in organizations. Beyond a fashion effect, social responsibility commitments could have an important influence on several organizational aspects. For example, it is a behavior that is appreciated by investors, because it guarantees a profitable investment in the longer term. It is suitable for the communities surrounding the companies, but also for its the human resources.

Thus, several studies have found a positive link between the company's involvement in social responsibility activities and satisfaction, organizational commitment or the perception of a good organizational image by employees (Schill, Letheilleux, Godefroit- Winkel and Combes-Joret, 2018). For their part, Igalens, Akremi, Gond and Swaen (2011) conducted a qualitative study that sought to understand the meaning that employees attribute to corporate social responsibility. The authors try to know the link between the perception with regard to CSR and the perception of the organization. The results of the study demonstrate that companies can strengthen their power of attraction and influence organizational identification through their CSR actions (Gond, El-Akremi, Igalens and Swaen, 2010).

This paper is part of a larger research project, which aims to study the link between models of social responsibility implemented by companies and the perception of organizational identification by employees. First, we worked to identify models of corporate social responsibility and secondly, we will verify whether the perception of organizational identification was different from one CSR model to another and how the models resembled each other from this point of view. seen.

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1. Research model

To analyze the SR of the organizations participating in our research, we started from established models in order to create our own analysis model, which we called “integrative model”.

Several definitions of social responsibility have been proposed over time, and there is still no consensus among researchers. For the present research, we have retained that of Carroll (1979), which seems to be the most used in scientific work. According to this author, CSR encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and voluntary expectations of a society towards organizations at a given time. CSR could then be considered as the commitment of the organization that goes beyond the simple satisfaction of the interests of shareholders, by targeting all its stakeholders. The organization's stakeholders could be employees, consumers, suppliers, as well as other groups with which it has a relationship.

1.1 Synthesis of the literature review. Well known CSR analysis models.

As part of this research, we have decided to retain three established models of CSR, which are presented below.

Carroll's model

In the scientific community, the measurement of CSR has mainly developed through the theories of corporate social performance (ESP) (Gond and Igalens, 2018). To define performance models of social responsibility, we must first understand the three-dimensional conceptual model of Carroll (1979) which is widely disseminated in the scientific literature. Indeed, the author suggests that it is the following three distinct aspects that must be defined and interrelated, namely: a basic definition of social responsibility, an enumeration of the issues for which social responsibility exists and finally, a specification of the response philosophy.

The model also proposes four levels of responsibility that society expects from companies. Each responsibility, individually, is only part of CSR as a whole. The four levels are part of the very definition of CSR, namely, the economic, legal, ethical, and voluntary level. (Carroll, 1979, p.500).

We can see that Pasquero (2018) is directly inspired by Carroll to present the structure of his model.

Pasquero model

Pasquero (2018), proposes to develop an open model, which could evolve over time, while being concerned with the history of the concept of corporate social responsibility. All the dimensions currently covered in the different concepts or definitions of CSR are present in this model. Also, it is important to specify that for Pasquero, the model must be conjunctive, that all the elements included in the model must be minimally satisfied.

In what follows, we will present in a synthetic way the main ideas retained from the model of Pasquero (2018).

Efficient management here refers to the existence of profits. However, this efficiency is a form of responsibility only if it is sustainable and comes from technically competent management, so that the organization makes a permanent effort to improve their productivity by using resources intelligently.

Philanthropy has been an integral part of CSR since the 19th century. This philanthropy in a context of social responsibility is based on an attitude of sharing between the organization and its environment. The organization throughout its activities is in constant contact with its community. Philanthropy can be expressed through various donations to organizations that the organization wishes to oversee or even the establishment of a foundation within the organization itself.

Solicitude in this specific context concerns a multitude of behaviors that the company should have towards its employees. For example, this concern can translate into the protection of employees, offering decent working conditions, considering the personal lives of

employees, helping rather than punishing, respecting their rights, allowing them to fulfill themselves. Provisions such as rehabilitation programs, ethnic diversity management programs or programs to counter racism or psychological harassment are examples of the concerns put forward by certain organizations, thus going beyond legal requirements.

The limitation of nuisances, which could refer only to the pollution generated by the company's activities, has been supplemented by new forms of nuisance. It refers to health and safety at work, to working conditions in general, to the protection of the natural environment, but also to the life cycle of products, to eco-design or to the ecological footprint of the product sold.

Social responsiveness refers to an organization's ability to anticipate and organize through the many socio-political changes that the system imposes on it. That is to say, the organization must equip itself with systems and a management culture that allow it to adapt to changes, anticipate them and absorb them without too much damage.

The ethics of organizations is much more than simple compliance with the law. Indeed, the ethical organization must have an organizational culture that aims for excellence in all areas. Ethics consists in respecting all the rules of conduct and social norms of a community. This component of CSR is also the basis of CSR.

In Pasquero's model, accountability is rather seen as an accountability of the company to society. The company must be accountable to the society that authorized its creation. A responsible company today is a transparent company that provides information, on an economic, social, and ecological level, and it must be comprehensive, fair, verifiable, useful and easy to interpret.

The final element relies on proactive citizen engagement. The philosophy of this commitment is collective development through partnerships in the community where the organization is integrated. We are talking here more about multinationals or large companies that offer their stakeholders socio-economic empowerment programs. Indeed, the organization should anticipate these actions regarding the common good.

Finally, remember that a company that wishes to be socially responsible according to the Pasquero model must at least satisfy all of the elements listed above.

The following model explores the ISO 26000 standard released in 2010.

ISO 26000 standard

The model of the ISO 26000 standard aims to establish two fundamental practices of social responsibility. First, the organization must identify its social responsibility and the stakeholders in its environment. Subsequently, the standard proposes to rely on seven central questions of CSR.

The first question concerns human rights, which refers to respect for everyone's rights and the identification of risks and their prevention, among others.

Labor relations and working conditions propose fair working conditions, the development of human resources and to address the health and safety of employees.

The question relating to the environment refers to the identification of the types of pollution of the organization and the prevention of these.

Fair practices suggest implementing measures to avoid corruption, among other things.

Consumer issues refer to the need to provide security to customers and ensure their privacy is respected, for example.

Finally, community and local development refer to the organization's commitment to the community in which it is established.

So, the ISO 26000 standard sheds an interesting and relatively current light on corporate social responsibility. The integrative model that we present in the Research model section will be an adaptation of the various models presented rather to which we add characteristics that we have deemed important. We therefore think of taking into consideration certain elements

that we retain from the literature review on the subject of corporate social responsibility and transposing them into an original model of CSR management.

“The integrator model”

Following the literature review, we want to design an integrating CSR management model. It is possible that the companies that were chosen to participate in our research propose CSR measures within the organization, but that there is no model to support the theory. We want to go back and forth between theory and practice in order to define a model if it does not exist. We have established specific characteristics of the integrative model which will be linked with the literature and the known models described above.

The factors that influence the determination of the integrative model have been established from the social responsibility management models proposed by Carroll, Pasquero and the ISO 26000 Standard. The integrative model is schematized in Table 1.

Table 1. The integrative model

<p>Model components</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements retained from established models • The level of importance of the CSR’s components • Temporality • Social pressure

We can see that within the integrative model, the aspects: level of importance of CSR components, temporality, as well as social pressure have been written in bold. This highlighting serves to identify our contribution to the design of the integrating model.

It is that from the documentation available in the company and following interviews with managers and employees we will be able to define a management model for corporate social responsibility. Also, we will want to know when the measures are put in place or are in effect. Does the temporality of the measurements influence their perception? The last notion on which we wish to complete the model is the social pressure exerted. Do the measures come from social pressure or from the initiative of employers? Was the establishment of a foundation carried out following the exacerbation of social pressure?

Also, as part of the integrative model, the various elements of CSR models in the literature have been included. Table 2 is used to identify the elements that we will retain from the models in the literature. It is important to specify that from one model to another, several similarities can be observed. Through the elements identified, we will retain some of them in order to mark out our field of study.

Table 2. Elements selected from CSR models

Carroll’s model	Pasquero’s model	ISO 26000 standard	Elements retained
Economic	Efficient management		Efficient management
Ethics	-Ethics -Solicitude -Social responsiveness	- Loyalty of the practices -CSR and stakeholders -Customers - Labor relations and working conditions	Ethics and working conditions
Legal	- Limitation of nuisances -Accountability	- Human rights -Environment	Laws respect and limitation of nuisances
Voluntary	- Philanthropy - Proactive citizen engagement	- Community and local development	Philanthropy and local development

As part of our research, we will therefore work with the elements identified as being the elements retained to build the CSR management models.

2. Methodology

As we wish to link the management of corporate social responsibility with the social identity of employees, we favored qualitative research in order to clearly identify the feelings of workers. Watson and Frost (2018 and 2011) state that qualitative research generates information that is very detailed, to describe a specific situation. Also, there is still no validated measurement scale for CSR, which may explain our choice to opt for qualitative research.

The determined research approach is the case study. Fortin (2010) recognizes the methodological contribution of the case study in the in-depth examination of a phenomenon. The case study is an empirical research approach that consists in investigating a phenomenon, an event, a group, or a set of individuals, selected in a non-random way, in order to draw a precise description and an interpretation that goes beyond its limits (Roy, 2009, p. 207). Since the purpose of the study is to know the influence of the CSR management model on social identity, it is appropriate to retain the comparative case study. Indeed, to identify elements related to the perception of workers, a comparative case study makes it possible to compare two different CSR management models and to assess the level of perception and social identification referring to it. The case study is already widely recognized by the scientific community for its contribution to the understanding of factors that are difficult to measure (Roy, 2009). As the elements of our research are mainly based on perceptions mentioned by employees, the case study seems ideal to us to carry out our research.

To be able to compare corporate social responsibility management models, two organizations in Abitibi-Témiscamingue that have implemented socially responsible measures will be targeted. A first sample made up of management personnel in each of the companies will make it possible to define the CSR management model favored by the organization.

In this study, we will use two types of data. The first consists of consulting the documentation that can help us identify the integrative CSR management model in the organization. This may include internal documentation such as human resource management or social responsibility policies if these exist. We could also refer to the organization's strategic plan, sustainable development reports, reports from companies that are listed on the stock exchange or even activity reports. Consultation of this documentation must be exhaustive and precise in order to build the most accurate CSR model possible. This additional data collection gives us a better overview. The second type of data will be the verbatims of the interviews. Individual semi-structured interviews will be conducted by the researcher. We plan to do a minimum of 9 interviews per organization regarding employees, for a total of 18 interviews. In reality, we will use the saturation theory which suggests that we will stop the interviews when they do not bring anything new as information, when the data collected will be saturated. (Flick, 2009, p.138)

The semi-structured interviews were carried out by Zoom, during the participants' working hours. The interviews lasted approximately one hour per participant. The semi-directive interviews were built around themes and used open-ended questions to encourage the respondent to engage. (Flick, 2009, p.156).

The transcription of the interviews was carried out, the coding was carried out, as well as the analysis of the results using the NVivo software.

3. Partial results

In the following, we will present the results of the interview we had with a senior manager of a public sector organization. This interview allowed us to identify a social responsibility management model whose characteristics led us to call it “Ethical and “good citizen” model”.

Given the restricted framework of this paper, we have decided to present the results by enumeration and to dwell on the elements which are essential, in our view. These elements will be supported by verbatim extracts from the interview.

3.1 Efficient management

Under this component, the following elements have been identified:

- Culture of efficient management
- Importance of managing public funds well
- Significant growth of the organization
- Better structure to manage the reception of new employees
- Efficiency at work (workgroup creation)
- Lean approach
- Collaborative approach
- The main objective remains the mission of the organization and its values

“Money, for me, is a means of being able to carry out our mission” (Verbatim 1).

"That's why I like it, it motivates me a lot to work for [company name] because it reaches me a lot more, but to have more means, we must not spend our funds unnecessarily" (Verbatim 2).

"Yes, that's how we think about efficiency, not to generate a profit for our shareholders, but rather to have the most possible means to carry out our mission, so to invest money the right place according to our priorities in the organization" (Verbatim 3).

It can therefore be observed that, even for a public institution, efficient management is a concern (management of public funds), but it should primarily serve to achieve the objectives and mission of the organization.

3.2 Ethics and working conditions

For this component, the following actions have been identified:

- Compliance with laws and standards
- Code of ethics for employees (and renewal)
- Advantageous collective agreement
- Group insurance and pension plan
- Civility policy
- Global health policy
- The employer encourages employees to take all their vacation
- The right to disconnect
- Delayed sending of messages to employees
- Telework program
- Variable schedule
- Employer brand: willingness to promote and integrate the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion into its community
- Promote the professional growth and well-being of staff members

“We renewed the signing of the code of ethics with all employees because it was not systematic for everyone to sign the code of ethics. We implanted that” (Verbatim 4).

“[...] I think they sign when they are hired, but the intention is to eventually renew that more regularly. Ideally, it is up to all years to raise awareness of this code of ethics” (Verbatim 5).

"With our collective agreements, that's where the working conditions are. I think they are very advantageous, and we can see it. We have difficulty recruiting, like all organizations. But we are still attractive as an organization because we are at that level" (Verbatim 6).

"I think that we are still going well beyond what could be offered or requested, we are talking as much in terms of salary level, at the level of insurance, group insurance even, I would say, the pension fund. Indeed, it is not an obligation, but we provide this service" (Verbatim 7).

"Our intention... in the fall... We managed to set up a telecommuting program. What we are asking is that it be a maximum of two days in telework and three days in the presence. When possible, that is what we asked" (Verbatim 8).

3.3 Compliance with laws and limitation of nuisances

- The environment is now part of the 2025 development plan
- First step of the committee set up for the environment: know the current environmental impact
- Toilets that use less water (renovation)
- Geothermal heating and air conditioning
- LEED certified building
- Preferred wooden structure
- Maintain the adequacy between the development of the institution and the availability of resources

"I see myself at [name of institution] being a public institution, with an even greater responsibility not to derogate from the laws" (Verbatim 9).

"I cannot confirm that we are completely legal everywhere. But the intention is to be, and particularly because we are a public institution. I see that role as even more important, to respect all that is law, both provincially and federally" (Verbatim 10).

Even if compliance with laws seems to be a very important concern for institutions, the framework surrounding respect for the environment now seems to be emerging as an avenue for action.

"And so there was an individual will of several individuals, but never written into the development plan. For the first time, we have put it in, we are working on an action plan at this level" (Verbatim 11).

3.4 Philanthropy and local development

The institution's involvement in its community and its contribution to local development is, in fact, its pride. This involvement is done through philanthropy, but also through other activities that affect non-native and indigenous communities.

- Use of philanthropy in special projects
- Sees itself as a development agent of the region, through its program offer
- Involvement in the Rouyn-Noranda Chamber of Commerce
- Presence in the cultural field (EMF)
- Involve local and regional actors as stakeholders in its development
- Indigenous involvement

"On the philanthropic side, of course we are more beneficiaries of philanthropy than donors. We will look for donations from the population, from companies to help us carry out our activities. On the other hand, we still participate. We encourage certain activities, in particular the Emerging Music Festival. [...] we see ourselves as agents of development in the region" (Verbatim 12).

Regarding the part of the integrative model dealing with the importance of the components of CSR, certain components are considered to be more important, such as respect for laws, ethics and community involvement. In terms of temporality, it seems that the introduction of social responsibility gestures is closely linked to the importance given to certain components. The more important they are, the earlier they are introduced. Finally, social pressure does not seem to significantly affect the type of measures chosen or the timing of their introduction into the organization's strategic plans.

4. Discussion

The management of social responsibility is essential nowadays, whether for reasons of social commitment, for respect for the environment or simply for economic reasons. This paper presents partial results of a larger research that focuses on the study of the link that could exist between social responsibility management models and human resource management, more specifically the organizational identification of employees.

The preliminary results concerning CSR management models allowed us to identify a model that we called “Ethical and “good citizen” model”. This model, specific to a public institution, demonstrates a strong commitment to the community in which the institution is established. In fact, many of the activities, as well as strategic decisions, are made with a view to ensuring positive impacts on the community. It is for this reason that we have called the identified CSR management model the “good citizen” model. Moreover, respect for rules, laws and ethics was also at the forefront for the organization participating in our study. It also uses philanthropy to improve its business and to give back to society. In the end, the economic results were not perceived as an end in themselves, but as a means of perpetuating the existence of the institution.

The rest of our analyzes of the results will allow us to take a comparative look at another CSR management model, this time from a private sector company.

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