Abstract

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become an acknowledged and well-established strategic approach in theory and in practice among many companies (Carroll, 2006; Blowfield & Murray, 2008). Although many organizations have implemented CSR strategies, the level of organizational integration and the effects obtained through CSR varies (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Critiques of CSR have stressed the overemphasis on the externally oriented CSR and often PR-driven CSR compared to the internal integrated and employee-driven CSR approaches (Vogel, 2005; Kuhn & Deetz, 2008) and the lack of measured effects gained through CSR implementation (Friedman, 1970; Wright & Ferris, 1997; McWilliams and Siegel, 2000).

A large majority of the existing literature emphasizes CSR integration within larger corporations, although CSR also plays a pivotal role in small to medium sized companies, SMV’s (Morsing, 2006). However CSR is more institutionalized in MNCs than in SMEs (Morsing, 2006: 3). Denmark for one wishes to capitalize on its CSR position and aims for worldwide CSR leadership by 2015. In continuation the Danish government has announced a CSR action plan, with an overall goal of making more SMEs interested, systematically aware and strategically capable of CSR.¹

This working paper will explore how Scandinavian SMV’s have integrated CSR, and how the levels of internal and external integration affect the qualitative and quantitative results of CSR. The internal CSR integration is here explained and measured through the level of employee involvement and the content and the effects of internal oriented CSR communication and activities. Consequently, the external CSR integration constitute the external CSR communication and involvement of customers, suppliers and other stakeholders in the externally oriented CSR activities of the companies. Through an exploratory case study of six Scandinavian SMV’s from different industries, and interviews with informants on management and employee level, the content and

¹ http://www.csrgov.dk/sw49167.asp, retrieved on May 6th, 2011
prioritization of internal and external oriented CSR communications and activities and the derived effects of the CSR integration are examined. The obtained data will be processed through the application of meaning categorization (Kvale & Brinkman, 2008), where the categorizations of the findings is applied in the discussion and formation of propositions on effective CSR integration in SMV’s.

*Keywords: CSR, Corporate social responsibility, SMV, Case study*
References


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