Strategic Management Quarterly
December 2018, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 1-9
ISSN: 2372-4951 (Print), 2372-496X (Online)
Copyright ©The Author(s). All Rights Reserved.
Published by American Research Institute for Policy Development
DOI: 10.15640/smq.v6n3-4a1
URL: https://doi.org/10.15640/smq.v6n3-4a1

Corporate Social Responsibility Programs and Initiatives of Global Firms: A Qualitative Assessment and Analysis of Financial Performance and Productivity

Dr. Ephraim Okoro[1] & Dr. Samuel Garwon[2]

Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a significant and evaluative business concept, which is expected to be practiced internationally for decades in order to achieve and sustain competitive advantage. The concept is used to assess the presence of multinational firms for social and community interest and support. Therefore, the focus of this paper is to determine whether there is a correlation or link between Corporate Social Responsibility, Financial Performance (FP), and Productivity.Recent research by (Arshad, Anees, & Ullah 2015; Lawrence, Weber, & Post, 2017) indicates that stakeholders around the world measureand support multinational firms on whether they engage in corporate social responsibility as it is a single most critical factor contributing to competitive advantage and increased financial performance. This study then explores the currenttrend in corporate social responsibility and attempts to determine the extent to which firms are participating in corporate social responsibility programs. In other words, the basic thrust of this research is an assessment of whether corporate social responsibility contributes to improved financial performance and overall productivity as demanded by global stakeholders. Employing content analysis of recent publications, the strategic role of the concept of corporate social responsibility of multinational firms was analyzed, specifically its link to financial success. The Stakeholder Perspective Theory of corporate social responsibility was applied inconductingcost-benefit analysis of firms' engagement in corporate social responsibility. Results from various studies indicate a lack of consensus among internal and external stakeholders on the financial growth of firms participating in social responsibility initiatives.Researchers as well as practitioners (Peloza, 2011; Cheng, Loannou, & Serafeim, 2014; Magbool & Zameer, 2018) support corporate social responsibility concept as a responsible business practice; but,they suggested that the concept does not necessarily translate into financial performance gains and success in corporate productivity. Based on qualitative and quantitative analytical frameworks over a period of ten years, this paper recommends increased corporate social responsibility for enhanced corporate image and for successful global competitiveness.

Introduction and Background

Among the current issues facing multinational corporations in the twenty-first century business environment is the sustainability of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which has become increasingly imperative because of the fact that relevant stakeholders, including market and nonmarket, are now expecting firms to conduct their global operations in a socially responsible manner. The attainment of this goal is significant in order for corporations to achieve and sustain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace. As a result, a number of global firms have responded by engaging in socialresponsibility programs and initiatives, andby employing corporate social responsibilityframework as part of their operational strategy.

[1] Howard University
[2]Strayer University

Scholars, researchers, and independent consultants have determined that market stakeholders, include creditors, customers, employees, suppliers, managers, among others; while nonmarket stakeholders, include the community, various levels of government, competitors, the general public, etc. (Barney, 2011; Arshad, Anees, & Ullah, 2015; Lawrence & Weber, 2017). This dichotomy of stakeholders allows for the establishment of appropriate programs for different interest groups who support global firms. Accordingly, when firms implement corporate social responsibility strategies and initiatives, they in turn cultivate positive and lasting relationships with both market and nonmarket stakeholders, resulting inincreasingcorporate image, expandedbrand equity, and enhancedglobal reputation and competitiveness. While creating many business opportunities to their advantage through social responsibility programs, which gradually leads to increasing their financial performance, productivity, and market-share, multinational firms attempt to encourage and establish social responsibility initiatives in countries where they have business operations and subsidiaries (Husted & Allen, 2007; Loannou & Serafein, 2014; Kadluck, 2015). Over the past decade, some corporate social responsibility researchers (Lawrence, Weber, & Post, 2017; Magbool & Zameer, 2018) have sought to determine whether or not the establishment of corporate social responsibility initiatives is directly or indirectly associated with increased sales margin as well as profitability in the final analysis of firms' financial success. Based on Friedman (1970) analysis over the past years, firms should not necessary embark on corporate social responsibility programs, because such initiatives do not increase or enhance their profit-margin and may not sustain long-term competitive advantage.

In their empiricalanalysis, Olowokudejo & Aduloju(2011) and Babalola (2012) contend that when firms undertake corporate social responsibility as a part of their organizational strategy, there should besufficient evidence that such firms outperformed their competitors, because the firms could attract more resources as the concept of CSR allows them to employand retain the best workforce in their industry. A recent example wasGoogle Corporation, which has done exceedingly well as a result of corporate social responsibility program that was established. Specifically, Google corporate social responsibility initiatives werecategories into three distinct units that include governance, citizenship, and workplace. For governance, the company was evaluated and rated based ontransparency, ethical attitude toward its customers, employees, as well as its transparency in conducting business relationships. While citizenship was based on environmental responsibility and support tosocial causes and interests, hard work was predicated on employees being treated fairly, respectfully, and with dignity at all times.This corporate social responsibility strategy created a positive relationship between Google and its market and nonmarket shareholders over time, demonstrating a sustainable and enduringrelationship between the firm's corporate social responsibility and its financial performance.

In addition, some scholars (Arshad, Anees & Ullah, 2015; Shin, Hur, & Kang, 2016) substantiated their support for stakeholder theory argument, contending that there was nothing wrong with businesses making profit, but the fact remained that these firms should interact constantly with their primary stakeholders, such as suppliers, employees, customers, investors, among others. In other words, the fundamental objective of corporate social responsibility is to establish a positive effecton the environment, community, and society in general.Whilethere were various studies (Jones, 1995; Allouche & Laroche, 2005; Hartley, 2011)focused on the relationships between corporate social responsibility and firms' financial performance that indicate moderate relationships, positive relationships, negative relationships, neutral relationships. These studies were in agreement that firms' should implement corporate social responsibility initiatives in order to be successful and to remain competitive. Evidently, there is a correlation between firms' corporate social responsibility and their financial performance over a period of time. Therefore, this study specifically examined recent scholarly literature on corporate social responsibility and firms' financial performance. Bbased on the implementation of community-oriented programs, the study reviewed the relationship between corporate social responsibilityand financial performance in global business environment. Specific issues confronting firms when implementing corporate social responsibility were also critically explored and analyzed in the context of competitiveness.

Importance of the Study

In the past few years, many global and domestic organizations faced a litany of complaints and issues bordering on unethical or dishonest business practices, abuse of trust, and fraud. Recent research(Corporate Scandal Sheet, 2012; Ronald McDonald House Charities, 2012) indicatesthat in the years 2001 and 2002, consumer confidence and level of trust in business undertakings plummeted as stakeholders could no longer trust business leaders in the United States and around the world. One of the notorious scandals of this decade was about Enron that occurred in late 2001, which resulted in a regrettable loss of many jobs, individual life savings, homes, and livelihood.

Both internal and external stakeholders of firms reacted negatively to the increasing distrust among businesses in the conduct of their operations. Post-Enron studies noted that the concept of corporate social responsibility is not an approach for short-term profitability and efficiency; rather, a better estimate of long-term benefits of a firm. However, for strategic approaches concerning corporate social responsibility and financial performance relationship, there was no definitive conclusion as to whether there was a positive relationship, a negative relationship, or no relationship at all.For instance, Magbool & Zameer (2018),inspite of recent positive findings on the relationship between corporate social responsibility and financial performance, researchers and practitioners (Goll & Rasheed, 2004; Raggio, 2010; Porter & Kramer, 2011) determinedthat a constant investigation needed to be conducted to see whether or not the relationship is positive or negative. Furthermore, more recent studies (Porter, & Rivkin, 2012; Harrison & Wicks, 2013; Lawrence, Weber, & Post, 2017) noted conflicting conclusions about positive outcome between corporate social responsibility and financial performance. After more than three decades of research on the relationship between corporate social responsibility and firm financial performance, studiesby (Husted & Allen, 2007; Yoshikwa & Phan, 2003) showed a positive relationship between the two variables while other more probing recent studies (Weber & Post, 2017; Magbool, S., Zameer, N. M., (2018) indicated a disturbing negative financial correlation. Therefore, the mixed results in the link between the two variablessuggested a need for an ongoing research to reassure stakeholders about the importance ofcorporate image and credibility, especially in a competitive multinational business context.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

Many multinational business organizations remain uncertain whether there is a direct or indirect relationship between corporate social responsibility and financial performance (Barney, 2011; Kadluck, 2015). Furthermore, Peloza (2011) noted that more recent studies (Lawrence, Weber, & Post, 2017; Magbool & Zameer, 2018) seemed to overlook mediating processesbetween corporate social responsibility and financial performance. This gap limits the practicalapplication of research and leaves open the question of the precise relationship. The significance and contribution of this study is reviewing and evaluating past and current studiesthat examined the businesscase for corporate social responsibilityfrom both academic and practitioner perspectives and findings, and to validate whether there is a conflicting, direct, or indirect relationship between the two variables (CSR and FP).

Importantly, this study critically analyzed the relationship between corporate social responsibility and financial performance in the twenty-first century global businessenvironment based on the conflicting perspectives provided by past and current researchers. While it is partially established that corporate social responsibility has an impact on firms' financial performance, the position of some researchers remain inconsistent or inconclusive (Peloza, 2011; Olowokudejo & Aduloju, 2011; Kadlubek, 2015).The primary objective would be to provide sufficient evidence that there is a relationship between the two variables and to formulate a set of recommendations that would assist multinational firms with the methodology to respond to the challenge of favorably discharging the needed corporate responsibility. Further studies (Palmer, 2012; KPMG, 2011 & 2012) concluded that there was an evidence of an increase in corporate social responsibility initiatives in the past two decades in the United States and in some countries overseas. For example, KPMG, one of the big four accounting firms in the United States published"The State of Global Corporate Social Responsibility report," which included a comprehensive analysis of corporate social responsibility programs and initiatives of multinational firms. In the year 2011 report, the global fortune of top 250 companies were evaluatedand reported, and the report determined that 95% of multinational firms and their subsidiaries provided a detailed annual corporate social responsibility performance report. Comparatively, the 2002 KPMG reports revealed that only 45% of multinational firms published a separate corporate report on their performance. According to Palmer (2012), in an analysis of "Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Financial Performance (FP)," the last decade indicated 111% increase in corporate social responsibility reporting to stakeholders, stating that important avenues and sources for corporate social responsibility reporting include corporate webpages, annual reports on community giving initiatives, and advertising channels. It was pointed out that consistent reporting of corporate operations has been strengthened by "independent third party affiliation."

Specifically, Price wáter house Coopers engages Craib Design & Communications to provide an annual "corporate social responsibility trends and analysis," which provided corporate social responsibility research on multinational firms.

According to Corporate Social Responsibility Trends 2010: Stacking Up the Results, in the year 2010 analysis, 423 business organizations were evaluated, and the analysis indicated that 31% of firms forwarded their annual corporate social responsibility reports to their stakeholders. Evidently, corporate social responsibility reports and financial statement audits strengthen the confidence level, trust, and dependability of stakeholders in domestic and multinational firms.

Methodology and Research Questions

This study employed a qualitative inquiry methodology, utilizing content analysis of themes, narratives, and assessment of quality issues in constant comparisons and contrast of topics associated with corporate social responsibility in the literature, based on Butler-Kisber (2018) guidelines. To accomplish the objectives of this study, the following research questions were framed to guide the investigation and analysis as well as frame future studies." Research question (a): What is the link and relationship between corporate social responsibility and financial performance? Research question (b):How does corporate social responsibility impact financial performance of multinational firms? Research question (c):Is there a direct, indirect, or conflicting correlation between the two variables?Questions in qualitative inquiry focus on what, how, and why using literature and participant voices and experiences to interpret and explain a phenomenon or what is happening or happened in a certain context. Maxwell (2006) suggests that the strengths of a qualitative study are focused on situations and/or experiences of people, the inductive/emergent nature of the work, and the emphasis on words, instead of numbers.

Expanded Literature Explorationand Foundation

Over the past several decades, the increase value and importance of corporate social responsibility for domestic and multinational organizations have attracted the attention of consumers and different categories of stakeholders. As a result of the collective concerns and interest of various communities, corporate stakeholders around the world are requiring that business firms toengage in specific corporate social responsibility programs. This is critically important when evaluating firms' support for communities, citizens, and other establishments in the areas in which are doing business. Therefore, engagement in corporate social responsibilityprograms becomes a decisive basis for succeeding in competitive marketplaces. In their empirical analysis, Orlitzky, Schmidt & Rynes (2003) concluded that managers in many organizations think that firms that engage and communicate in corporate social responsibility to their stakeholders (consumers, suppliers, investors, employees, etc.) have the potential to expand their sphere of influence and reputation. For instance, Spicer (1978) determined that organizations' operational and financial relationships improve with their investors, if they demonstrate a commitment toa high level of corporate social responsibility. In earlier studies, Friedman (1970) and Ullman (1985) noted that involvement in corporate social responsibility initiatives and programs negatively impacted firms' resources and depleted their investments and reserves, making it difficult for firms' competitive growth or advantage. The authors arguedthat participation in corporate social responsibility programs not only impact business financial resources, it also imposed a burden on efficient utilization of manpower resources. Therefore, meeting the expectations and demands of various stakeholders by engaging in corporate social responsibility initiatives created serious financial challenges for multinational firms. Additional, studies (Cochran & Wood, 1984; Waddock and Graves, 1997) used accounting measures to evaluate whether or not there is a relationship between corporate social responsibility and financial performance, and these measures include Return on Investment (ROI), Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Sales (ROS), Earnings Per Share (EPS). Vance (1975) employed market-based measures of financial performance to evaluate whether there was a positive link between corporate social responsibility programs and corporate financial performance. Author Vance also noted that Balabanis et al. (1998) and Choi et al. (2010) conducted a combination of market-based and accounting assessments to evaluate whether firms' engagement in corporate social responsibility initiatives had a significant impact on their financial performance. Based on empirical analysis of the preceding studies in both developed and developing nations, there were mixed findings on the relationship between corporate financial performance and engagement in social responsibility programs and initiatives.

Althoughit is an appropriate business strategy for long-term sustainability and expansion, corporate social responsibility has been seen as problematic and unrealistic ventures over the years. Recent studies (Porter & Kramer, 2011; Porter & Rivkin, 2012) cited a lack of consensus about the positive or negative correlation between corporate social responsibilityand corporate financial performance. Prior researchers (Spicer, 1998; McWilliams & Siegel, 2000; Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003) across business disciplines used different business measures to assess correlation between corporate social responsibility and financial performance.

The studies explored and reevaluated the relationship between corporate social responsibility initiatives, financial performance, and productivity of multinational corporations. The findings and conclusions of most recent literature (Arshad, Anees, & Ullah, 2015; Shin, Hur, & Kang, 2016; Lawrence, Weber, & Post, 2017) werecompared and contrasted to examinespecific key themes, concepts, incidents used to assessthe relationship between corporate social responsibility and financial performance in order to provide a comprehensive context, readability, and validity of the current study.

Incorporating Corporate Social Responsibility as Business Strategy

The need to engage in corporate social responsibilities has been explained and substantiated with a number of advantages and values. It is not only beneficial for global and domestic business operations and recognition, it allows the public to compare and contrast businesses and their levels of commitment in community orientation. As operationalized by a number of scholars and practitioners (Zeghal & Maaloul, 2010; Yasir, Imran, and Irshad, 2013; Wasim-ul-Rehman, Hafeeez-ur-Rehman, 2013; Lawrence & Webere, 2017), on the one hand, corporate social responsibility is assessed as a process by which firms take actions in a manner that improves and supports societies as well asfirms' stakeholders (customers, employees, managers, suppliers, investors, among others). On the other hand, firms should be transparent in their transactions and activities in order to be held accountable for actions that harm the community, people, and the environment in which they are doing business. In other words, corporate social responsibility is a legitimate process bywhich business organizationscommit to giving back assistance to societies and their stakeholders, as well as providing necessary financial support that would enhance the wellbeing of people at large. According to Shin, Hur,& Kang (2016), firms have been under pressure over the years to implement CSR initiatives as part of their business strategy intended to sustain interest in their brand identity. Examples of corporate social responsibility program include engaging in charitable givens, donations, academic scholarships, philanthropy or philanthropic undertakings, and adopting socially responsible business initiatives that would support their shareholders' interests. Essentially, conducting business in a law-abiding way clearly indicates a good business practice, which enhances a firm's reputation and image. Consequently, many business organizations have expanded their market-share, increased profitability, sustained brand equity, which lead them to be financially successful over their competitors.

As Witek-Hajduk & Zaborek (2016) suggested that there should be standards and criteria to be met by multinational organizations to ensure standardization, accountability, and transparency in conducting or performing their business practices. The increasing importance of corporate social responsibility places non-participating businesses in a competitive disadvantage; thereby, causing stakeholders to reassess their involvements in their business undertaking. The authors further stressed thatresponsible organizationsshould establish a department or unit that is responsible for planning and implementing corporate social responsibility in their business operations in order that their mission and objectives are achievable. Further, it was expected that firms interested in corporate social responsibility should set policies and procedures to ensure that ethics, transparency, and socially-responsible business management practices are adequately maintained.Witek-Hajduk &Zaborekalso noted that corporate social responsibility was designed and implemented by firms to allow them attract and retain the best qualified pool of employees in their workplace. Magbool & Zameer (2018) added that firms with a sustainable corporate social responsibility program continued to increase the number of shareholders and customers over time, because of the outstanding image created by the firms by implementing corporate social responsibility programs.

Furthermore, Shin, Hur & Kang (2016) pointed out that when firms' employees see the good image of firms, they tend to be loyal, committed, and demonstrate stronger relationship with their respective firms. In other words, a representative image, credibility, and conducts of an organization have a long-lasting impact on the workforce and could engender loyalty and commitment. Although there have been conflicting positions on the impact of corporate social responsibility on financial performance of firms, a number of authors have stressedthe existence of positive impact as a result of corporate social responsibility initiatives associated with firms. Evidently, findings from the Corporate Social Responsibility Perceptions Survey in 2010 support that corporate social responsibility program increases sales, market share, and customer loyalty and retention. Other inherent benefits associated with CSR include expansion of customer base, customer satisfaction, and outperformance of competitors in the marketplace.

For example, Cone Communications (2010) surveyed 1,057 US customers and determined that "80% are likely to switch to brands with equitable price and quality to a brand that completely supports a social responsibility program, or has an initiative that is designed to demonstrate corporate social responsibility. Moreover, when stakeholders or customers evaluated competing businesses, they have valid reasons to associate with a brand or a business that is engaged in CSR initiatives with the result that the firm enjoys increased sales margin, expanded market share, and increased annual revenue. Backhaus (2002) concurs that firms with corporate social responsibility initiatives gain a competitive advantage as they are able attract and retain more productive employees. Nevertheless, Peloza (2011) cautioned that one of the consequences of implementing corporate social responsibility program is decreased customer base as a result of increased prices to sustain a program.

Stakeholders Theory of Firms

In their qualitative analysis, Harrison & Wicks (2013) definedstakeholders as individuals who have an economic stake in a firm, and they include customers, employees, suppliers, investors, and other members of the community. Therefore, the stakeholder's theory of firms contend that firms' CSR practices is achieved when firms create value for their stakeholders by implementing CSR initiatives. For instance, stakeholders such as customers have their legitimate power, because the customers may decide to continue business with a firm or not to engage with the firm when the customers feel that their rights have been abused, disrespected, or compromised. Harrison and colleague stressed that it is important for firms to produce or offer quality products and services so that customers will achieve or expect to achieve the level of utility of their purchase. Therefore, firms should be concerned with producing quality goods and services in a manner that customers would receive benefit package or maximized satisfaction.

Similarly, suppliers provide goods and services, and as such they expect fair and honest trading with firms or partners. Meanwhile, employees engaged in what is called human resource management or intellectual capital, that is they provide their skills, expertise, knowledge, time, and among others; therefore, they expect fair wages or salaries as compensation for services provided to firms. Similarly, the community provides firms with locations or environment to operate, expecting the firms to pay taxes,and create employment opportunities for the development of local communities. In addition, investors or stakeholders invest in firms for the sole purpose of getting returns on their investment (Lawrence &Weber, 2017). However, when firms overlook or abuse their responsibilities to their stakeholders, there is a consequence that the stakeholders should withdraw their support, or cease dealings with such firms.

Correlating Corporate Social Responsibility with Financial Performance

Consistent with Magbool & Zameer (2018), contemporary firms are required to exemplify ethical values in relations to corporate social responsibility. In other words, firms are being responsible to their suppliers, customers, employees, managers, stockholders while making sure the community and the environment become a better place for conducting businesses. As a result, firms could attract more investors and perform financially better than their competitors in the same industry or in the marketplace. Based on stakeholder demands and expectations, an increasing number of firms have been responding to CSR initiatives by devoting additional resources to programs which in turn impact their financial performance (CSR Trends, 2010).However, some firms have resisted engagement in corporate social responsibility initiatives, stressing that additional investments in corporate social programs are inconsistent with their fundamental goals to maximize profits, and would affect their profit margin in the long run.It is argued(Harrison & Wicks, 2013; Arshad & Anees, 2015) that investing additional resources topromote product differentiation and brand equity would earn a better dividend (Raggo, 2010).There are still some companies that would produce goods with characteristicsand labels indicating to consumers that their firms are concerned about corporate social responsibility; thereby, creating a relationship between firms and consumers. The fundamental concern is not that all firms should perform CSR in the same manner; but those firms should integrate certain functions of corporate social responsibility in their business strategy in order to increase their financial performance. As a result, firms shouldbrand themselves in the community in which they operate. As Magbool & Zameer (2018) explained, stakeholders in the communities would purchase firms products and support their mission and objectivess, which would lead to an increase in the sales of the firms' products and services.

Describing the importance of corporate social responsibility and its link to financial performance, Cheng, Loannou, & Serafeim (2014) argued that firms include corporate social responsibility in their business operations for a variety of reasons.

They cited thatsuch firmswould proactively strengthen business relationship with their stakeholders, and would encourage responsible investors to strategicallysponsor their corporate responsibility initiatives, which gives firms the competitive edge in producing quality products in today's competitive multinational business environments.In a strategic analysis of the essence of corporate social responsibility and the performance of selected forms, research (Kadlubek, 2015) explained that investing in incorporate social responsibility, firms ultimately enhance the value of their business operations and their subsidiaries in a number of significant ways. When this occurs, these firms create an enduring relationship with their stakeholders, allowing them to establish superior brand equity in the industry, resulting in a continuing financial success.It is vital to note, according to Kadlubek (2015), that corporate social responsibility is about firms showing support and commitment to their business environment, while at the same time making profits and taking care of social and other related obligations. Creating a lasting impression and sustainable image,good will, and recognition in the eyes of investing public is largely dependent on corporate social responsibility involvement of firms, and their genuine interest in the community as well as with stakeholders.Evaluating and discussing the challenge of measuring financial impacts from investments in corporate social responsibility initiatives, Barney (2011),Peloza (2015), and Kadlubek (2015) concluded that in a competitive markets, firms produced or improved their quality of products and services to customers consistent with good business practices and in line with the expectations of stakeholders. Such firms would be in a position to gain the support of potential customers and maintain loyalty of existing customers. Additionally, the authorsstressed that it is important for firms to invest in their human resources as a business strategyin order to improve skills and harness intellectual capital for competitive positioning in the industry.

Concluding Thoughts and Recommendations

In the past several years, there have been an increasing number of studies regarding corporate social responsibility and its impact on firms' financial growth, but these studies lack consistency and agreements in their assessments about specific role of the concept of corporate social responsibility since its inception. However, based on qualitative content analysis of the impacts of corporate social responsibility on the financial performance of multinational firms, several operational definitions and explanations indicating that the benefits of corporate social responsibility programs are important, and they significantly outweigh the disadvantages that are associated with it.Analyzing the significance of creating values, Porter & Rivkin (2013) described corporate social responsibility as the conscious effort to treat stakeholders in a responsible, equitable, and ethical manner, which would result in corporate financial growth and sustainability of human capital.Further, in their assessment of corporate social responsibility in modern business environment, Zegha & Maaloul (2010) and Olowokudejo & Aduloju (2011) cautioned that developing economies would be unable to sustain the costs associated with corporate social responsibility initiatives, because of high standards threshold involved and expected by various stakeholders. Independently of each other, Freeman (2010) and Choi & Choe (2010) concurred with Freeman's position that developing nations, such as African countries, would not be able to sustain the competitive and highly demanding structure of corporate social responsibility programs and initiatives.

Over the past decades, different categories of stakeholders emerged and have placed increasing importance on corporate social responsibility for domestic and multinational firms as a primary basis for acceptable investments. In their qualitative research on corporate social responsibility and access to finance, Cheng, Loannou, & Serafeim (2014) noted that stakeholders were motivated by a firm's involvement in corporate social responsibility programs, and they are demanding continued support for additional corporate initiatives that would benefit communities and consumers. Consequently, increasing pressure by stakeholders on corporate social responsibility is making organizations, corporations, and global firms to place priority on corporate social responsibility programs as a basis for gaining and sustaining competitive advantage in their respective locations.

In the twenty-first globally competitive marketplaces, firms and their subsidiaries should strategically position themselves as socially responsible and should consistently undertake programs and initiatives that support different human needs and interests. Author Freeman (2010) had pointed out that firms should be actively engaged in socially responsible initiatives and programs either domestically or internationally as a primary step in their competitive efforts, and that meeting this challenge would have adequate financial benefits.

Indeed, both domestic and global firms should uphold the essence of engaging and sponsoring major public undertakings, and should jointly or separately participate or sponsor community and social-oriented programs and initiatives.

References

Arshad, G., M., Anees, F., & Ullah R., M. (2015). The impact of corporate social responsibility on firm's performance. Department of Banking & Finance. Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan.

Babalola, Y.A. (2012). The impact of corporate social responsibility on firms' profitability InNigeria.*European Journal of Economics,* Finance and AdministrativeSciences, 45, 39-50.

Balabanis, G., Phillips, H.D., & Lyall, J. (1998). Corporate social responsibility and economic performance in the Top British Firms. Are they linked? *European Business Review,* 98(1), 25-44

Backhaus, K.B. Stone, B.A., & Heiner, K. (2002). Exploring the relationship between corporatesocial performance and employer attractiveness. Business and society, 41:3, 292-318.

Barney, J. B. 2011. *Gaining and sustaining competitive advantage* (4th ed.). Upper SaddleRiver, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Baskin, J. (2006). Corporate responsibility in emerging markets. *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship,* 24, 29-47

Chochran, P.L., & Wood, R.A. (1984). Corporate social responsibility and financial performance.*Academyof Management Journal*, 27(1), 42-56.

Cheng, B., Loannou, L. & Serafeim, G. (2014). Corporate social responsibility and access to finance.*Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 35, Issue 1, p1-23.

Choi, J., Kwak, Y., & Choe, C. (2010). Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Financial Performance: Evidence from Korea. *Australian Journal of Management,* 35(3), 291-311Cone Communications (2010). Cone Cause Evolution Study.

CSR Trends 2010: Stacking Up the Results. Publications, PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2010.*European Management Journal*, Number 21, p 698-706

Freedman, R.E. (1984). Strategic management: A stakeholder approach. Boston, MA: Pitman

Freeman, R.E. (2010). Strategic management: A stakeholder approach: Cambridge University Press

Friedman, M (1970, September 13). "The social responsibility of business is to increase its profit." The New York, NY

Harrison, J.S., & Wicks, A.C. (2013). Stakeholder theory, value, and firm performance. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 23(1), p97-124. DOI: 10.5840/beq20132314

Heese, H. (2005). The development of socially responsible investment in South Africa:Experience and evolution of SRI in Global Markets. Development Southern In Africa, 22(5), 729-739.

Husted, B. W., & Allen, D. B. (2007). Strategic corporate social responsibility and value creation among large firms: Lessons from the Spanish experience. *Long Range Planning, 40*(6), 594-610. doi:10.1016/j.lrp.2007.07.001

Kadlubek, M.,(2015). The essence of corporate social responsibility and the performance of selectedcompany. Procedia-Social and Behavior Sciences 213 (10), 509-515, from www.sciencedirect.com\

KPMG International Survey of Corporate Responsibility Reporting 2011. Publication, KPMG, 2011.

KPMG Internatinal Survey of Corporate Sustainability Reporting 2002, Publication, KPMG, 2002

Lawrence, A. T., Weber, J., & Post, J. E. (2017). *Business and society: Stakeholders, ethics, publicpolicy.*Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

Magbool, S., Zameer, N. M., (2018). Corporate social responsibility and financial performance: An empirical analysis of Indian bank. *Journal of Strategic Management*, Vol. 4 Issue 1, p84-93.

Olowokudejo, F., & Aduloju., S.A. (2011). Corporate social responsibility and organizational effectiveness of insurance companies in Nigerian. Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

Orllitzky, M., Schmidt, F.I. & Rynes, S. (2003). Corporate social responsibility and financial performance. A meta-analysis, organization studies, 24(3), 403-411.

Porter, M.E. & Kramer, M.R. (2011). Creating hared value. *Harvard Business Review*, 6.Porter, M.E. & Rivkin, J.W. (2012). The looming challenge to U.S. Competitiveness.*Harvard Business Review*, 1-9.

Preston, L. E. (1990). Stakeholder management and corporate performance. *Journal of Behavioral Economics,* 19(4), 361-375.

Peloza, J. (2011). The challenge of measuring financial impacts from investments in corporate social. *Journal of Management, 35*(6), 1518-1541. doi:10.1177/0149206309335188

Raggo, R.D. (2010). When CEO;s personal crusade drives decisions.Case Study. *Harvard Business Review*, 1-5.

Ronald McDonald House Charities (2012). McDonald'sRelationship, Web, 21

Shin I, Hur, W., & Kang, S. (2016). Employees' perceptions of corporate social responsibility and job performance: A sequential mediation model. Journal of Sustainability, from: www.mdpicom.

The Corporate Scandal Sheet (2012). Forbes Magazine, Web. 24 http://www.forbes.com/2002/07/25/acc ountingtracker.html

Waddock, S.A. & Graves, S.B. (1997). The corporate social performance-financial performance link. *Strategic Management Journal,* 303-319

Wasim-Ul-Rehman, N.A., and Hafeez-Ur-Rehman (2013). Intellectual capital efficiency and financial performance of insurance sector in Pakistan: A panel data analysis, Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research, 17(9), 1251-1259

Witek-Hajduk, M.K., & Zaborek, P. (2016). Does business model affect corporate social responsibility involvement? A survey of Polish manufacturing and service companies. Institute of International Marketing and Management, 10(1), p25-27.

Yoshikawa, T & Phan, P. (2003). The performance implications of ownership-drivegovernance reform.

Zegha, D., & Maaloul, A. (2010). Analyzing value added s an indicator of intellectual capitaland its consequences on company performance. *Journal of intellectual capital*, 11(1), 39-60.

Yasir, M., Imran, R., & Irshad, K. K. (2013). Mediating role of Organizational climate in therelationship between transformational leadership, its facets and organizational performance. Actual problems of Economics/Aktual'ni Problemi Ekonomiki, 145(7), 559-569.