




## BOOK REVIEW

### The Book

Palazzo, Maria 2019. Linking cultural dimensions and CSR communications: Emerging research and opportunities. USA: IGI Global

### The Reviewer

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The impact of culture on business has been the topic of research in last decades; however, recently, focus has been on the relationship between organizational culture, corporate performance and importance of such relationship for company's competitive advantage and value creation for stakeholders. In this context, the book explores the link between the corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the cultural dimensions of communications. The concept of CSR reshapes companies' strategies, as witnessed, in recent decades, under the rule of the need to promote the sustainable development principles. It is the paradigm shift of the mission that companies have in modern society. Maximizing profits for shareholders is gradually being replaced by maximizing the value created for stakeholders, with companies aiming to maximize profits, promote CSR and business ethics. For this reason, the book analyzes the impact of cultural dimensions on CSR engagement, performances, and communications of specific companies.

The scientific approach of the book is excellent as few studies have investigated the impact of cultural dimensions in communicating on social responsibility efforts of companies. Starting from the cultural dimensions specific to each entity, the author focuses on the comparative research in the communications made through the websites of listed companies, which is characterized by increased transparency given both legal regulations and their desire to meet investors' information needs. The book has six chapters and is structured as follows. A literature review summarizes past perspectives on the relationship between CSR and cultural dimensions (in the first four chapters). Chapters five and six explore the method of the study and introduce the sample selection and the coding scheme. The results are then reported with discussions and implications.

Specifically the aim of the book is to evaluation Hofstede's cultural dimensions in the context of the CSR. The author conducted a quantitative content analysis of 352 websites of multinationals firms which were included in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index (DJSWI) and the Hang Seng (Mainland and HK) Corporate Sustainability Index (HSMHUS). The results indicate that there is a difference between firms operating in Asian culture and firms operating worldwide. The novelty of the author's scientific approach lies in the analysis of the complex, interdependent relationship between CSR and cultural dimensions. The conclusion, according to the author, is that cultural dimensions are factors that should be analyzed as social aspects, whereas online CSR communication should instead be explored as strategic feature. Further, the book contributes to the analysis of the impact of country-level dimensions of cultural values on online CSR communication. The results of the research suggest that managerial decision-making processes such as CSR communication are largely independent from Hofstede's cultural dimensions and that the CSR disclosure from companies in different world regions does not follow the supposed cultural

differences. The book also provides insights into the Internet culture, highlighting that it can overcome the impact of national cultural dimensions and dilute their influence when analyzing communication approaches. The author concludes that some managerial decision-making processes (e.g. CSR communications) are largely independent from Hofstede's cultural dimensions and that the globalization of business and "culture of the Internet" expansion may dilute the cultural dimensions' influences.

Further, international businesses need to respond to increasing demands from stakeholders to involve companies in promoting sustainable development and corporate social responsibility. The multilateral institutions such as the United Nations or the Organization of Economic and Cooperation Development have forced companies to become socially responsible. Thus, companies endeavor to maximize their positive role in economy and minimize their negative externalities.

Overall, the book stands out in its multidisciplinary approach as the author analyzes the relationship of interdependence between culture, marketing communication and social responsible strategies of specific companies. The author emphasizes the importance of in-depth and qualitative studies of organizations such as symbolic and intangible aspects of organizations and management strategies. A well-developed empirical research provides new insights from these domains of interest. I appreciate very much the philosophy of this book as it is a mixture of theory and practice based on empirical research which makes it useful for doctoral students, practitioners of corporations or non-profit organizations who have interests in CSR and communications. Implication for managers is that they would better understand the complexity of the environments in which they operate and interactions with numerous stakeholders—customers, portfolio investors, competitors, public authorities, employees, suppliers, and retailers. Indeed the book has high practical and scientific applicability.

### Reviewer



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