

Multifaceted Meaning of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): A Case Study Among Insurance Company, Non-Government Organization and the Government

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Abstract: The term CSR is a topic which is being discussed widely among researchers. However, the meaning of the term CSR is not the same for all stakeholders. The present study has explored to understand the meaning of the term CSR for the practitioners as well as the related stakeholders. A qualitative approach was adapted for this study and an in-depth interview was conducted with the CSR consultants, CSR managers of the corporate companies, NGOs and the government representatives. The study used the Nvivo 10 Software for data analysis. The study findings is consistent with the past literature related to CSR and the findings has highlighted that the term CSR is a dynamic term. The meaning of CSR is different for different stakeholders. The findings of the study will help the researchers and CSR practitioners to have a deeper understanding of the term CSR in different perspectives, which in turn will help in efficient implementation of the CSR initiatives.

Index terms: Corporate Social Responsibility; Meaning Of CSR; CSR Definition; Corporate Citizenship; CSR Practitioners

I. INTRODUCTION:

The transformation of CSR from an irrelevant or doubtful idea to an indispensable component in achieving the organizational objectives has been recognized by business managers and all stake holders. Researchers realize its suitability to serve as a viable area or field of interest for academic research [3]. This research has attempted to study the multifaceted meaning of the term CSR as viewed by insurance companies, government and the NGOs. There are pragmatic issues surrounding the definition of CSR as discussed in chapter two. Understanding of the concept is important for principles to be translated into practice. CSR is a concept that is dynamic and broad in nature which makes it difficult to define, CSR has acquired different meanings over time and combined some features or characteristics, making it to represent set of obligations,

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responsibilities, stakeholder rights and all form of philanthropic activities [2]. CSR has many names, being proliferated due to the broad nature of the concept. Terms like corporate sustainability have been used to describe their social responsibility practices. However, most of different terms and definitions proposed refer to the same meaning, the responsibility of the business.

II. METHODOLOGY:

Thematic analysis (TA) is one of the types in the qualitative analysis. It is used to analyze classifications and present themes (patterns) that relate to the data. It illustrates the data in great detail and deals with diverse subjects via interpretations (Boyatzis, 1998)[1]. At the first level of analysis, the researcher read and reread the entire corpus of data and devised a coding frame to guide the thematic analysis. The full set of codes that was chosen to apply to the data set. Once the codes were developed, refined, the reliability was determined. Since the data comprised of multiple interviews, computer assisted data coding and analysis was found most appropriate. As a mechanical aid, the computer was used to enhance research. After categorizing the data, the themes were developed based on the codes, and then the examination of the theme and their interconnectedness, the prevalence of the themes in the sample and sub samples were analyzed[4]. Application of Nvivo 11 helped in examining the patterning of themes across the range of interview and the chain of associations with the interviews.

(Ramakrishnan et al. 2016). Finally, the meaning and connections that constituted the theme were conveyed by visual presentations of the components of themes. The respondents list included the representatives from insurance companies, NGOs and the government[5][6].

III. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS:

The findings of this study were grouped into three stakeholders responses i.e the insurance company, government and the Non government organization (NGO). The following section will discuss each of the finding in detail with the help of the word frequency cloud and the word tree

issues conforming to good practices, regulations, good behaviour. But CSR is basically the corporate whether there is a social responsibility. It pulls only social but something is missing in that like environmental, corporate should be used only for human issues like employees, employers, society, community and so on. But things like animal welfare, pollution, destruction of environment, rivers, climate change mitigating factors is missing in that”Another perspective of CSR from the NGO represented was given by Mr Z. As per him CSR is“For me it is a new concept. Thousand years back there was a first human in the world Adam,achristian .At that time they did not have CSR, so its a new concept to suit the corporate world. Everyone know that CSR is you give money. Many times it is done to avoid tax. It is something extrinsic. After that i get some reward if issue being is in genuine terms.” (Mr Z , Director of an NGO).

The respondent Mr L felt that the approach to CSR should change, He explained “Many of the organisation still look at CSR as mere philanthropy, but we in its base not about philanthropy only, but more a strategic philanthropy, that mean I want to know for every single dollar that I am going to put into CSR, what is the return on investment, but we are not looking at ROI but SROI, that is social return on investment. On every single dollar I spent on CSR. There are 2 ways to CSR, external engagement and internal engagement. You cannot say you just want to focus on either or you need both so that’s my perspective of CSR.” (Mr L, Director of the NGO)

Overall the NGOs look CSR in a different perspective, the frequently used words to explain the term CSR is shown in the word cloud shown in the Figure 3.2. The size of the word is directly proportional to the number of times the word is used by the respondent during the discussion with the NGO related to the meaning of CSR.



Figure 2: Word frequency cloud for Meaning of CSR for the NGOs.

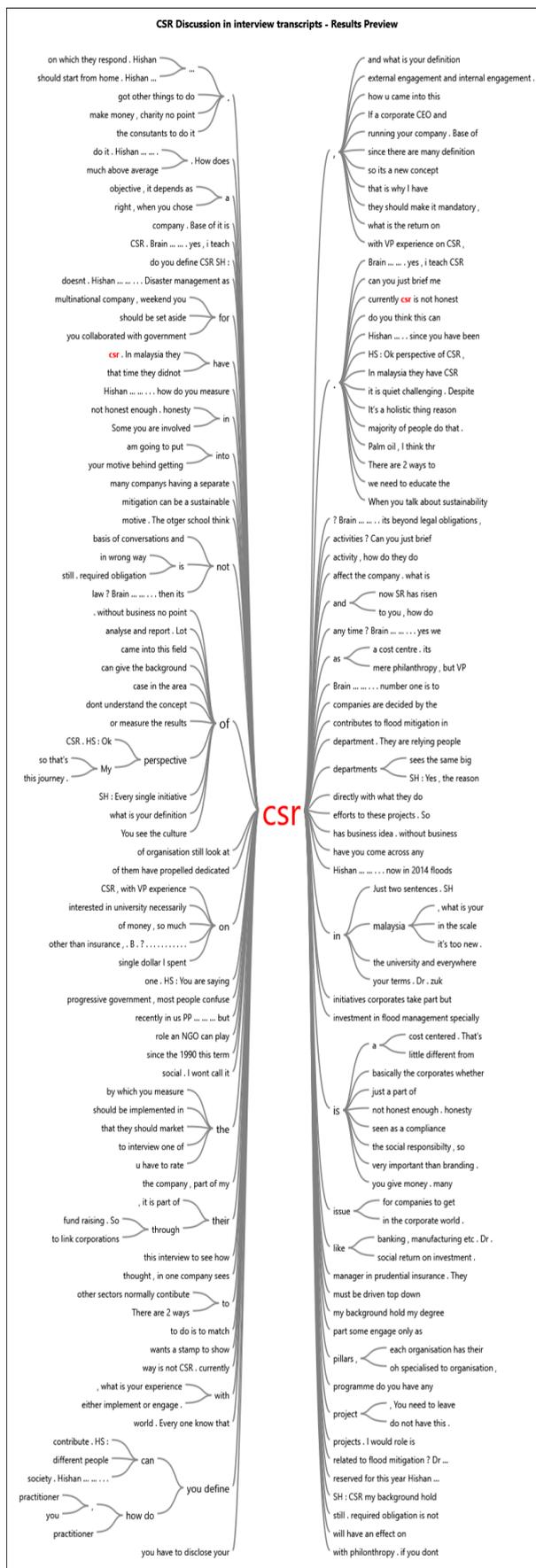


Figure 2a: Word tree for the word CSR in the NGO interview transcripts.

The NGO interview transcripts text query result for the word CSR shows that the NGOs are well informed about the companies CSR programs and they feel the companies CSR program can be a important factor for the success of flood mitigation. However, as per the respondents the meaning is not understood by the CSR practitioners in the industry properly and the understanding of the CSR meaning varies from one person to another. The NGOs opined that the companies CSR has a big role to play in the flood mitigation exercise.

C. Meaning of CSR for the government:

The government is one of the key players for the success of CSR and also in the successful implementation of the flood mitigation program. Based on the interview transcripts of the government representative regarding the CSR meaning it was clear that there is still some ambiguity in the concept. The respondent Mr G explained that “A group of companies can come into together and mobilise the business we want them to come. Many a times, yes, they contribute but corporate are not recognised except the developers. Compliance costs 10 to 15% of the total cost. Councils and states use their contributions, but they don’t get recognition” (Mr G – State Executive Counsellor for Local government, Traffic Management and Flood mitigation).

The word frequency cloud query result given in the figure 3.3 gives an idea about the related words which is associated with CSR from the interview transcripts of the respondents from the government.



Figure 3: Word frequency cloud for Meaning of CSR for the Government.

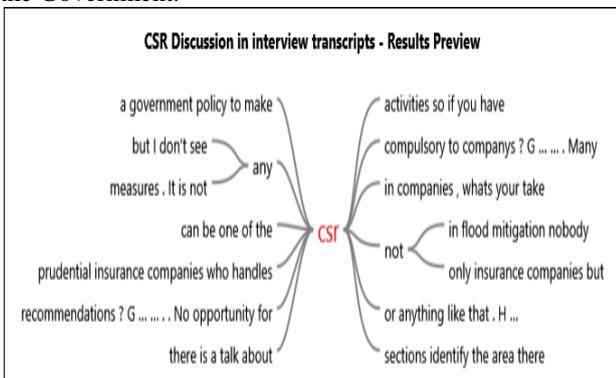


Figure 3a: Word tree for CSR from government interviews. Further using the results from the “Text search” query for CSR for all the transcribed showed the word tree shown in the Figure 3.3a.

The results show few sentence like “there is no opportunity for CSR”, “flood mitigation nobody”, “there is a talk about” suggests that there is not much CSR contribution from the corporate, especially the insurance companies. Hence it is very important for the government to devise a strategy to shift the focus of the companies CSR programs, especially the insurance companies CSR programs in this area.

Based on the word frequency query result of the entire interview transcript coded under the meaning of CSR, the frequently used words to explain the term CSR is shown in the word cloud in Figure 4. The size of the word is directly proportional to the number of times the word is used by the respondent during the discussion related to the meaning of CSR. From the word frequency cloud it is clear that the concept of CSR is more related to society, people, organization, responsibility, business, community and sustainability.



Figure 4 :Word frequency cloud for Multifaceted meaning of CSR.

IV. CONCLUSION:

Consistent with the past research literature in CSR, the present study findings show a multifaceted meaning of CSR. This study focused more on the CSR in the perspective of flood mitigation in Malaysia with special reference to the Malaysian listed insurance companies. The finding of the present research aligns with the thought that the meaning of the term corporate responsibility is multifaceted. Each of the stakeholders has their own ideas of the concept. The meaning of CSR the insurance companies also we have varied viewpoints, some understand CSR as a part of business strategy because sustainable and responsible business practices matters to stake holders whose support they rely on. Some others view CSR as the way they build brand equity and this as one way to position themselves as reputable and respectable company. The NGOs view CSR in a different point view point; many people don’t understand the concept of CSR. Despite having progressive governments, most NGO confuse CSR with philanthropy. Some feel that this term CSR that has risen mainly because it tries to give another bottom line to the corporate that address certain issues conforming to good practices, regulations and good

behaviors. Some other NGOs are of the view that CSR gives money. Many at times it is done to avoid tax. Its base is not about philanthropy only but more a strategic philanthropy where they want to know for every single dollar, they pay what is their social return on investment. Therefore, the different meaning of CSR to NGO is evident in this research finding. From the government interviews also the findings suggests that the concept of CSR is still an ambiguous term. They feel that the work they do for flood mitigation is just a part of their responsibility as a government and does not give a special meaning to the term CSR. In conclusion the meaning of CSR varied from one group of respondents to another; however, few of the words like sustainability, society, contribution and group or collaboration are the common words which were highlighted by all the different stakeholders.

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