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## Postface and Conclusion: Current Challenges and Forward-Thinking Perspectives on Responsibility in Organizations

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### Introduction

The traditional economic paradigm of the organization is often interpreted narrowly in the context of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The purpose of an organization was not to be externally focused for the benefit of society but rather to simply make a profit. According to de Jong and van der Meer (2017, p. 71), “Society nowadays expects organizations to be socially engaged. Almost every modern organization is in one way or another involved in corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities.” Recent research suggests that CSR is widespread amongst global corporations, although there is no agreed upon definition amongst researchers. According to Bice (2017, p. 17), “Studies remain heavily focused on making a business case for CSR, despite its widespread acceptance into business practice.” Bice goes on to examine CSR from an institutional perspective, arguing that institutionalism is well placed to address the core challenges of CSR. Similarly, Haski-Leventhal et al. (2017) develop an Employee Social Responsibility and Corporate Social Responsibility Congruence Model, which appears to be a unique model to address both companies and employees, hence adding to the single-level CSR typology. This book goes a step further by synthesizing a broader paradigm of CSR by looking through the lens of institutional, international, and professional perspectives.

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- Institutional perspective—Examining both commercial businesses and public or non-profit organizations, Part I provides discussions on ethics and human resources management as key parts of organizational responsibility, and Part II examines the role of communication and reputation related to social responsibility.
- International perspective—Analyses made in different countries, Part III provides representations and practices of responsibility in the European context.
- Professional perspective—Combining the outlooks of researchers and practitioners, Part IV provides new forms of responsibility to address societal challenges.

Ethical behavior is a critical imperative of leadership theory such as transformational leadership and authentic leadership (Bedi et al. 2016). An extension of these theories, responsible leadership assumes responsibility for organizational outcomes as well as for the processes and people with which they work, as well as the effects on society and the environment. In the following section, the chapters of this book are aligned with each of the perspectives and grouped in Parts I–IV. Key issues that Responsible Organizations are likely to face in the managerial, ethical, cultural, and socio-economic domains are identified from each chapter.

## Various Perspectives of Responsibility

### Institutional Perspective

The institutional perspective looks at both commercial businesses and public or non-profit organizations. Part I provides discussions on ethics and human resources management as key parts of organizational responsibility, and Part II examines the role of communication and reputation related to social responsibility. In Chap. 2, McCabe discusses several issues such as due process for non-unionized employees, procedural justice, employee voice systems, ethics, and employee rights in the employment relationship. The concept of due process is explained as “the rights of employees to have impartial third parties such as peer panels or arbitration to review the personnel decisions that may adversely affect them.” The author argues that organizational decisions must be fair and align themselves with procedural justice and ethical due process. The author concluded that a Responsible Organization should have policies and practices in place to increase employee morale. Overall,

this chapter argues that a “Responsible Organization” creates an environment that encourages employees to raise their grievances to management. The author concludes that “a just, fair, and legitimate open-door” culture is one in which executives are committed to their employees and make them feel comfortable, “without fear of retribution.”

Duckworth in Chap. 3 discusses continuous improvement concepts based on the total quality management (TQM) philosophy, as applied to organizational responsibility, arguing that many organizations struggle with resources to apply to social and environmental responsibility. The author explains how continuous improvement for social responsibility (CISR) can be integrated into existing Lean Six Sigma or Operational Excellence improvement programs. However, the author emphasizes the need for Standard Operational Excellence methods to be aligned with social responsibility targets, such as “...sustainable profitability, people, and planet are the end goal...ensuring that all leaders speak the language of responsibility... [and] that CSR leaders are speaking the language of business objectives.”

Ben Mlouka and Hefaiiedh in Chap. 4 discuss the critical role of employee commitment and survival during crisis, using the 2011 Tunisian Revolution. The authors examine how CSR practices influenced employees’ commitment to allow company survival during the crisis period. A qualitative method based on four case studies with a thematic content analysis was conducted. According to the authors, “The results show that employees play a dual role in the societal pressures faced by companies...It appears that the nature of CSR practices dedicated to employees influence their behavior in terms of organizational commitment.” Globalization and radical change have created instability and widespread crisis in many countries. Organizations are challenged with the commitment and behaviour of their employees, during periods of instability and crisis, making their commitment a strategic issue for Responsible Organizations.

Part II explores the challenges and opportunities and how they relate to communication and reputation related to CSR.

Glass and Cahn in Chap. 5 classify ethics codes using natural language processing. The authors argue that business ethics scholars have varied opinions of corporate ethics codes, stating, “Many advocate them as a way to contribute to an organizational environment in which ethics will be a regular consideration in the decision-making process.” The authors develop a model which indicates that ethics codes may be differentiated from each other based on their terminology using NLP models as a tool to identify which companies’ ethics codes are different. The authors conclude that ethics codes in companies classified as “Ethical” were found to be different from large corporations,

stating that "...the codes of these 'Ethical' companies can serve as models on which to base writing of an ethics code." The authors recommend future research by using ethics codes and financial data to test the relationship between CSR and corporate performance.

Goxe and Viegas Pires in Chap. 6 critically analyze diversity of the multinational company L'Oréal, demonstrating that L'Oréal's definition of diversity is based on three sociodemographic characteristics: gender, disability, and origins.

The authors present results which show that different discursive frameworks coexist in multinational organizations. For example, the three types of discourse are interlocked in corporate communication, which reinforces the customer orientation of the organization. The authors argue, "This orientation, as well as other aspects of rationalistic discourse, also contribute to create a sense of legitimacy for shareholders and other stakeholders that might be preoccupied with the economic performance of the firm." The societal dimension of diversity discourse positions the firm within broad societal challenges and contributes to reputation building in the eyes of civic stakeholders.

Bargenda in Chap. 7 discusses the role of aesthetic CSR communication from a global perspective on organizational art collections. This chapter critically discusses aesthetic artifacts, such as artwork and art collections, and argues that they enhance CSR by satisfying social and environmental standards, stating "...the pluralistic uses of aesthetics within the broader scope of corporate sustainability (CS) delineate the major relevance of arts-based initiatives for global finance organizations." The author concludes that "...aesthetic artifacts achieve synergies between context-specific factors and global issues of sustainability." However, arts-based CSR initiatives may not be solely driven by organizational outcomes, according to the author, who proposes further research to explore varying motivational factors, for example, executive motivations.

Petit in Chap. 8 argues that law, and specifically "soft law," can consolidate the approach of CSR in its questioning of companies' reputations. The author examines the multinational corporations' awareness of their social responsibility law vs. reputation, stating, "Designed primarily as a moral responsibility, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a privileged basis from which to question the reputation of multinational companies, and thereby to act on their ability to create economic opportunities... Law can reappear in the foreground of the levers that are available to our societies in order to ensure that multinational companies satisfy social and public interests." Petit argues that CSR should not be confined to definitions and explanations; it must also include "co-construction of the standards of compliance." The author concludes that compliance can lead to internalizing

the organizational control system and helps companies to structure themselves to meet the standards of compliance. Overall, meeting CSR goals can lead to an integrated culture of conformance and performance.

## International Perspective

The international perspective provides practices of responsibility internationally.

In Chap. 9, Bouterfas, Raytcheva, and Rouet provide a discussion on CSR in Europe. The developments in this chapter show that theoretical, social, and political approaches can always be different, from one country to another, particularly across the Atlantic. The authors state, “Some multinational firms are applying a new managerial paradigm integrating CSR. It is no longer (or not only) a marketing or communication argument.” This chapter concludes that “corporate philanthropy, partnerships, and humanitarian activities are particularly characteristic of a new proactive orientation.”

In Chap. 10, Marasova, Vallušová, Vasileva, and Philip de Saint Julien present results of a comparative study of CSR practices of Veolia in France, Slovakia, and Bulgaria. Based on an examination of documents of the Veolia Group on the application of CSR in three countries, interviews with managers, questionnaire surveys, and the media reveal that “the level of CSR approach, largely determined by the European standards, is approximately the same in these countries.” However, the authors found that the approaches to CSR differ only in methods used to meet the standards. For example, unlike France, management of Veolia in Slovakia and Bulgaria needs to focus more intensively on communication about the importance of the central distribution of heating and water and protecting the environment. The authors conclude that “communication to employees, town authorities, and municipalities, as well as to the wider society, still has some aspects in which improvement is necessary.”

In Chap. 11, Faucheux, Gans Combe, Kuszla, and O’Connor, based on a study in Europe, examine social costs of non-responsible research. This chapter addresses (1) research misconduct of persons and organizations directly engaged in the practice of scientific research and (2) responsible research, or the activities of discovery and innovation respectful of wider societal values.

Based on results from the European DEFORM Project, the authors clarify the distinction between and the inter-relations of the two concepts in (1) and (2). The authors look at the phenomenon of research fraud to highlight misconduct relative to “internal” standards of good science. The authors argue,

“New conventions of reciprocal accountability are required...But this cannot be obtained by inward-looking processes; rather there must be transparency in the engagement of accountability from each stakeholder toward the others.” The authors conclude that the quality of the relationships is of critical importance.

## Professional Perspective

The professional perspective in Part IV provides new forms of responsibility to address societal challenges by combining the outlooks of researchers and practitioners.

In Chap. 12, Assens and Bouchez examine corporate governance in social networks and communities in three settings: self-governed networks, lead organization-governed networks, and network administrative organizations. The authors argue that governance based on “altruism in partnerships, equal decision-making power and equity in the sharing of relational benefits is distorted.” According to the framework based on the three forms of governance, the authors concluded that “...the network and community are not always untarnished examples of good governance that are unwaveringly respectful of democratic principles.” According to the authors, the rules of exchange are established through conventions and based on a balance of bargaining power, largely dependent on the member’s position within the network. On the other hand, member’s location is less important, which “reflects his influence over others as an intermediate or a pilot.” Indeed, “the true limits of a network or a community are often intangible; they are based on a sense of belonging to a club, with specific rules of co-optation and control.”

In Chap. 13, Tarabasz examines CSR in times of internet insecurity. The author discusses the growth of the internet users and social narcissism. Furthermore, the author argues that cyber threats are exacerbated by the enormous growth of social networking and lack of knowledge related to awaiting cyber threats, which are also favored by personable identifiable data (PID) being voluntarily revealed by digital users themselves. Increasing attacks on social media accounts, stolen online identities, ransomware strikes, and excessive trust in open WiFi all lead to tremendous data breaches. The author provides evidence from market reports that the “...greatest threats to companies’ online security are not third-party hackers but departing employees.” The author concludes that a proactive approach is needed to educate digital customers in terms of cyber threats.

In Chap. 14, Bartoli, Perrin, and Sebai present results from a research project that focuses on the management and coordination of patient care processes in the field of mental health. The authors state that "...mental health pathologies are among the most complex diseases, especially because they are multi-symptomatic and often become chronic." This chapter examines how to integrate and coordinate care and social services as a responsible way of handling psychiatric disability, particularly in the comprehensive and societal consideration of the patient's needs, which goes beyond the creation of networks of experts and independent key players. The authors conclude that coordination and integration need to be implemented in the context of case management and empowerment.

## Key Issues That Responsible Organizations Are Likely to Face in the Future

The key ideas studied in the chapters of this book and perspectives for the future regarding the issues that Responsible Organizations are likely to face in managerial, ethical, and socio-economic domains are synthesized below within the institutional, international, and professional perspectives framework.

### Institutional Perspective

The institutional perspective identified ethics and human resources management (HRM) as key parts of organizational responsibility. The role of communication and building reputation is related to social responsibility. Bice (2017, p. 22) defines an institution as "frameworks of rules; proscriptive actions; patterns in repetitive interactions; customs; governance structures; special arrangements which minimize transaction costs; sets of norms, rules or principles; or directly or indirectly agreed roles combined with conventions." The definition recognizes the social phenomena of institutions that emerge as social patterns shaped by cultural norms, as synthesized from Chaps. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

- Leadership and human resources management practices would encourage employees to raise their grievances to management. This would require policies, procedures, and management practices to increase employee morale through role clarity and job satisfaction. This would likewise require

a more flexible organization that would be less bureaucratic and more efficient to deal with complaint in a timely manner and demonstrate duty of care. This finding is consistent with a meta-analytic review of ethical leadership outcomes and moderators conducted by Bedi et al. (2016), who found that “ethical leadership is related positively to numerous follower outcomes such as perceptions of leader interactional fairness and follower ethical behavior.”

- Continuous improvement concepts, principles, tools, methods, and techniques are adapted by Responsible Organizations, which lead to social and environmental responsibility performance improvement such as commitments to environmental management standards and reductions of waste and defects. This is supported by Campbell et al. (2016, p. 274) who state that “...the establishment of internal control can guide an organization to achieve several specific objectives including effectiveness and efficiency of operations, reliability of financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.”
- Better internal controls also allow the Responsible Organization to communicate relevant and accurate information to the external stakeholders, which enhances their confidence and trust that the organization is implementing its vision and mission underpinned by ethical principles and practices.
- Globalization, instability, and widespread crisis: Responsible Organizations would be challenged with the behavior of their employees during a crisis, toward their work and their company. Senior management would need to have a corporate crisis plan in place making employee commitment a strategic issue. For example, according to Hernandez Bark et al. (2016, p. 475), “Motivation is a primary driver of human behaviour; it forms the direction, the intensity, and persistence of human’s actions.”
- Sustainable profitability, people, and planet are the end goal: ensuring that all leaders speak the language of responsibility and not just economic goals is imperative. On the other hand, Responsible Organizations need to ensure that CSR leaders understand the business objectives. A study by Cai et al. (2016, p. 587) concludes the following: “Our study demonstrates that environmental initiatives are generally associated with lower levels of firm risk for a company, a stance that scholars of finance, management, and environmental studies would see as a positive influence.”



- Ethics codes: Anecdotal evidence shows there is a positive relationship between “ethical” organizations and financial performance. Companies classified as “ethical” were found to be different from large corporations in how they articulate their ethics codes and can serve as role models for how to write ethics codes. The authors recommend future research by using ethics codes and financial data to test the relationship between CSR and corporate performance. There is also the opposite view as expressed by Walker et al. (2017, p. 53), stating that “although many organizations around the world have engaged in corporate social responsibility (CSR) programing[sic], there is little evidence of social impact.
- Walker et al. (2017) found that when consumers believed an organization deployed CSR strategically, the initiative negatively influenced organizational attitudes.” The authors argue that to reverse such negative attitudes, it is imperative for organizations to have their programs evaluated through third-party program evaluations.
- Discourse on diversity of a multinational company like L’Oréal reinforces the importance of the creation of a customer-oriented culture. This orientation can also contribute to the creation of a sense of legitimacy for stakeholders that have “tunnel vision” when focusing on the economic performance of the firm. The Responsible Organization would prioritize the societal dimension of diversity discourse. This would raise organizational reputation and be seen as responsible in the eyes of civic stakeholders. Audi et al. (2016, p. 551) conclude that “...trust is both ethically important and essential for business but difficult to measure. Contrary to what one might think, firms with a strong trusting culture frequently use audit and control-type words and that trust is positively linked with subsequent share-price volatility.”
- Aesthetic CSR: Responsible Organizations through aesthetic artifacts, such as artwork and art collections, would enhance their corporate social responsibility (CSR) image by satisfying social and environmental standards. However, the motivation behind arts-based CSR initiatives may not be driven by organizational outcomes alone.

## International Perspective

This perspective analyzed the opportunities and challenges for “Responsible Organizations” in different countries:

- Responsible multinational firms have embarked on a new managerial paradigm within the concept of Responsible Organizations, integrating dimensions of CSR with corporate philanthropy, partnerships, and humanitarian activities that are characteristic of a new non-marketing orientation. CSR is also integrated with internal management processes, such as the quality of human resource policies and leadership skills that are seen as key assets for global performance. The literature supports the synergy between the interests of diverse stakeholders—employees, shareholders, government, customers, partners, sponsors, communities, and society, all underpinned by the Employee Social Responsibility and Corporate Social Responsibility Congruence Model discussed earlier (Haski-Leventhal et al. 2017).
- Compliance law, and specifically “soft law,” is an important lever that is available to societies to ensure that multinational companies satisfy social and public interests. “Soft law” helps companies internalize their organizational control system to meet the standards of compliance and to create an integrated culture of conformance and performance. According to Thorne et al. (2017, p. 85), “A firm’s national institutional context, which includes legal, regulatory, and professional structures, influences the firm’s responsiveness to CSR.”
- Approaches to CSR differ among countries only in methods used to meet the standards. For example, unlike France, management of Veolia in Slovakia and Bulgaria needs to focus more on the communication of CSR to employees, town authorities and municipalities, and to society. According to Thorne et al. (2017, p. 85), “...cross-national differences in CSR arising from cross-national variations in stakeholder pressure may lie in the nature of respective countries’ institutional framework.”
- New conventions of reciprocal accountability: Responsible Organizations have outward-looking processes and are transparent in the engagement and communication of accountability toward stakeholders. Responsible Organizations develop competence and responsibility through the development of relationships and collaboration through informal networks.

## Professional Perspective

This perspective provides a new form of responsibility to address societal challenges.

- Networking and community sense of belonging to a club: Responsible Organizations can be characterized with five interacting features—net-

worked, flat, flexible, diverse, and global. Governance issues within these interacting features are dependent on the “rules of exchange” that are established through conventions and based on a balance of bargaining power, for which a member’s position within the network is more important than their location.

- CSR in times of internet insecurity: The biggest threat for Responsible Organizations in the twenty-first century is online security. A CSR culture would focus on educating digital customers about cyber threats. The major problem within and outside the organization is the oversharing of information on social media, with individuals willingly disclosing sensitive data in exchange for free applications. Notwithstanding the fact that big data and digital tools are beneficial to individuals and organizations, Responsible Organizations will be confronted with the challenge of questioning the meaning of privacy in our society.
- Integration and coordination of care and social services: Responsible Organization would be “game changers striving to defy outmoded business models and design tomorrow’s enterprises” (Osterwalder and Pigneur 2010). For example, mental health pathologies are among the most complex diseases; they are multi-symptomatic and often become chronic. A Responsible Organization would be able to demonstrate an innovative way of handling psychiatric disability. Furthermore, coordination and integration would need to be implemented along with case management and empowerment.

## Conclusion

Several dimensions have emerged as key issues that Responsible Organizations are likely to face in the future, such as internal management processes, continuous improvements, human resource policies, and leadership skills. Also, the rapid development of digital technology and the emergence of big data have enabled the interests of employees, shareholders, governments, customers, partners, communities, and society to be interconnected with the aim of achieving global corporate performance.

However, these developments have raised new questions regarding ethics and responsibility. Whilst positive benefits are obtained from big data and digital tools, Responsible Organizations will have to come to terms with the meaning of privacy in our society and the risk of a single-minded focus on profit maximization instead of focusing on stakeholders’ interests, as evidenced

by the global financial crisis. Heimans and Timms (2018) in their book *New Power* have summed up the challenge for Responsible Organizations: “The future will be won by those who can spread their ideas better, faster, and more durably.”

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