

Corporate Social Responsibility influences Employee Engagement

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of corporate social responsibility on employee engagement, motivation and job satisfaction on the staff members of two multinational companies in Greece (Procter & Gamble and Unilever). Unlike other studies, this study examines the link between CSR and employee behaviour amid Greece's financial difficulties. Generally, findings illustrate that employees are proud to identify themselves with companies that have a caring image. Findings also support a positive correlation between CSR and employee engagement for both companies. As we separately investigated two multinational companies, interesting differences between the workforces' behaviours have been identified.

Research paper

Keywords: *Corporate Social Responsibility, employee engagement, job satisfaction, staff motivation.*

1. Introduction

The most commonly used definition of Corporate Social Responsibility derives from Davis (1973) who describes it as a combination of social benefits and economic gains where companies empower the society's betterment. The last two decades CSR has grown into a very popular idea (Nan and Heo, 2007) for businesses around the world. The benefits of CSR for both the firm and the society have been widely acknowledged by consumers, NGOs, governments and media (Kerr *et al.*, 2008).

Extensive literature brings into light the corporate external profits of CSR, (Zappala, 2004; King and Lenox, 2002). For example, empirical research has shown that there is an indirect positive relationship between responsibility and turnover increase (McGuire *et al.*, 1988). Similarly, the stakeholder theory invites businesses to displace the mono-stakeholder concept and establish a multi-stakeholder approach (Cornell and Shapiro, 1987; Freeman, 1984; Wood and Jones, 1995; McGuire *et al.*, 1988).

On the other hand, literature supports that there are important internal gains for sustainable companies. Hence, it is believed that corporate citizenship can have a strong influence on employee morale, motivation, commitment, loyalty and training (Weiser and Zadek, 2000; Zappala, 2004; Orlitzky *et al.*, 2003). Quite parallel to what this research paper aims to confirm, Waddock (1997) notes that organisations with CSR activities can benefit from empowering and encouraging their staff's commitment and productivity. The author also links increased staff productivity to an increase in financial performance. Equally, Peterson (2004) found a positive correlation between employees' perceptions of CSR and organisational commitment, mainly when organisational values and ethics are in agreement with employees' personal values and norms.

Similar to this study, in Kim *et al.*'s (2010), Babcock and Strickland's (2010) and Glavas and Piderit's (2009) research papers, additional employee-centric variables and their relationship to CSR policies were statistically measured, such as employee commitment to the company, employee identification with their firm and staff's creative involvement. Their studies were based on the organisational level (CSR activities) and individual level (employee-centric variables). Correspondingly, this study aims to show the correlation between CSR strategies (organisational level) and employee engagement, motivation and job satisfaction (individual level).

Regarding recruiting, Cave (2002) notes that money is no longer the most critical force that influences staff motivation. The author states that employees are also looking for '*meaning in their work...they want to know they are making a difference to the community in general*' (Cave, 2002, p. 32). Thus, literature supports that responsible companies are a magnet for more talented workforce and inspire their staff to work harder (Zappala, 2004; Cave, 2002).

Nevertheless, literature advocates that the relationship between CSR and employee attitude is culture driven (Zappala, 2004; Collier and Esteban, 2007). In the same way,

Sethi (1975) highlights the importance of distinguishing the various CSR definitions due to variations in culture, economic, political, and social characteristics. For example, firms that operate in western countries have a more constructive position towards CSR (Franke *et al.*, 1991). Other scholars note that citizenship is not only dependant on culture but it is strongly linked to the country's social system, thus the CSR strategy has to be adjusted accordingly (Metaxas and Tsavdaridou, 2010). This study took place in Greece, a country with two key characteristics: hit by a major financial crisis since 2010 and -although a western culture-, responsibility is still in its formative years. Consequently, it is of interest to examine whether people's perception of responsibility has shifted due to their personal economic losses.

In specific, this study examines the association between CSR and employee engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction among the staff of two multinational companies in Greece, Procter&Gamble and Unilever. Both companies gave consent to publish their names and the research findings. These two organisations belong to the consumer goods industry, which is a business area that has a negative outcome on the environment (Deloitte, 2010). Therefore, it is motivating to study the impact of CSR activities on employees who work for organisations linked to environmental and social casualties in a rather CSR-unfamiliar country. Lastly, the study attempts to form an understanding of how employees view responsibility amid rapid wage cuts or benefits loss.

2. Literature review

CSR in Greece

As CSR policies differ among countries due to diversities in culture, economic development, social systems, legal and political formation, and expectations (Franke *et al.*, 1991; Wotruba, 1997); it is essential to capture an overview of citizenship in Greece.

Greece is positioned as a rather CSR-unfamiliar place (Skoloudis *et al.*, 2011; Metaxas and Tsavdaridou, 2010). For example, a research conducted by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (2006) among managers shows that 53 per cent of them believe that CSR is rarely adopted. The same survey found that Greek companies are mostly interested in promoting their brand name and increase sales through CSR (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 2006). According to the survey, responsibility for Greek organisations is mainly about equal opportunities, education and environment, while 54 per cent of the respondents admit that their firms' CSR strategy has either minimum or zero cost (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 2006). Likewise, as reported by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), all Mediterranean countries view CSR in a similar way, along with some countries of Eastern Europe (Titan, 2007). A decade ago the European Commission encouraged Southern and Eastern European countries to adopt CSR drives in order to shore up a European agenda of CSR (Albareda *et al.*,

2007). For example, the Greek Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation adopted EU's directive to support gender equality in businesses (Metaxas and Tsavdaridou, 2010).

Authors have affirmed different reasons for why CSR performance is poor in Greece. Metaxas and Tsavdaridou (2010) support that Greece's extensive corruption as the main CSR barrier. Galanaki *et al.* (2009) found that there is underrepresentation of women within Greek companies, and Ringov and Zollo (2007) note that masculine businesses are more doubtful towards the importance of CSR.

To name a few research on responsibility in Greece, Metaxas and Tsavdaridou (2010), found that 34 per cent of CSR activities in the country were addressed as internal functions of the company (i.e. human resources) and 60 per cent of Greek organisations relate their CSR strategy with financial performance increase. Unfortunately, only 2 per cent of Greek companies publish a sustainability report, while 28 per cent attach some social and environmental details in their annual financial reports (KPMG/UvA, 2002). Skouloudis *et al.* (2011) believe that Greek firms' lack of enthusiasm to report is a failure in building up stakeholder engagement and disclose their corporate accountability to the general public. The European Social Survey (2003) notes that Greeks are suspicious and it seems difficult for them to accept organisations' 'good will' as truthful. To add up, Skouloudis *et al.* (2011) highlight that 99.5 per cent of organisations in Greece are small and medium enterprises, with limited resources or knowledge to take up CSR activities.

Not unexpectedly, the Hellenic Network for CSR was only established in 2000. The network, based in Athens, was founded by 13 companies and now approximately 60 firms have enrolled. The network's role is to share information with its members regarding CSR development, to support joint social projects and to complete regular surveys in order to understand societal needs and update their approach accordingly (Hellenic Network for CSR, 2009).

Lastly, Stavroulakis (2009) quotes '*Greece having been a rural country for long still lacks business tradition and ethics*' (p. 149). Sustainability consciousness is still in its early years in the country, with the exception of a few large corporations. Not surprisingly, Skouloudis *et al.* (2011) pessimistically state that the current economic decline in Greece will, sooner or later, hit donations and will result in managers' oversight CSR.

Employee engagement

Kahn (1990) was the first academic to conceptualize work engagement as the amount of *energy*, *commitment* and *devotion* that employees put into their job. On the other hand, the Institute of Employment Studies (IES), an independent consultancy firm in human resource issues, notes that engagement is '*a positive attitude held by the*

employee towards the organisation and its values' (IES, 2016). This study adopts Kahn's (1990) definition as it is believed that it offers a holistic description which takes into account the physical, emotional and cognitive dimensions of employee engagement.

An engaged employee is familiar with business perspective, and works along colleagues to progress performance within the job for the benefit of the organisation. Companies should launch a two way relationship between the employer and the employee in order to boost engagement (Robinson *et al.*, 2007). Among the drivers of employee engagement are appraisals, efficient communication, developing career, bonuses, work-life balance opportunities, working conditions, job satisfaction, immediate management and team working (Robinson *et al.*, 2007).

Employee motivation

Work motivation is described by Pinder (1998) as '*a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behaviour and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration*' (p. 11). Thus, motivation is a psychological notion formed by the interaction between the person and the environment (Latham and Pinder, 2005).

McGregor (1960) related motivation to self identity. This is in accordance with the social identity theory, where people prefer to associate with groups with which they identify themselves.

Steer and Sanchez-Runde (2002) believe that work motivation highly depends on national culture. They also note three key factors that affect work motivation: a) people's self-concept, b) norms about work ethic, and c) environmental factors such as economic and social status (Steer and Sanchez-Runde, 2002). It is also believed that these three features serve not only as a source of motivation but also as predictors of job performance (Steers and Sanchez-Runde, 2002).

Job satisfaction

In the early days of research around job satisfaction, Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939) described job satisfaction as nothing less than the outcome of the interaction between the person and his work environment. Later, Locke (1969) portrayed job satisfaction as '*the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievements of one's job values*' (p. 316). The author believes that job satisfaction cannot be found solely in a job; rather it is the association between the job itself and the person. He also acknowledges that although compensation and benefits are important for one to be satisfied with their job, emotions also have a central role (Locke, 1969).

Rosen and Rosen (1955) were the first to embrace the concept of values in their description of job satisfaction, indicating that if employees' value standards are pleased this leads to a feeling of satisfaction.

Valentine and Fleischman (2008) believe that, nowadays, business ethics programmes and responsibility initiatives are important for job satisfaction. They describe their principle as '*an informal contract*' between the employer and the employee, according to which the organisation has to offer the desired business ethics and values that lead to job satisfaction (Valentine and Fleischman, 2008).

Theoretical background

Authors and Date	Type of study and sample	Country	Main Findings
Babcock-Roberson and Strickland, 2010)	Surveys on 91 employees.	USA	Significant positive relationship between work engagement and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and between leadership and OCB.
Corporate Leadership Council, 2004	Surveys on 50.000 employees, from 59 organisations, from 30 countries.	Worldwide	Community involvement and organizational culture drive employee engagement.
Valentine and Fleischman, 2008	Surveys on 313 business professionals.	USA	CSR mediates the positive associations between ethics programmes and job satisfaction.
Yousaf, <i>et al.</i> , 2016	Surveys on 163 employees of five major commercial banks.	Pakistan	Internal CSR has a direct positive impact of employee engagement.
Cullen <i>et al.</i> , 2003	Online surveys on 411 employees of a telephone company (study 1) and 139 employees (study 2) of smaller firms.	Netherlands	Benevolent climates are positively linked to employee commitment.
Baden <i>et al.</i> , 2009	A combination of 25 interviews with 49 respondents of an online survey (both worked at SMEs).	UK	There is positive connection between employee motivation and retention to CSR.
Ferreira and Real de Oliveira, 2014	Online surveys on 193 employees and observation based on three scenarios.	Portugal	Employee engagement show different levels when staff is exposed to different CSR situations. Employees exposed to internal CSR are more engaged compared to those that attended external CSR activities.

3. Hypotheses

Employees may be informed about their organisations' CSR efforts internally by their seniors or externally by the media and their own personal experience (e.g. community service experience). In order to measure the influence of citizenship to employee behaviours it has to be clear whether employees perceive their employers as socially and environmentally responsible. Even if a company is well known to the world as being responsible, it is preferable to assess the appeal of the companies' CSR strategies on the views of the employees.

In accordance with Ritch *et al.*'s (2010) view, we believe that doing good to the community, through your work, will raise the engagement levels. Therefore, we hypothesize that employee' perceptions of their company's CSR efforts are positively related to engagement.

Hypothesis1 (H1): Perceptions of CSR and employee engagement are positively related.

Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter (2003) believe that when people find meaning in their work they are further motivated to work harder, which in turn leads to increased productivity. Willard (2004) found that organisations with CSR activities provide a meaningful workplace for their staff. Combining the above mentioned notions we hypothesize that favourable perceptions of CSR and job motivation are positively related.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Perceptions of CSR and job motivation are positively related.

McWilliams and Siegel (2001) believe that CSR satisfies all stakeholder groups, including staff. Similarly, we hypothesize that the adoption of CSR promotes individuals' job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Perceptions of CSR and job satisfaction are positively related.

4. Methodology

Research design

A quantitative methodology is employed in the form of statistical analysis of the results derived from the responses on an employee engagement questionnaire.

In theory, the purpose is to:

- Find a positive connection between employee engagement, motivation and job satisfaction with corporate social responsibility.
- Find if citizenship stimulates employees to work harder.
- Develop the existing literature on the control of citizenship in a somewhat 'CSR-unaware' country.

The authors contacted the HR departments of P&G and Unilever in Greece in order to seek approval for the research. The study's objectives and data collection process were both outlined to the HR managers. After organisational permission was ensured the survey was formed and sent out via email to the HR departments of both companies for approval. The HR departments raised no objection and the survey was then sent out via HR email to their staff.

Questionnaire design

The survey was created in a way to ensure that research objectives are met, valid and reliable data is obtained; respondents' contribution is highlighted; and participants are able to clearly understand how to answer all the questions. Consequently, the questionnaire was translated into Greek and distributed to over 200 employees of both companies. Participants were informed about the questionnaires' content and the fact that all data and results will be used by academic staff only. Confidentiality and anonymity were both guaranteed.

After the introduction and the instructions part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to answer five questions about themselves including gender, age, how long they have been working for this company, their position in the company, and the department that best described their nature of work.

The second part of the questionnaire was piloted in accordance with analogous surveys that have been conducted by large consultancy firms and measure employee engagement and organisational behaviour in general. In the survey there were statements with which participants had to decide whether they agree or not by selecting one of the 5-point Likert type scale (1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=Strongly Disagree).

It is useful to briefly describe how three of the largest consultancy firms measure employee engagement in their surveys. Firstly, Towers Perrin (2008b) employee engagement index is measured according to the following nine questions:

1. I think my job is considered important in my company.
2. I am likely to speak well of my company.
3. I am proud to work for my company.
4. I believe strongly in my company's future direction and key priorities.
5. I understand my company's future direction and key priorities.
6. I am personally motivated to help my company be successful.
7. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected to help my company succeed.

8. At present time, are you seriously considering leaving your company?
9. I would recommend my company as a good place to work.

Secondly, Best Companies found eight key factors that drive employee engagement. These factors and their meanings are explained in Table 1.

As a result, Best Companies engagement index provides the following five survey questions that best measure staff engagement levels (Brandon, 2008):

1. I love to work for this organisation.
2. I would miss this place if I left.
3. I feel proud to work for this organisation.
4. I feel I can make a difference in this organisation.
5. I believe I can make a valuable contribution to the success of this organisation.

Thirdly, the Institute of Employment studies (IES) has provided a model of ten factors that also drive employee engagement. As a result, the IES developed twelve questions (or statements that should be answered positively) that should be asked in order to measure engagement (IES Survey, 2003):

1. I speak highly of this organisation to my friends.
2. I would be happy for my family and friends to use this organisation's products or services.
3. This organisation is known as a good employer.
4. This organisation has a good reputation generally.
5. I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this organisation.
6. This organisation really inspired the very best in me in the way of job performance.
7. I find that my values and the organisation's are very similar.
8. I always do more that is actually required.
9. I try to help others in this organisation whenever I can.
10. I try to keep abreast of current developments in my area.
11. I volunteer for things outside my job that contribute to the organisation's objectives.
12. I frequently make suggestions to improve the work of my team/department.

After disclosing how the above three reputable consultancy firms measure employee engagement, it is easy to distinguish some similarities between them. Primarily, all of them refer to drivers of employee engagement that lead to understanding whether or not an employee is engaged or not to his job. The questionnaire that we conducted specifically for this research is based on the arguments mentioned above. As for job satisfaction, the Gallup consultancy firm notes that key drivers that promote satisfaction are the compensation and benefits that employees earn, the feedback that they receive, the safety in the work environment and the possibility of a career development (Gallup Poll, 2008). Lastly, the recognition of employees' contributions and their encouragement are considered as drivers of motivation. Table 2 illustrates

sixteen of our total twenty-two questions that measure employee engagement, job satisfaction and motivation.

Regarding CSR, the survey aims to measure employees' perceptions of their company's efforts towards responsibility by providing six statements that demonstrate whether or not employees feel satisfied and appreciate the organisation's current CSR activities (Table 3).

Sample

Given the fact that the proper sample size of a research should be at least 10% of the population (Malhotra and Birks, 2007), and taking into account that P&G counts approximately 600 employees in Greece while Unilever counts 800, a total of 154 responses is an adequate sample size for this study's (64 from P&G and 90 from Unilever).

SPSS v23 software (originally, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used for statistical analysis. The data set was checked for errors and one error on a questionnaire from Unilever was identified. Consequently, 89 valid responses from were gathered from Unilever and 64 from P&G.

Scales reliability

To check that all scales 'hand together', Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used (DeVellis, 2003). According to Lamoureux *et al.*, (2007), the reliability of a scale can differ depending on the sample size. There is high internal consistency of the scale, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient reported of .740 for P&G and .764 for Unilever. Both coefficients are above .7 which means that internal consistency and reliability are high (Malhotra and Birks, 2007; Lamoureux *et al.*, 2007).

Before running any statistical tests, the variables were grouped into four new variables that stand for employee engagement, employee motivation, job satisfaction and perceived CSR (Table 4).

Internal consistency of the grouped scales is .692 for P&G and .707 for Unilever.

5. Results

a. P&G

Most of the respondents from P&G are females (62.5%) and males represent only 37.5% of our sample. More than two thirds of the respondents work for P&G between 6 and 20 years; while there are only 11 and 9 people working for less than 5 and more than 21 years respectively. The majority of the respondents were employees with no

managerial responsibilities (45.3%), followed by 29.7% of managers with no employees reporting to them and 25% managers with employees reporting to them. Lastly, most of the respondents (23.4%) reported to work at the Engineering department, 18.8% at Marketing and Sales, 15.6% at the Safety, Health and Environment department and 10.9% at Legal. Percentages less than 10% were indicated for the departments of Communications and PR, Human Resources, Finance and Accounting, and IT.

H1

The relationship between employee engagement and CSR was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality and linearity. The findings indicate that there is a weak positive relationship between the two variables ($r = .251$, $n = 64$, $p < 0.05$). However, academia also tends to believe that an r value that is so close to 0 ($r = .251$) should be interpreted carefully (Malhotra and Birks, 2007). Though, Malhotra and Birks (2007, p. 577) comment that *'values close to 0 do not indicate that the two variables are unrelated, rather there could be a non linear relationship between them which could not be captured by r '*. The coefficient of determination was calculated in order to get an idea of how much variance our two variables share. The r value was squared and multiplied by 100 [$.251 \times .251 = 0.063 \times 100 = 6.3\%$]. 6.3% indicates that there is little overlap between the two variables. Thus, it is proposed that *H1* is confirmed for P&G with the correlation being too small.

H2

Regarding *H2*, there is no accurate evidence that there is a relationship between job motivation and responsibility, ($r = .200$, $n = 64$, $p > .05$). The Pearson correlation coefficient is too low ($r = .200$) and the significance value is a lot above .05 ($p = .114$). Thus, *H2* is not supported for P&G.

H3

Pearson correlation coefficient was also used to test *H3*. The results indicate that all 64 cases had scores on both of the scales. According to the findings there is no relationship between job satisfaction and CSR since the Pearson correlation coefficient is too low but also the significance value is higher than .05 ($r = .195$, $n = 65$, $p > .05$). Hence, there is not accurate evidence that *H3* is confirmed for P&G.

b. Unilever

Unilever respondents are mostly males (57.8%) and females are only 38 (42.2%). The majority of the respondents are young people under 35 years of age (74.9%). Almost 85% of the respondents work for Unilever from 1 to 10 years, while 15.6% work for the company for more than 11 years and no one works for the firm for more than 21 years. Approximating P&G, the majority of the respondents from Unilever are

employees with no managerial responsibilities (41.1%), whereas 32.2% are managers with no employees reporting to them and 26.7% are managers with employees reporting to them. Regarding company departments, most of the participants work at the Engineering (22.2%) and at the Safety, Health and Environment department (20%). In addition, 18.9% of the sample works at the Marketing and Sales and 10% at Legal. The remaining four departments account for smaller representation (Communications and PR 8.9%, Human Resources 5.6%, Finance and Accounting 6.7%, and IS/IT 7.8%).

H1

The results indicate that there are 90 cases with scores on both of the scales used in this analysis, so there are no missing cases. Similar to P&G's sample, there is a weak positive relationship ($r = .281$, $n = 90$, $p < 0.01$) between the two variables. The coefficient of determination was calculated [$.281 \times .281 = 0.078 \times 100 = 7.89\%$] in order to find 7.89% of variance shared by the two variables. As mentioned earlier, the different points of view from Cohen and Cohen (1988) and Malhotra and Birks (2007), regarding the acceptable level of an r value, indicate that a Pearson correlation of .281 is somewhat supportive to our hypothesis. Thus, *H1* is also accepted for Unilever.

H2

Unlike P&G, there is a weak but positive relationship between job motivation and responsibility for Unilever subjects ($r = .248$, $n = 90$, $p < .05$). By calculating the coefficient of determination [$.248 \times .248 = 0.061 \times 100 = 6.15\%$], a little overlap of the two variables (6.15%) was found. Although the Pearson correlation coefficient is too small ($r = .248$), it can still be considered as a relationship between the two variables; hence, *H2* is confirmed.

H3

All 90 cases are reported to have scores on both of the scales used for this analysis. The findings indicate that there is a weak positive relationship between job satisfaction and responsibility ($r = .292$, $n = 90$, $p < .01$). Whereas, the coefficient of determination at 8.52% indicates that there is little variance shared by CSR and job satisfaction [$.292 \times .292 = 0.085 \times 100 = 8.52\%$]. Consequently, *H3* is confirmed for Unilever.

6. Discussion and concluding remarks

This study aims to highlight similarities and differences between CSR and employee behaviour among two multinational companies in Greece. Regarding *H1* the results for both companies indicate that there is a small correlation between CSR and employee engagement, which is consistent with literature (Glavas and Piderit, 2009;

Ferreira and Real de Oliveira, 2014). The findings promote the view that employees are willing to go the extra mile if they believe that their work is significant for the community (Glavas and Piderit, 2009). Since work engagement has been described as commitment and loyalty to one's job (Peterson, 2004; Kim *et al.*, 2009) and strongly linked to a feeling of pride, it is reasonable to assume that the respondents are proud to identify themselves with companies that have a caring image.

Different results were found for P&G and Unilever for *H2* and *H3*. There was lack of correlations between motivation and job satisfaction to CSR for P&G, whereas a small correlation between the variables was reported for Unilever. After visiting Unilever's corporate website we were able to identify that there is an annual CSR report that highlights Unilever's dedication to providing a safe and healthy workplace and they admit that engaging and motivating employees is a top priority for them (Unilever, 2014). Surprisingly, employee engagement and motivation is equally underlined by P&G's annual report (P&G, 2015), even though we were unable to find any correlations in our study. A possible explanation is given by Adkins *et al.* (2001) who believe that job relations are highly influenced by job insecurity during times of financial downturn; thus, CSR is meaningless compared to job insecurity. It is widely known that Greece has been in financial difficulties over the last years with job insecurity being the number one concern of employees. Therefore, another explanation might be the different work conditions and compensation cuts that each company implemented. For example, while the Greek government legislated wage cuts of 11% in 2012, some companies individually chose not to cut staff benefits. We are unaware of any such wage or benefit cuts for P&G and Unilever.

In addition to the three hypotheses, it was also found that the correlation between CSR and employee engagement is stronger for females than males only for Unilever. Moreover, the relationship between CSR and motivation, and CSR to job satisfaction were both stronger for the women employees of P&G only. A possible justification derives from a report published by the National Statistical Service of Greece which shows that the current unemployment rate for females is 20% as opposed to 14.1% for males. It is possible that females feel more insecure today thus they feel more engaged, motivated or satisfied when being employed.

This study strengthens Sethi's (1975) opinion that people's views on corporate responsibility are highly affected by culture and the current circumstances that take place in the country under investigation. It is possible that the financial crisis has negatively influenced lots of people's opinions on CSR. It looks like spending corporate money on charities while at the same time imposing salary cuts on staff is an uncomfortable condition.

All in all, this study aims to disclose that not only customers reward organisations for acting responsibly but also employees seem to value their employers' philanthropic stance. It was found that CSR improves staff's organisational commitment in general

even amid crises, which is a very interesting finding for decision makers to bear in mind as an indirect but useful drive for organisational performance.

Practitioners and marketing professionals can benefit from this research by absorbing the fact that employees feel engaged, satisfied and motivated when they play a positive role to society through their work. It would be constructive for HR professionals to plan CSR strategies and involve employees both to the planning and the execution of those strategies. Another implication for businesses is to internalise CSR so that employees act as corporate volunteers, which may result in higher engagement and commitment scores. Lastly, we encourage companies to publicize Sustainability Reports and make sure that employees are aware of the firm's social stance in order to increase staff motivation.

7. Limitations

Evidently, the small size of the sample is a limitation for this study because it leaves no room for generalising the findings. Secondly, although some of the hypotheses were backed by the data, still the findings are not strong enough since the reported correlations were too small.

The research took place at the Greek department of two multinationals, P&G and Unilever. Taking into consideration that academia segments Greece as a rather CSR-unfamiliar country, the findings cannot be widespread to other countries or other companies.

8. Future research

The present study is one of the few that have been conducted within the Greek business community and the only one to examine employee engagement in relation to corporate citizenship amid economic troubles. An important research direction would be to continue exploring the influence of CSR on Greek employees and possibly combine the findings with either western or eastern European countries. A qualitative study is also recommended as it will provide the reasons behind employees' behaviours and attitudes.

Further research could also examine if the present correlations are strengthened or weakened over time while the Greek financial difficulties continue, as it is possible that lots of companies will choose to minimize additional spending. Future studies could monitor possible links between responsibility and other aspects of employee performance (i.e. innovation). Such a study, combined with earlier findings, can be useful to organisations and managers in order to develop employee performance.

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