Strategic and moral motivation for corporate social responsibility

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This article examines the relationship between management's view on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and firms' actual CSR efforts. It focuses on the practices of 111 Dutch firms with respect to five stakeholder groups—employees, supplies, customers, competitors and society at large—and their use of organisational instruments. We find that the moral (intrinsic) motive, which holds that CSR is a moral duty of companies towards society, induces a stronger involvement in CSR than the strategic (extrinsic) motive, which holds that CSR contributes to the financial success of the company in the long run. This particularly applies to ethical aspects of employee relations and the use of instruments to integrate CSR in the company's organisation. With respect to consumer relations, the strategic and moral motives are equally important. As for relations with suppliers and competitors and society at large, we do not find a significant relationship between management's strategic and moral view on CSR and actual CSR performance.

<keywords? 5–10>

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Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a popular topic for management conferences. In public talks and media debates, top managers display their proficiency in the language of CSR. However, this growing attention to CSR does not prove that much has changed in everyday business practice. The scandals involving Enron, Arthur Andersen, Worldcom, Ahold and, more recently, Shell, show that even formerly respected firms are not able or willing to comply with the minimal contractual norms that are laid down by law. These firms are not even responsible in the minimal sense that Milton Friedman (1970) once defined.

This article empirically examines the relationship between management's view on CSR and actual CSR efforts. We distinguish between a positive strategic view and positive moral view on CSR. A positive strategic view on CSR implies that companies believe that there exists a win–win relationship between CSR and the financial success of the company. Direct stakeholders may punish the firm if its operations are not in line with their moral expectations (Graafland 2002a, b). Thus, there are sound reasons to believe that in many cases ethics pays, which provides an important incentive to adopt a proactive stance with respect to CSR.

However, the profit motive is not the only reason to contribute to CSR. Sometimes CSR policies will prove costly to a company. Many companies, however, have a business culture that upholds certain business principles according to which CSR is perceived as a moral duty of the firm. Etzioni (1988) argues that the deontological motive is more important than the economic motive. Especially in times of economic hardship, this motive may prove more significant in the continued pursuit CSR policies than the profit motive.

In this paper we examine whether a positive strategic or moral view on CSR actually matters. Which motive is more important: the strategic motive which holds that CSR contributes to long-term financial success, or the moral motive which views CSR as a moral obligation of companies? Do we find evidence that supports Etzioni's view that deontological reasons are more decisive than consequential reasons? To test this hypothesis, we employed a questionnaire that was sent to and completed by 111 Dutch firms. Actual CSR performance was measured with reference to 31 aspects that are similar to the categories used in the CSR benchmark method of Graafland *et al.* (2004). These aspects relate to five stakeholder groups (employees, suppliers, customers, competitors and society at large) as well as to several instruments to integrate CSR in the organisation.

The article is structured as follows. The next two sections define CSR and a positive strategic and moral view on CSR. Then we describe the sample and present the outcome of the questionnaire. In the subsequent section we analyse the relationship between the strategic and moral view and actual CSR performance. In the final section, we summarise and interpret our research findings.

What is CSR?

The operationalisation of corporate social responsibility requires that its meaning is considered. Academic literature contains many definitions of CSR. Here we mention only a few: 'Corporate social responsibility refers to management's obligation to set policies, make decisions and follow courses of action beyond the requirements of the law that are desirable in terms of the values and objectives of society' (Mosley *et al.* 1996); 'Corporate social responsibility means that a corporation should be held accountable for any of its actions that affect people, their communities, and their environment' (Post *et al.* 1996); 'CSR is the obligation of the firm to use its resources in ways to benefit society, through committed participation as a member of society at large independent of direct gains of the company' (Kok *et al.* 2001). The common idea put forward in these different definitions of CSR is that companies should conduct their business in a manner that demonstrates consideration for the broader social environment in order to serve constructively the needs of society, to the satisfaction of society.

The definition of CSR used in this study is taken from a report in 2001 by the SER (Social Economic Council of the Netherlands), an advisory body of the Dutch government. The Social Economic Council defines CSR as follows:

> Corporate social responsibility incorporates two elements.
>
> 1. Sufficient focus by the enterprise on its contribution to the welfare of society in the longer term
> 2. The relationship with its stakeholders and society at large

This definition was selected because most respondents are familiar with it as a result of the Dutch employers' organisation's participation in the SER report and its strong support for the report's content. The first part of the definition emphasises the company's contribution to the welfare of society. This element is closely related to the 'values and objective of society' and 'benefit society' stressed in the definition of Mosley *et al.* and Kok *et al.* Following Elkington (1997), the Social Economic Council stresses that the company's contribution to the welfare of society does not consist only of economic value creation, but concerns value creation in three spheres, referred to as the Triple-P bottom line.

- **Profit**: the economic dimension. This dimension refers to the creation of value through the production of goods and services and through the creation of employment and sources of income.
- **People**: the social dimension. This includes a variety of aspects concerning the impact of company operations on human beings inside and outside the organisation, such as sound labour relations and health and safety.
- **Planet**: the ecological dimension. This dimension relates to the effects of company operations on the natural environment.

The second element in the definition emphasises the relationship with stakeholders and society at large. According to the so-called stakeholder approach, enterprises are not accountable only to their shareholders, but should also balance a multiplicity of interests of stakeholders that can affect or are affected by their operations (Freeman 1984). Good stakeholder relations also require that the firm respond to legitimate questions and concerns, that it opens up its way of doing business and that it engages in continuous dialogue with several interested parties. This requires that the company apply certain procedural standards that contribute to the transparency of the company.

Corporate social responsibility encompasses a set of highly diverse aspects of company conduct. In order to operationalise CSR, we distinguish various categories used in the CSR benchmark method of Graafland *et al.* (2004). This benchmark method is based on the company's performance against various stakeholder-related CSR issues as well as the employment of organisational instruments that promote the integration of CSR in everyday business practice (Ulrich *et al.* 1998; Graafland *et al.* 2003).[1] This is in accordance with principle P6.4 of the AA1000 standard (Jonker 2000) which states that indicators should reflect both organisational processes and the outcomes of these processes.

1 This method is more detailed than that of Graves *et al.* (2002), which measures CSR by weighting shareholder data (three-year average of total return to shareholders), pollution emissions, union relationships, employee benefits and philanthropic contributions.

We distinguish between five stakeholder groups: employees, suppliers, customers, competitors and society at large. We abstract from shareholders, because our sample contains many small companies for which there is a lack of sufficient data to research shareholders' interests. Our research therefore mainly focuses on value creation in the social and ecological dimensions of CSR. Furthermore, since our sample concerns companies that chiefly operate in the Dutch market we also left out CSR aspects of international business, such as respect for human rights.[2]

Strategic and moral view on CSR

Companies have different reasons for developing and implementing an active CSR policy. First, companies are more likely to contribute to CSR if they believe that CSR pays off in the long run (Graafland 2002a, b). In this paper, we examine managers' strategic view on CSR with the following proposition: *'Our firm's efforts with respect to CSR will have a positive influence on our financial results in the long term'*. There are several ways in which CSR can affect profitability (Graafland 2004; Graafland and Smid 2004). First, it can improve the company's reputation in the consumer market (Fombrun and Shanley 1990). Miles and Covin (2000) find empirical support for the claim that environmental stewardship creates a reputational advantage that enhances marketing and financial performance. Several other empirical studies show that a good social reputation facilitates the support of consumers to buy or refrain from buying goods, especially in the retail sector (Brown and Dacin 1997; Alexander 2002). There is evidence that a negative social reputation ultimately can have a detrimental effect on overall product evaluations whereas a positive social reputation can enhance product evaluations (Brown and Dacin 1997).

Second, a good CSR reputation may also be rewarded by both potential employees and the current workforce (Turban and Greening 1996). An ethical work climate leads to more trust in the company, stronger commitment from employees, lower absenteeism and turnover rates, higher profitability and productivity, and a more positive attitude to work and good conduct (Sims and Keon 1997). An ethical climate also reduces employee misconduct (Treviño *et al* 1998; Weaver and Treviño 1999). Several studies have found a positive relationship between the ethical climate in a company and job satisfaction (Sims and Keon 1997; Viswesvaran *et al.*<and Ones?> 2002). A good ethical reputation may indirectly contribute to job satisfaction and lower employee turnover by invoking positive reactions from external groups such as family and friends (Riordan *et al.* 1997<not in References>).

Finally, several other studies that investigated the relationship between CSR and profitability without explicitly considering the role of reputation, found that CSR really pays off for companies (Hart *et al.* 1996; Moore 2001).

The financial motive is not the only reason to contribute to CSR. Many companies have a business culture that is committed to certain business principles, including moral duties. Moral reasons meet four criteria: they reflect an imperative and symmetry when applied to others<is this two criteria?>, they are universalisable and they are motivated intrinsically. Etzioni (1988) cites much empirical evidence to demonstrate that moral commitments affect behaviour. Most empirical evidence pertains to the behaviour of individuals (consumers or citizens). In this paper we are interested in the behaviour of companies. To this end, we examined the moral dimension of the respondents' view on CSR with reference to the following proposition: '*To behave in a responsible way is a moral*

2 For an overview of the 31 aspects, see Table 3.

duty of businesses towards society'. A positive moral view on CSR implies that CSR-related efforts are regarded as a moral duty towards society. That a firm indeed has a moral duty towards society to behave responsibly can be justified by several ethical theories such as Kantian ethics (Evan and Freeman 1988; Bowie 1999<not in References>) and virtue ethics (Solomon 1992<not in References>). Evan and Freeman (1988), for example, argue that according to the second formulation of Kant's categorical imperative, *each* stakeholder group has a moral right not just to be treated as a means to some end (maximisation of the shareholder value), but as an end in itself. Management is accountable not only to shareholders, but also to other stakeholders. Its task is therefore balance the conflicting claims of a multitude of stakeholders. For our purposes it is immaterial which moral philosophy one chooses to defend this claim.

Sample and outcomes

Sample

The research sample consists of 111 large and small companies in the two Dutch provinces of North Brabant and Zeeland. The standard classification of a small firm employed by the organisation for small and medium sized business in the Netherlands is a firm with less than 100 employees. Accordingly, large firms are defined as firms with 100 or more employees. In order to increase the comparability of the different firms, the research focuses only on four sectors: construction, metal manufacturing, financial services and wholesale traders (see Table 1). In total, 1,518 questionnaires were sent to a sample of companies, randomly selected by the Dutch Chamber of Commerce. The relatively low response rate of 7% (15% for large firms and 5% for small firms) implies that the outcome is probably not fully representative of the complete sample of 1,518 firms. Indeed, it is likely that those firms that are relatively active in their use of instruments to promote corporate social responsibility will have been more inclined to

	Metal manufacturing	**Construction**	**Financial services**	**Wholesalers**	**Total**
Large	14	14	10	10	48
Small	17	10	17	19	63
Total	31	24	27	29	111

Table 1 SAMPLE

send in the questionnaire. Another question is whether the answers of the respondents reflect social response bias or the actual situation. As the questionnaire was anonymous, respondents had no reason to present a more favourable picture than is in fact the case. Indeed, as we will see below, many firms reported a relatively low score with respect to several instruments, which suggests that the questionnaires were filled in honestly.

Strategic and moral view on CSR

Table 2 depicts the managers' response to the two propositions regarding the strategic and moral dimensions of CSR. The respondents were asked to which extent they agreed or disagreed with the proposition on a 5-point scale.

With respect to the first proposition, there is a broad consensus about a positive rela-

	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Strategic view	4 (3.6%)	3 (2.7%)	22 (20%)	61 (55.5%)	20 (18.2%)	3.8
Moral view	2 (1.8%)	3 (2.8%)	16 (14.7%)	59 (54.1%)	29 (26.6%)	4.0

Table 2 THE STRATEGIC AND MORAL VIEW ON CSR

tionship between the firm's own efforts with respect to CSR and long-term financial performance. The majority of companies also agree with the second proposition. In general, CSR is seen as moral duty towards society in the four sectors that were included in our study.

Figure 1 depicts the responses to the first and second proposition for each sector and size. Financial companies in particular assume a win–win relationship between financial performance and CSR performance of the company. This may be explained by the fact that trust and good relationships with various stakeholders are of utmost importance for these companies. Furthermore, we find that small companies are, on average, less optimistic about the financial payoff of CSR than large companies. One reason why small companies are less optimistic about the financial advantages of CSR is that the reputation mechanism may be relatively unimportant to them. Small companies are less visible and more anonymous than large companies in the labour market and consumer market. As for financial markets, the incentive to attend to reputation building will probably be weaker since small companies generally are not listed on the stock exchange. NGOs (non-governmental organisations) also have little incentive to scrutinise small companies. Another reason for this discrepancy is that large companies may have strategic assets that reduce competition and enable them to have a long-term view. Indeed, research indicates that large multinationals seem to have a longer time-horizon than other companies in their industry (Segelod 2000).

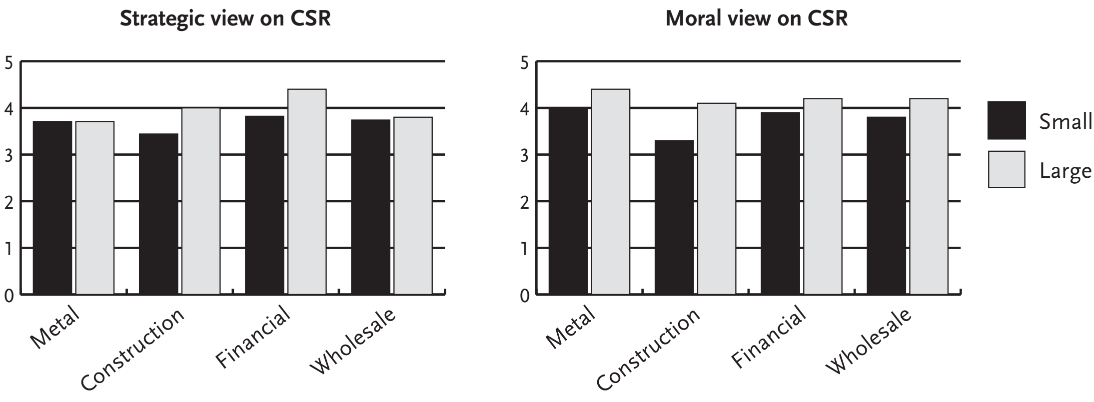

Figure 1 STRATEGIC AND MORAL VIEW ON CSR ACCORDING TO SECTOR AND SIZE

With regard to the moral view, the sectoral pattern is slightly different. In contrast to the strategic view, the financial sector now occupies an intermediate position, which it shares with the wholesale companies. Companies in the metal sector display the most support for the second proposition. Remarkably, a difference between large and small companies can also be discerned with respect to the moral view. This indicates a relationship between the strategic view and moral view. Indeed, if we correlate the responses to propositions 1 and 2, we find a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.366, which is significant at the 0.01 level. Nevertheless, although the strategic and moral views are

No.	Aspect	Large	Small	Average
	Employees			
1	Preferential treatment of women in applications	0.07	0.22	0.08
2	Preferential treatment of minorities in applications	0.07	0.23	0.11
3	Individual training programme for employees	0.80	0.48	0.63
4	Instruction of employees about health and safety conditions	0.90	0.67	0.77
5	Measures to prevent employee invalidity	0.97	0.67	0.81
6	Influence of the works council on company policy*	0.79	0.77	0.78
7	Measures to prevent abuses on the work floor	0.77	0.56	0.66
8	Measures to foster proper relations among employees	0.83	0.71	0.77
	Suppliers			
9	Control of the quality of suppliers' products	0.92	0.77	0.84
10	Control of the environmental standards of the products and production processes of suppliers for compliance with legal requirements [b]	0.58	0.47	0.52
11	Control of the labour standards of suppliers for compliance with legal requirements	0.50	0.29	0.39
12	Complaints procedure for suppliers	0.67	0.56	0.61
	Customers			
13	Control of the quality of own products	0.94	0.72	0.81
14	Proof of meeting environmental regulations to consumers	0.90	0.73	0.81
15	Development of a sustainable alternative for customers	0.59	0.35	0.45
16	Complaints procedure for customers	0.98	0.68	0.81
	Society			
17	Report on environmental issues	0.81	0.25	0.49
18	Employees are familiar with the environmental norms relevant to the firm	0.78	0.63	0.70
19	The company is familiar with the environmental effects of the production chain within which it operates	0.79	0.63	0.70
20	Percentage of net profits used to decrease the environmental impact of the production process or the consumption of the product	0.30	0.21	0.25
21	Percentage of net profits allocated to social and other non-commercial projects outside of Europe	0.15	0.08	0.12
22	Percentage of net profits allocated to local community projects	0.25	0.36	0.29

Note: The average score is calculated by valuing three alternative answers (no, sometimes, often) at 0, $^1/_2$<use 0.5?> and 1, respectively. Questions 13–15 and 25–31 have two alternative answers (no = 0, yes = 1). Questions 18, 19 and 20 have three alternative answers (not substantial = 0, 0–2% = $^1/_2$, >2% = 1).

* The average is calculated for companies for which the question is relevant.

Table 3 CSR PERFORMANCE (continued over)

No.	Aspect	Large	Small	Average
	Competitors			
23	Respect for the intellectual property of competitors	0.94	0.94	0.94
24	Measures to prevent collusion	0.47	0.17	0.31
	Use of instruments			
25	Code of conduct	0.51	0.29	0.40
26	ISO certification	0.76	0.32	0.51
27	Social manual	0.87	0.40	0.61
28	Ethics confidant	0.84	0.40	0.61
29	Ethics committee	0.17	0.07	0.11
30	Ethical training	0.14	0.07	0.10
31	Social reporting	0.62	0.20	0.39

Table 3 CSR PERFORMANCE (from previous page)

related, they can still differ substantially for different companies. This is confirmed by calculating the so-called Cronbach alpha, which tests whether the responses to proposition 1 and 2 can be clustered into one variable. We find a Cronbach alpha of 0.53, which is well below the lower limit for acceptability (which is considered to lie between 0.6 and 0.7; Hair *et al.* 1998). This makes it worthwhile to investigate which of the two views have an impact on the actual CSR effort.

CSR performance

Table 3 presents the average scores of CSR performance of the companies in our study. In order to quantify the scores, we distinguish three scores per aspect of CSR (valued respectively by 0, $\frac{1}{2}$<better as 0.5?> and 1.0). This is similar to the method of Waddock and Graves (1997) and Graves *et al.* (2002) according to which each company can have 'strengths' and 'concerns' for each category measured on a scale ranging from –2 (major concern) to 0 (neutral) to +2 (major strength).

In general, large companies are more involved with CSR than small companies. This holds for all 31 aspects, except for preferential treatment of women and minorities, which enjoys scant support among large companies. Another CSR aspect with a very low score is the percentage of profits allocated to social and other non-commercial projects outside of Europe: 75% of the companies do not contribute to projects in developing countries. Issues that receive a lot of attention are measures to prevent employee invalidity, quality control of suppliers' and own products, being able to prove to customers that environmental regulations are met, a complaints procedure for customers and respect for the intellectual property of competitors. A marked difference between large and small firms has also been found regarding the organisational instruments that facilitate responsible company conduct. The most popular instruments are a social manual and an ethics confidant. ISO certification is also very common among large firms and the majority has a code of conduct and publishes a social report. Small firms are less inclined to use formal instruments to promote ethical behaviour within the organisation than large firms. As noted above, large firms are more visible to the public and the media.

Investment in instruments useful in external communication such as a code of conduct, ISO certification and social reporting is therefore more important for large firms. Second, as large firms operate on a larger scale, the costs involved in the development of ethical instruments are relatively small. Third, because of their size, large firms have a greater need for instruments that facilitate the communication of values and norms to internal and external stakeholders. Indeed, for very small firms these kinds of instrument are not really functional (Graafland 2004).

Relating strategic and moral views to CSR performance

The hypothesis of this paper is that a positive strategic and moral view on CSR will stimulate companies to implement stakeholder-related aspects of CSR and instruments to embed CSR in the firm. In order to test this hypothesis, we examined the connection between the answers given to the two propositions about the strategic and moral view on CSR and the actual efforts of firms with regard to CSR.

Table 4 contains the (partial) correlation coefficients for the relationship between responses to proposition 1 and 2 and performance in terms of stakeholder-related CSR aspects and use of instruments, aggregated per stakeholder group and for all instruments. We controlled for size and sector by adding one dummy for size and three dummies for sectors.

Table 4 shows that, on the whole, actual CSR performance is much more correlated to the moral view on CSR than the strategic view on CSR. This suggests that a moral commitment to CSR provides a stronger motive to contribute to CSR in practice than a positive strategic view on CSR. Thus, our results suggest the relevance of Etzioni's view that moral motivations may have an important role to play in explaining corporate conduct. In other words: CSR is driven more by an *intrinsic* motivation than by an *extrinsic* motivation. An intrinsic motivation is the will to obey a certain moral norm because it is desirable for itself; it is an end in itself. In contrast, an extrinsic motivation is the will to perform a certain act or to adhere to a moral norm because it is instrumental in realising another end (such as earning money).

The difference between the correlation coefficients of the moral and strategic view is most pronounced for society-related CSR aspects and the use of instruments of CSR. But also for other stakeholder-related CSR aspects, the moral view is slightly more correlated

Stakeholder-related aspects	**Strategic view on CSR**	**Moral view on CSR**
Employees	0.29	0.44
Suppliers	0.08	0.11
Customers	0.40	0.32
Society	–0.08	0.21
Competitors	0.09	0.12
Use of instruments	0.09	0.32
Overall	0.10	0.35

Note: Partial correlation coefficients, controlled for size and sector. Values in bold are significant at a (two-tailed) level of 0.01. For employees we aggregated the score on items 1–8, for suppliers items 9–12, for customers items 13–16, for society items 17–22, for competitors items 23–24 and for instruments items 25–31 (see Table 3). For the last row of Table 4 we calculated the aggregate score on items 1–31.

Table 4 CORRELATION BETWEEN VIEWS ON CSR AND CSR PERFORMANCE: AGGREGATE RESULTS to CSR performance than the strategic view. The only exception is customer relations. This might indicate a perception among companies that the win–win perspective is most relevant for CSR aspects of customer relations. Correlations for each of the 31 CSR aspects show that quality control of products and a complaints procedure for customers in particular, may be motivated strategically.[3] Research shows that customers indeed punish companies if they harm customers' interests. Archer and Wesolowsky (1996) have found that consumers of durable goods tend to excuse single incidents with no effect on brand loyalty, but they do not tolerate more than one such incident. Landon and Smith (1997) also find that, while short-term changes in quality hardly affect the price that consumers are willing to pay for a product, persistent variability in quality does have an impact. Kimes (1999) has found a direct relationship between product quality and operational performance. In her research, Kimes found that inefficient hotels earn less per available room than efficient hotels. Furthermore, another study shows that a one-point increase in the consumer satisfaction index of a Business Week 1000 firm has been calculated to be worth about US$94 million or 11.4% of the average return on investments (Anderson *et al.* 1994). This indicates that consumers reward companies that manufacture more reliable products. We also found some positive correlation between the strategic view and having a sustainable alternative in the product range and the company's contribution to local community projects.

Also with respect to employee relations we find a significant positive relationship between a positive strategic view and CSR performance. Detailed correlations for each CSR aspect show that this positive relationship especially pertains to measures to prevent sickness and disability and employee participation in business policy. The priority this matter enjoys can be attributed not only to the pursuit of lower staff turnover and replacement costs, but also the Dutch government's recent introduction of a system of penalties for companies with a high rate of employee invalidity (the so-called PEMBA arrangement). It is also consistent with empirical research that has found a positive correlation between the ethical climate of a company and job satisfaction (Sims and Keon 1997; Viswesvaran *et al*<and Ones?> 2002).

Conclusions

This article tested the hypothesis that a positive strategic and moral view on CSR stimulates companies to undertake CSR efforts. Our sample consisted of 111 Dutch companies. Managers' strategic view on CSR was measured by the response to the proposition: '*Our firms' own effort with respect to CSR will have a positive influence on our financial results in the long term*'. The manager's moral view on CSR was measured by the response to the proposition: '*To behave in a responsible way is a moral duty of businesses towards society*'. The results show that a majority of respondents have a positive view on CSR in both dimensions.

Since personal opinions of managers are no guarantee that actual measures are taken, we related the scores on the questions with respect to the view on CSR to questions about actual efforts with respect to 24 stakeholder-related CSR aspects and seven instruments of organising CSR. We find a weak correlation between the strategic view and actual CSR efforts. The strategic view generates active CSR policies only with respect to consumer relations and, to a lesser extent, employee relations. In the relation with suppliers, competitors and society at large, and the use of instruments to integrate CSR in the organisation, a positive strategic view hardly makes a difference with respect to actual CSR

3 These results can be obtained from the authors on request.

efforts. This finding is somewhat puzzling. It is often assumed that the first step towards the implementation of CSR is a growing awareness on the part of top management of the strategic importance of CSR. Although this still may be the case, our findings show that a positive strategic view on CSR is not a sufficient condition for a firm to actually undertake measures to enhance CSR.

We find a stronger correlation between CSR performance and a moral view on CSR. The correlation coefficient between the moral view and overall CSR performance is 0.35. The moral view is mostly related to CSR policies affecting the relationship with employees, customers and the use of instruments to integrate CSR in the organisation. For other stakeholders we find a small but insignificant correlation between the moral view on CSR and CSR performance.

The result that CSR implementation is more related to moral commitments than profit maximisation implies that one should be careful when emphasising the financial advantages of CSR. In the economic literature it is well known that extrinsic motivations may crowd out intrinsic motivations (Bowles 1988<1998?>; Fehr *et al.* 1997; Frey 1998). Stressing financial returns from CSR may therefore drive out these intrinsic moral motivations. If managers derive intrinsic benefits by behaving altruistically or by living up to civic duties, paying for this service would diminish this type of conduct. Frey and Oberholzer-Gee (1997) give the following explanation for this phenomenon: a person perceives the external intervention to be controlling and, as a result, their intrinsic motivation decreases. They conclude that where public spirit does exist, stressing financial incentives needs to be reconsidered as an instrument to muster support for a social good. Only where intrinsic motivations do not exist or have already been crowded out can emphasising the financial benefits of CSR be a promising way to win support among managers. Our research shows that this is obviously not the case in the Netherlands. It is important to research the motivational forces in other countries as well because if CSR is intrinsically driven, policy-makers and businesses should focus on the moral commitment to CSR. The motivation to obey moral rules, certainly at the conventional stage of moral reasoning,[4] benefits a lot from a general acknowledgement of those moral rules and the corresponding duty to obey them. Therefore, stimulating debates about the responsibilities of companies can reinforce the moral commitment of management to CSR initiatives and instruments.

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