

A Perspective on the Applicability of the Quadripartite Model of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Organizations of the Western Development Region, Romania

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the issues of social obligations that organizations have to society, starting from an analysis of the quadripartite model of corporate social responsibility described by Archie B. Carroll in 1979 and known by 1991 as the "pyramid of corporate social responsibility". The objective of this paper is to demonstrate that social responsibility dimensions do not exclude each other, but can in practice be approached by companies at the same time, but in different weights. A sociological survey conducted in the industrial organizations operating in the Western Development Region of Romania supports this hypothesis and, by creating a set of key factors, illustrates the reason why organizations tend to rely mainly on one or more of the specific dimensions of social responsibility. This research is, in our opinion, the first attempt to highlight the applicability of the model of social responsibility in businesses in Romania.

KEYWORDS: *corporate social responsibility, pyramid of corporate social responsibility, quadripartite model of social responsibility, social responsibility dimensions.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *M14, M21*

INTRODUCTION

By the 1990s, concerns over responsible actions and businesses were the result of consumer pressure, environmental issues or labour market practices. The concept of social responsibility has evolved towards understanding society's problems and human rights, towards developing sustainable strategies and corporate governance codes (Zaharia et al., 2010b). Thus, we can talk today about the "inclusion of social responsibility in all human activities" (Zaharia et al., 2010a, p. 160).

Early efforts focused on identifying and explaining the categories of obligations of companies have turned to the idea that "few trends could so thoroughly undermine the very foundations of our free society as the acceptance by corporate officials of a social responsibility other than to make as much money for their stockholders as possible" (Friedman, 1962, p.133). In Milton Friedman's view, social responsibilities belong to individuals, not business (Ionescu, 2006, pp. 53-72).

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Gradually, a broader vision over corporate social responsibility developed (McGuire, 1963) according to which "the idea of social responsibilities supposes that the corporation has not only economic and legal obligations, but also certain responsibilities to society which extend beyond these obligations". Thus, the concept of corporate volunteering implied that "another aspect of any workable definition or corporate social responsibility is that the behaviour of the firms must be voluntary" (Manne & Wallich, 1972, p. 5).

During the course of its theoretical development, the notion of corporate social responsibility has acquired multiple dimensions, conceptualized in different ways.

Based on an analysis of contributions published after the 1960s, Archie Carroll (1979) drew up a list of different views on corporate social responsibility. First used in management, the concept of social responsibility has also become a focal point for other areas.

Starting from the best-known model of corporate social responsibility created by Archie Carroll in 1979 and then improved in 2000 in a paper co-authored by Carroll and Buchholtz, we intend to investigate its applicability in businesses of the Western Development Region of Romania.

Our study focuses on presenting various views on the meaning of corporate social responsibility and suggests a number of empirical studies in the field. This presentation continues with the analysis of the quadripartite model of corporate social responsibility and its levels. We then present the research objectives and methodology, the study hypotheses and methods of data collection. Finally, we carry out the analysis and set the findings of the study.

1. QUADRIPARTITE MODEL OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: MEANING AND ROLE

The most developed and widely accepted model of corporate social responsibility is the quadripartite model created by Archie Carroll (Carroll, 1979) and later improved in 2000.

The work of Archie Carroll published in 1979 shows how social responsibility can be divided into four groups: economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities. The weight of each category shows its amplitude. In fact, the order established by Carroll for the four categories is an order of importance. Although all these types of responsibilities exist simultaneously in organizations, business history shows that the focus was first placed on economic and legal aspects, and on ethical and philanthropic later on. In addition, any business action or responsibility may be based on economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic reasons.

These four categories of social responsibility are, in fact, varied responsibilities that society expects businesses to assume. Each category is part of an overall social responsibility of business. The author defines corporate social responsibility as: „economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time" (Carroll, 1979, p. 500).

According to Carroll, corporate social responsibility guides business conduct, so that organizations are profitable, they follow the law and promote ethical behaviour. According

to Carroll, for an organization to be considered socially responsible, profitability and understanding of the law must be the most important terms when talking about business ethics and also when talking about supporting community with work, money, time and talent.

Later (Carroll, 1991), corporate social responsibility was considered a multi-layered concept with four interrelated aspects (economic legal, ethical and philanthropic) arranged as a pyramid, so that "real" social responsibility gathers all four levels in corporate behaviour.

The first and most important responsibilities of businesses are **economic responsibilities**, in other words the obligation to ensure shareholder gains, good and safe wages for employees, good products or services for customers. According to Archie Carroll, satisfying economic responsibility is crucial for any company and an essential condition in operating and keeping the business in the market. This first level of corporate social responsibility is at the bottom of the pyramid, supporting other types of responsibilities.

The second category of responsibilities, located on the second level in the pyramid of corporate social responsibility consists of **legal responsibilities**. They are a condition of fair business and are based on the obligation of businesses to comply with applicable laws and "rules of the game". As with economic responsibilities, Archie Carroll believes that legal obligations are a requirement of society to any corporation and a prerequisite for any enterprise that wants to be socially responsible.

Ethical responsibilities are a class of obligations that go beyond legal obligations. They involve the assumption of fair and equitable business, even if law or other regulations do not require this. Archie Carroll believes that ethical responsibility is what society and community expect from corporations, beyond economic and legal requirements, which are deemed to be fulfilled.

The highest level in the pyramid of corporate social responsibility is occupied by **philanthropic responsibilities**. This category includes those obligations assumed by organizations to engage in actions to improve quality of life of employees, local communities and society as a whole without any external constraint. According to Archie Carroll, philanthropic responsibilities include corporate actions that respond to societal expectations that businessmen can be good citizens and can come in the form of voluntary, not imposed initiatives.

Introducing the concept of "corporate citizenship" (Carroll, 1998) as an expression of social performance of businesses highlights four sides of corporate citizenship: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. The author creates a full picture of corporate citizenship based on the model of social responsibility. Good corporate citizenship must: be profitable (fulfilling economic responsibilities); comply with law (fulfilling legal responsibilities); adopt ethical behaviour (responsiveness to ethical responsibilities); give back through philanthropy (contributions to the community).

Consequently, "social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time" (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2000, p. 35).

The concept of "stakeholders" was recently added (Carroll, 2004) to the equation of social responsibility. In this context, economic responsibility means that businesses do "what is *required* by global capitalism" and legal responsibility directs "organizations to do what is *necessary* for stakeholders worldwide." Ethical responsibility is "to do what is *expected* by stakeholders worldwide", and philanthropic responsibility means "to do what is *desired* by stakeholders worldwide."

Business is viewed as a framework for managing relations with stakeholders (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2006). This framework emphasizes the social, legal, political and ethical responsibilities of businesses to internal and external groups who have a stake in the business. The primary objective is to ensure balance and protect the interests of investors, employees, community, environment etc.

The merit of the quadripartite model proposed by Carroll and Buchholtz is that it structures the various social responsibilities of corporations into different dimensions, without ignoring that vital fact that companies are required to be, above all, profitable within the law (in this respect, this theory is as pragmatic as possible).

The authors talk about total social responsibility (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2008, p. 46), summarized by a formula: "Economic responsibilities + Legal Responsibilities + Ethical Responsibilities + Philanthropic responsibilities = Total corporate social responsibility".

In the above-mentioned work (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2008), the authors present a model of corporate social performance model that combines three dimensions: a category of social responsibilities: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic; a philosophy of social responsiveness: reaction, defence, adaptation and proactivity; addressing social problems (or of stakeholders): consumers, environment, employees etc.

Along with the transition to a new economy, the perception of managers regarding the role of social responsibility has changed. Thus, corporate social responsibility became a strategy that organizations employ to pursue business competitiveness (Dobrea & Găman, 2011). In the long term, this implies a positive relationship between corporate social responsibility objectives and the financial success of organizations (Petrache, 2011).

2. THE APPLICABILITY OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Specialized literature identifies a number of empirical studies indicating that corporate social responsibility aimed at different aspects of business depending on the context.

Most empirical research based on the pyramid of social responsibility designed by Archie Carroll has been made in the American context. The model was empirically tested for the first time in 1985 (Aupperle et al., 1985) on a number of 241 companies in the Forbes Top 500, based on the CSR statements of 171 managers. The practical model has been validated by statistic results in two ways: on the one hand, it identifies four categories of responsibilities that are conceptually independent, but connected to each other from an empirical point of view; on the other hand, it helps define weights for the four categories of responsibilities. The study has helped identify perceptions of interviewed managers on the four categories of social responsibility, rather than highlighted their evolution and interdependencies.

Another empirical research (Pinkston & Carroll, 1994) conducted among top managers of 591 U.S. subsidiaries of chemical industry companies based in the UK, France, Germany, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S. showed that all four categories identified by Carroll manifest themselves, but in some cases, to a different extent than in the original model. The research has established that the model can also include exceptions, so that in Germany and Sweden legal responsibilities prevailed over economic, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. Compared with the previous study, further research (Aupperle et al., 1985) showed that the difference between the relative weights of economic and legal responsibilities decreased, while ethical responsibilities received more attention and philanthropic responsibilities grew smaller in terms of importance.

Another empirical study aimed to test Carroll's model used a sample of 503 large U.S. companies (Edmondson & Carroll, 1999). Research has shown that economic responsibility is of outmost importance, ethical responsibility is ahead of legal responsibility and the difference between philanthropic and legal responsibility is very small.

Another study reported here (Burton et al., 2000) also highlights the importance of culture, comparing the views on CSR of 165 students from Hong Kong to those of 157 U.S. students. It was found that students in Hong Kong, more than their U.S. counterparts, see economic responsibility as the most important and see no difference between the legal and ethical dimensions of social responsibility.

The table below highlights differences in the values awarded to the four dimensions in different empirical studies aiming to evaluate the pyramid of social responsibility created by Archie Carroll (Table 1):

Table 1. A comparison of different studies that used Archie Carroll's model of social responsibility

| Studies | Mean values | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| | Economic orientations | Legal orientations | Ethical orientations | Philanthropic orientations |
| Aupperle, Carroll & Hatfield (1985) | 3.50 | 2.54 | 2.22 | 1.30 |
| Pinkston & Carroll (1994) | 3.28 | 3.07 | 2.45 | 1.15 |
| <i>England</i> | 3.49 | 3.15 | 2.29 | 0.98 |
| <i>France</i> | 3.60 | 3.04 | 2.35 | 0.98 |
| <i>Germany</i> | 2.86 | 3.21 | 2.46 | 1.42 |
| <i>Japan</i> | 3.34 | 2.76 | 2.42 | 1.41 |
| <i>Sweden</i> | 3.27 | 3.30 | 2.43 | 1.00 |
| <i>Switzerland</i> | 3.11 | 3.04 | 2.70 | 1.10 |
| <i>USA</i> | 3.11 | 2.96 | 2.48 | 1.19 |
| Edmondson & Carroll (1999) | 3.16 | 2.12 | 2.19 | 2.04 |
| Burton, Farh&Hegarty (2000) | - | - | - | - |
| <i>Hong Kong</i> | 3.11 | 2.32 | 2.32 | 1.84 |
| <i>USA</i> | 2.81 | 2.42 | 2.51 | 1.99 |

Source: Visser (2005), p. 36.

European studies on the model of social responsibility (Crane & Matten, 2007, p. 46) point out all levels of CSR play a role in Europe, but they have different significance, and furthermore are interlinked in a somewhat different manner”.

In European organizations, *legal responsibility* is at the core of all the other dimensions of social responsibility, this being a consequence of state involvement in regulation of businesses. For Europeans, the state imposes the rules of the economic game. *Ethical responsibilities* are a priority for the European public. In terms of *philanthropic responsibility*, it is less evident in Europe than in the United States because philanthropic actions of organizations are considered to be more of a government task. The work legislation also encouraged some European countries to provide social benefits to employees and their families, without leaving this aspect in the enterprises’ agenda.

Carroll's model was used to identify how social responsibility manifests itself in the African context (Visser, 2005). The purpose of this research was to explore the accuracy and relevance of the pyramid of social responsibility in an African context. After a thorough investigation, the author concluded that the four dimensions of the model are accepted in Africa, but priorities vary from those set by the classical form, based on economic, social, and cultural context. However, the author believes that Archie Carroll's model can be considered the best model for understanding corporate social responsibility of business, in general, and the significance of this concept for African companies in particular.

The idea that economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibility bear different meanings in the American, European or African contexts can be extracted from the above research (Table 2).

Table 2. Meaning of the dimensions of social responsibility in different contexts

| Dimensions of social responsibility | American context | European context | African context |
|--|---|--|---|
| <i>Economic responsibility</i> | Profitability, obligations to shareholders, corporate policies relating to good corporate governance, remuneration, consumer protection | The legal framework, encoding corporate constitution, respecting the number of work hours per week, providing minimum wages, developing legislation for the development and testing of pharmaceuticals | Economic contribution, the government's economic dependence on a single company |
| <i>Legal responsibility</i> | Low level of legal obligations for business | High level of legal obligations for business | Low priority compared with developed countries, reduced pressure on good behaviour, ensuring good relations with government officials |

| Dimensions of social responsibility | American context | European context | African context |
|--|---|--|---|
| <i>Ethical responsibility</i> | Corporate policies regarding local communities | High level of taxes in connection with the high level of state welfare service provided by local public services | The smallest influence on the CSR agenda, gap between the high ethics of transnational corporations and widespread corruption, adoption of codes of ethics and governance |
| <i>Philanthropic responsibility</i> | Corporate initiatives to sponsor arts, culture and funds for higher education | High level of taxes requires governments to be the main supplier of culture and education | Funds for corporate social responsibility projects |

Source: adapted from Visser (2005), p. 29

The quadripartite model of corporate social responsibility created by Archie Carroll remains the most sustainable and most cited model in the literature (Crane & Matten, 2007).

The reasons of the widespread use of the model are (Visser, 2005): it is a simple, logical and easy to understand model; for over 30 years it has been widely cited in very relevant management magazines and in magazines and journals of social responsibility, even the author himself; the author adapted the original model, while trying to introduce new concepts such as corporate citizenship and the concept of stakeholders; the empirical model was tested and proven relevant; the model gives priority to economic responsibility, by placing it at the base of the other categories of responsibilities.

The limits of this model, partly highlighted by empirical studies are: the model does not tell us what happens when two or more responsibilities are conflicting; the model renders useful and applicable in its original form only in American businesses.

Therefore, it is necessary to rethink and reposition the corporate social responsibility dimensions, depending on various factors. Through this study we aimed to identify these factors and establish a model that is applicable in Romania.

3. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research methodology was based on a literature survey aimed to identify the meaning and content of Archie Carroll's pyramid of social responsibility and on empirical studies by different authors focused on testing this model.

Empirical research conducted in this study aims to highlight the applicability of the pyramid of corporate social responsibility in Romania and the reasons why companies rely mainly on one or more of these dimensions. This research is, in our opinion, the first attempt to highlight the applicability of the model of corporate social responsibility in Romania.

To this end, we initiated a sociological investigation in the organizations of the Western Development Region's industry to identify the significance they attach to each of the corporate social responsibility dimensions and to test the functionality of this model in a Romanian context.

Out of the available data collection tools we chose the direct, selective, questionnaire based research, which was carried out from October to December 2011 on a sample of 370 managers from the concerned region. The researched group included 7061 local industry units from the Western Development Region, according to NACE nomenclature sections (National Classification of Economic Activities) and to the 2009 Romanian Statistical Yearbook (National Institute of Statistics, 2011). To determine the sample size we used the following formula:

$$n = \frac{t^2 \cdot p(1-p)}{\Delta\omega^2} \quad (1)$$

Establishing a minimum sample to ensure representativeness of the research was conducted by introducing coefficients in the formula, as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} t &= 1.96 \text{ (corresponding to a probability of results of 0.95),} \\ p &= 0.5 \text{ (corresponding to maximum dispersion)} \\ \Delta\omega &= 0.05 \text{ (error limit).} \end{aligned}$$

The result was a sample size of 384 companies, as follows:

$$n = \frac{1,96^2 \cdot 0,5(1-0,5)}{0,05^2} = 384,16 \quad (2)$$

Depending on the size of the community survey (N), the sample was corrected as follows:

$$n_c = \frac{n \cdot N}{n + N} \quad (3)$$

$$\text{Therefore, } n_c = \frac{384 \cdot 7061}{384 + 7061} = 364,19$$

The questionnaire included 16 items, closed and open questions respectively, designed to identify the wide range of features of the investigated area. To prevent some loss in the collection and processing, we distributed 600 questionnaires to managers of companies operating in the industry in the Western Development Region and we received 370 properly filled in questionnaires, which could be processed and analysed.

The structure of the sample was:

- (a) by ownership: public companies: 2,16%, private companies: 97,30%, joint ventures: 0,54%;
- (b) by position held by the respondent in the company, according to hierarchical level: first line manager (team leader, head of department, etc.): 54,10%, middle manager (department head, executive director, etc.): 29,80%, top manager (CEO, President, etc.): 16,10%;
- (c) by firm size: large organizations: 46%, medium-sized organizations: 42%, small and micro organizations: 12%.

The purpose of this questionnaire was to identify perceptions of managers on the concept of social responsibility and its dimensions and the reason why organizations rely mainly on one or more of these dimensions.

The following objectives were pursued when distributing this questionnaire:

- O1. Identify the perception of managers on the concept of socially responsible organizations.
- O2. Identify perceptions regarding the necessity of corporate involvement in social responsibility practices.
- O3. Highlight advantages and limitations that these managers associate to social responsibility initiatives.
- O4. Identify the importance that each analysed company places on each of the corporate social responsibility dimensions.
- O5. Identify how the four dimensions of corporate social responsibility manifest themselves.
- O6. Identify the factors that influence the approach of different specific dimensions of corporate social responsibility.
- O7. Identify forms of corporate social responsibility that are already applied and those considered urgent in the future.

The hypotheses of the research were:

- I1. Romanian companies can simultaneously base their work practice on economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic reasons.
- I2. These dimensions can be addressed in the same time by companies, but with different weights.
- I3. The reason why organizations rely mainly on one or more of these dimensions is determined by different factors.

4. THE RESEARCH RESULTS

Data analysis revealed numerous sociological aspects, which are presented below.

Perceptions on the concept of socially responsible organizations. In defining a socially responsible organization, 48% of interviewed managers consider that organizations must carry out actions to limit the negative effects of their functioning, to behave properly and just towards the environment, consumers, customers, employees, and community. 29% of managers estimate that socially responsible organizations are contributing with human and material resources to community development and to improving the quality of life. 23% of respondents consider that the main obligation of an organization is to offer goods and services required by society, to create jobs and to generate economic growth.

From the above we can conclude that when defining socially responsible organizations, managers believe that the economic dimension is first, before the philanthropic and the ethical dimensions, while the most interesting fact is that the legal dimension was not chosen by any of the respondents.

A large number of managers are familiar with the concept of social responsibility and they approach it in individual and group discussions on the topic in the company and / or outside it. Only 23% of respondents stated that they didn't have the opportunity to participate in corporate social responsibility discussions or activities. 50% of organizations are aware of the importance of corporate social responsibility and created special departments or structures, while the other half do not manifest this concern.

Perception on the necessity of corporate involvement in social responsibility practices.

28% of the interviewed managers strongly believe that organizations should act responsibly, but do not have sufficient financial resources to support the community in which they operate. A quarter of managers consider that their organizations are already contributing enough to the community, while 22% believe that the organizations they belong to can and should do more to support the community. 6% of respondents feel that there is no reason for organizations to get involved in solving the problems of the community in which they operate.

Advantages and disadvantages of social responsibility initiatives.

When asked about the benefits of adopting CSR practices, managers placed equal importance on raising the state's and the public's awareness on social and environmental issues and on strengthening the corporate brand and image on the market (26%). Other benefits have also been identified: development of sustainable business by attracting responsible partners (20%), maintaining existing customers and attracting new ones (20%). A small part (8%) considers that the adoption of responsible practices leads to higher long-term profits.

Regarding the limits reported by interviewed managers, the highest percentage (41%) highlight the difficulty in finding a balance between economic requirements and social responsibilities. In the context of the financial problems faced by these companies, this setback is fully understandable. 22% appreciated that the adoption of responsible practices is too costly and could reduce profits. For some respondents (22%) it was very difficult to economically and financially assess the effects of a socially responsible behaviour. 15% of managers consider that one of the limitations of using corporate social responsibility is the loss of customers due to price increases caused by social costs.

Importance of corporate social responsibility.

In an attempt to assess the importance of each of the dimensions of social responsibility, managers were asked to rate from 1 to 5 each specific dimension as it appears in the pyramid of corporate social responsibility created by Carroll. The results show that economic responsibility prevails, followed by the legal responsibility and ethical responsibility. Philanthropic responsibility ranks last, with the lowest score given by respondents.

Materialization of the four dimensions of corporate social responsibility.

A significant part of the interviewed managers consider that all four dimensions of social responsibility occur simultaneously in their organizations and only a small part believe that these dimensions exclude each other. Also, almost 60% of respondents considered that organizations focus more on economic and legal responsibilities than on ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. As in European research, the economic dimension is at the base of the pyramid of social responsibility.

Corporate reasons for addressing specific dimensions of corporate social responsibility.

Most managers appreciate that the reasons for manifesting the economic dimension of corporate social responsibility are the improvement of corporate image and the increase of their long-term profit.

Legal responsibilities, ranked second in the pyramid of corporate social responsibility, are justified by legal requirements and even by the possible penalties that companies would receive if they did not perform fair business.

With regard to the ethical dimension, a significant proportion considers that this is determined by a sense of duty to the community in which businesses operate.

Finally, interviewed managers said that organizations choose to show philanthropic responsibility because of the increasing requirements of environmental protection, increase of quality of life and sustainable development.

When asked if they were involved in actions or events to support community development organized by enterprises, 50% of managers felt they participated, 38% have not participated, and the rest said they did not know / did not remember.

For organizations included in this study, the philanthropic dimension and the voluntary obligations are focused on: volunteering (34%), donations to humanitarian foundations (26%), financial support for employees with medical problems (22 %), scholarships for family members of employees (9%) and partnerships with NGOs (9%).

In terms of assessing the impact that businesses have on human health and environmental safety, 48% of managers believe their organizations have a high-impact and 52% believe their businesses have a low impact on environment and human health.

Indeed, environmental concerns are more pronounced, defining the philanthropic dimension. 96% of managers consider that their organizations are involved in a large / very large extent in protecting the environment for different reasons: the responsibility to find solutions to environmental problems and to integrate them in the organization's strategy (32%), obligations not to violate legal provisions (25%), awareness of the responsibility towards future generations (21%), desire to avoid sanctions (12%) or desire to be perceived by consumers as environmentally friendly and to improve corporate image (10%).

It therefore seems useful to highlight the reasons Romanian organizations have when adopting different types of obligations that characterize Archie Carroll's model. To this end, we created a set of key factors illustrating the reasons of Romanian organizations to address different dimensions, namely categories of obligations that are specific to corporate social responsibility (Table 3).

Table 3. Key factors that illustrate corporate reasons to address different specific dimensions of corporate social responsibility

| Key factors | Dimensions of corporate social responsibility |
|---|--|
| Increasing concerns regarding environment protection Increasing the quality of life Sustainable development | <i>Philanthropic dimension</i> |
| Sense of duty towards the community | <i>Ethical dimension</i> |
| Legal requirements Possible sanctions for unfair business | <i>Legal dimension</i> |
| Improving company image Long term increase of profit | <i>Economic dimension</i> |

Source: made by authors

Forms of corporate social responsibility. The responses of interviewed managers described the following forms of corporate social responsibility used by their respective organizations: actions to improve public health and safety, community welfare and quality of environment (39%), donations to social causes (28%), responsible corporate practices integrated into business strategy (15%), corporate volunteering (13%) and promotion of social causes (7%).

Respondents also identified areas where their organizations would be involved in the future to address social problems in the community: protection of the environment (45%), increase consumer safety and health (36%), supporting cultural activities and talent (12%), donations to support disadvantaged people (7%).

CONCLUSIONS

This research highlighted the following issues:

- It appears that in Romanian organizations, not all managers share an accurate understanding of the concept of corporate social responsibility, although it is obvious that there are individual or collective discussions on the topic within and / or outside the company;
- Awareness of corporate social responsibility of business manifests itself in the creation of special departments or structures in 50% of organizations, while the other half does not manifest this concern;
- The corporate social responsibility model, as created by Archie Carroll, applies to companies included in this study because all four dimensions of corporate social responsibility (economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic) emerged in the study; as a result, hypothesis 1 according to which "Romanian companies can simultaneously base their work practice on economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic reasons" is valid;
- In an attempt to define socially responsible organizations, managers identify the economic dimension as ranking first, then the philanthropic and ethical ones. Extremely interesting is that, in this context, the legal dimension was not chosen by any respondent; an explanation for this choice could be the economic, political and social context, but also the attitude towards rules and laws;
- A positive aspect is that organizations are aware of the necessity to involve in solving community problems; economic factors are considered the engine of corporate social responsibility of businesses with an overwhelming influence on their responsible behaviour;
- All four dimensions of corporate social responsibility occur in the studied organizations, but priority is placed on the economic responsibility, followed by legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibility, so that hypothesis 2 "These dimensions can be addressed in the same time by companies, but with different weights" is true;
- Companies address various specific dimensions of social responsibility for multiple reasons, both economic and ethical, which allowed us to create a set of key factors which illustrate the reasons why Romanian companies address specific dimensions of corporate social responsibility, so the hypothesis 3 that "The reason why organizations rely mainly on one or more of these dimensions is determined by different factors" was validated and has resulted in this set of key factors;
- Environmental concerns are more significant for the most part of the studied organizations for various reasons: responsibility to find solutions to environmental problems and to integrate them in the corporate strategy, obligations not to violate the

provisions of law, awareness on responsibility towards future generations, desire to avoid sanctions or to be perceived by consumers as environmentally friendly and to improve corporate image;

➤ Specific forms of corporate social responsibility covered by organizations are: actions to improve public health and safety, community welfare and environmental quality, donations to social causes, responsible corporate practices integrated into business strategy, corporate volunteering and promoting social causes;

➤ Top areas where organizations could engage in the future to solve social problems in the community are: protecting the environment and increasing consumer safety and health, supporting cultural activities and talents and donations to support disadvantaged people.

The research revealed that Romanian companies do not yet have strategies and policies to support social responsibility practices, which are very often unplanned. As expected and as it is happening globally, addressing different dimensions of social responsibility is based more on image or commercial reasons than on ethical or philanthropic reasons.

Therefore, there is no pattern to fully illustrate the reasons why organizations address different dimensions of corporate social responsibility, but there is a set of useful key factors that could be improved by further research.

Romanian organizations need to integrate social responsibility into their development strategy, against the background of an increasingly globalized economy. In fact, Romanian companies should acknowledge the role of social responsibility not only in corporate image or profit maximization, but also in social and environmental performance. Companies will differentiate from one another also based on their reasons to address social responsibility practices that answer community expectations and ensure seamless integration within it.

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