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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE PRODUCTIVE MATRIX FOR ECUADOR SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract: The use of social responsibility as a business management strategy was defined, from a theoretical point of view, was studied to determine its utility to the change of the productive matrix for Ecuador sustainability. A descriptive correlational research was carried out in four companies in the Pichincha province, demonstrating that there are significant differences in the integral performance of Corporate Social Responsibility regarding the change of the productive matrix; that the eight indicators that influence the most these differences were found. There was a positive correlation with the two indicators related to the change in the productive matrix, which provided empirical evidence that the companies that perform better in Social Responsibility have better conditions to develop the required production transformation.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility; productive matrix; sustainability; indicators; Ecuador

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1. Introduction

For a number of years, social responsibility has been managed in companies both as an enabler of fulfilling their commitments to society (Friedman, 1970; de Castro 2005; Porter and Kramer, 2006; Bénabou and Tirole, 2010; Escudero and García, 2014; Stankevičius, Lukšaitė 2016; Samašonok et al. 2016), as for their ability to compete in an increasingly demanding environment, transforming over time into an important business strategy (Toro, 2006; Chirinos et al. 2013; Gasparėnienė et al. 2016), also related to the company and economy sustainability (Montiel, 2008; Tvaronavičienė 2016; Sun, Fuschi 2015), Miriam, Radoslav 2017

In a very particular context for Latin America in the last years (Jáuregui, 2008; D`Amato, 2013), in the Republic of Ecuador companies begun to consider as fundamental axis of the economic policy promoted by the government of Rafael Correa (2008-- -), the transformation of the productive matrix of the country, defined as "the set of interactions between the different social actors who use the resources available to them to carry out the productive activities; Which includes the products, productive processes and social relations resulting from these processes" (Ecuador, 2012, p.1). In the current context, this becomes one of the fundamental pillars for the achievement of the country's sustainability (Larrea, 2013).

One of the key actors for the transformation of the productive matrix (Vallejo, 2015) is undoubtedly the Ecuadorian company, by contributing to the productive chain with the creation of jobs, innovation, generation of networks, clusters and associations, in order to improve the productivity of the different sectors (Ecuador, 2015, p.106). It is the company where the main production processes take place, those capable of generating new and improved goods and services based on the knowledge and development of human talent (studied by Ciro, 2011 as a determining condition in the current context for the dynamization of productive processes), to modify the current export structure based on primary products without added value and overexploitation of natural resources.

The lack of a reference framework for the articulation of the different actors around the transformation of the productive matrix (Montenegro, 2015), coupled with the fact that in the initial documents the role of the Ecuadorian company was not clear, may be some of the causes that this purpose is still an aspiration for the socioeconomic development of the country (Ochoa, 2015). It is precisely the achievement of this type of aspiration that requires coordination by the State, of efforts between the company and other social actors (Lozano et al., 2005; Romero, 2010) and the strategy of a coordinated handling of the "social responsibility among companies, governments and civil society (Miralles, 2003; Chumaceiro et al., 2013). In general, the axiom is that the implementation of strategies of social responsibility in Ecuadorian companies -imposed on the policy of change in the productive matrix- should positively impact, from the economic, environmental and social point of view, on the diversification of production; on the generation of added value; and on the selective substitution of imports and the improvement in exportable supply, as indicators of a socially responsible company (Chirinos et al., 2013).

Although from the theoretical point of view no studies have been found that relate to the Ecuadorian case, corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies with the transformation of the productive matrix; The authors consider that the main links are at the level of which the company is - after incorporating CSR to its management - in better conditions to assume commitments with the society and the economic development of the nation (Avendaño, 2013) and to create products and new or improved services according to the new demands of society (European Communities Commission, 2001). According to Raufflet et al. (2012) the evaluation of CSR taking into account certain company indicators is one of the fundamental pillars for its performance. In this particular case, it is complex because, according to the analysis carried out by Strandberg (2010), the main norms and instruments of measurement of CSR do not include the product and the market of the company as priority aspects. For example, in the evaluation guides of INCAE (2010) and Ethos (2011), the treatment to these aspects is basically oriented to the environmental performance of the company and the quality management. Despite the theoretical deficit in previous studies on the subject and there is no suitable assessment guide for assessing the relationship between CSR strategies and company actions in order to meet a national demand such as the transformation of production, the present investigation makes a first empirical evaluation of this problem.

A study was carried out in four companies in the province of Pichincha, Ecuador, all linked to the strategic sectors identified in the production matrix, with the objective of assessing the CSR performance in relation to the required production transformation, and the main aspects they have influence on.

2. Material and methods

For the development of the research, theoretical methods were used in the analysis of the object of study (CSR) and its possible interrelationships with the process of transformation of the productive matrix in Ecuador. Based on the above, the Ethos Institute's guide (2011) was used for the company's self-assessment in the implementation and performance of CSR, with adaptations according to the characteristics of the organizations studied and adding two indicators that allow assessing compliance with regulations as well as the development of strategies that guarantee the change of the productive matrix (indicator one). Taking into account the objective of the study, it was deemed necessary to include an indicator referring to the capacity of the company for the development of the product and market that meet the requirements of the transformation of the productive matrix (indicator two).

Finally, 36 indicators (shown in Table 1 of the Results section) were studied in four companies in the province of Pichincha, Ecuador. The companies belong to three strategic sectors identified in the productive matrix: metal mechanics (one); Construction (two); Vehicles, automotive, bodies and parts (one). 3The existence or non-existence of significant differences in each indicator in the different companies was determined using the Kruskal-Wallis test under a significance level of 0.05; using SPSS v21. On the other hand, the level of completeness in the companies studied was determined taking into account the 36 integrated indicators using the nonparametric statistician mentioned above.

In order to compare the level of correlation between variables, the Pearson coefficient was applied, determining the existence of positive or negative correlations or non-existence of linear correlation, comparing all the indicators with indicators one and two respectively. The classification of the type of relationship between indicators was performed using the scale suggested by Suárez (2011).

3. Results and discussions

Table 1 shows the results of the integral analysis by companies, applying the Kruskal-Wallis test, observing the existence of significant differences in the overall behavior recorded when comparing the average ranges obtained by the companies in the 36 evaluated indicators (p = 0.000). Company two has the highest average rank (640.36), and company three has the second highest average rank (631.56), which shows that both are the best integrally with better overall scores.

Table 1. Results of the integral analysis by companies. Kruskal-Wallis test

Company	Average ranks
1	399,60
2	640,36
3	631,56
4	586,48
Contrast statistics of the test	
Asymp. Sig.	**,000**

Source: Prepared by the authors from statistical processing results

Although the study is performed in a small sample of companies, the significant differences in the integral behavior of them are considered as of high importance, taking into account that the lack of homogeneity in the management of companies that must be aligned to compliance of economic policy commits the implementation of projects of national interest, as demonstrated in the study of García et al. (2013) and Fernández et al. (2016).

The evaluation of the performance of each company in the indicators evaluated, applying the Kruskal-Wallis test is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Performance of companies in the indicators evaluated. Kruskal-Wallis test

Indicator	Average ranks				Kruskal-Wallis test
	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3	Company 4	
1. Regulations and strategies for the change of the productive matrix	10,50	22,50	18,50	22,50	,002
2. Product and market	11,50	17,50	11,50	17,50	,061
3. Ethical commitments	39,46	50,85	56,60	47,08	,042
4. Organizational culture	13,80	9,50	9,50	9,20	,407
5. Corporate governance	14,80	23,55	20,10	23,55	,106
6. Relations with competition	16,39	16,17	25,06	16,39	,093

7. Dialogue and involvement of the interested groups (stakeholders)	14,06	19,00	17,25	15,69	,610
8. Social balance	12,00	45,92	44,00	44,08	,000
9. Relations with labor union	7,40	12,10	13,60	8,90	,244
10. Participatory management	5,20	11,70	11,50	13,60	,069
11. Commitment with the future of children	6,30	12,90	9,90	12,90	,158
12. Valuation of diversity	31,85	60,30	77,82	72,03	,000
13. Relationship with outsourced workers	11,20	14,30	12,50	4,00	,012
14. Remuneration policy, output and career	14,00	14,21	17,64	12,14	,543
15. Health care, security and work conditions	19,83	25,50	29,17	23,50	,316
16. Commitment with professional development and employability	8,07	18,50	16,71	14,71	,036
17. Conduct against layoffs	5,20	13,40	13,40	10,00	,046
18. Retirement preparation	9,70	11,30	11,30	9,70	,933
19. Commitment to the improvement of the environment quality	11,75	22,25	13,50	18,50	,057
20. Education and environmental awareness	5,50	9,50	11,50	7,50	,172
21. Management of the impact on the environment and the life cycle of products and services	8,00	16,00	18,00	16,00	,013
22. Reduction of material input and output	12,33	21,22	19,44	21,00	,075
23. Suppliers selection criteria and evaluation	17,40	22,80	19,20	22,60	,410
24. Forced labor in the productive chain	5,00	7,17	7,17	6,67	,822
25. Support to the suppliers development	10,86	16,36	14,64	16,14	,365
26. Policy of commercial communication	11,44	18,25	18,25	18,06	,145
27. Excellence of attention	14,25	17,94	17,94	15,88	,644
28. Knowledge and management of the potential damage of products and services	5,40	12,30	12,30	12,00	,055
29. Management of the impact in the community and the environment	9,08	14,33	12,67	13,92	,403
30. Relationship with local organizations	6,00	10,50	9,00	8,50	,552
31.Financing of the social action	7,30	12,10	12,10	10,50	,415
32. Involvement in social action	8,92	15,58	15,25	10,25	,162
33. Contributions to political campaigns	9,00	8,88	10,63	5,50	,300
34. Anti-corruption and anti-bribery practices	8,38	10,88	6,38	8,38	,566
35. Leadership and social influence	4,50	8,50	7,00	6,00	,532
36. Participation in government's social projects	8,80	13,10	9,90	10,20	,645

Source: Prepared by the authors from statistical processing results

From the previous analysis, it can be observed that of the 36 indicators, there are eight that maintain significant differences in the four companies studied: regulations and strategies for the change of the productive matrix (one); Ethical commitments (three); Social balance (eight); Valuation of diversity (12); Relationship with outsourced workers (13); Commitment to professional development and employability (16); Conduct against layoffs (17) and management of the impact on the environment and the life cycle of products and services (21). Despite the voluntary nature of CSR, the importance of knowledge and application of legal standards for business management is recognized (European Commission, 2013). In this case, the change in the productive matrix is covered by the National Plan for Good Living, numerous documents of regulatory agencies, and more specifically in legislation such as the Organic Code of Production, Trade and Investment and the Organic Law of Regulation and Control of market power. However, its knowledge and application by the companies studied shows that there is no homogeneous behavior, which can compromise the success of the execution of plans and projects according to the basic axes of the productive transformation (Ecuador, 2012).

The relationship between ethics and social responsibility has been widely recognized. In the study of Rodríguez et al. (2007) based on a comparative analysis between Spanish and English companies; there are significant differences in the operationalization of ethical commitments according to CSR, coinciding with the results obtained in the present investigation. One of the easiest to explain results in terms of the differences found between companies is related to the social balance, therefore the theoretical and methodological inadequacies that prevail in the subject (Ortiz, 2010) impose a framework of action limited to the companies in a general manner. The labor edge of CSR is fundamental, given the influence of the workers' perception of the company and its social commitments for good performance (Moros et al., 2014). In this area, the relationship with outsourced workers stands out because of their differences among the entities studied; commitment to professional development and employability; and behavior in the face of layoffs. These aspects should have a more homogeneous behavior given its high ethical and normative component. Thus, in the first issue, the results obtained differ from those of Salgado and González (2013), who demonstrate similar behaviors in this activity in Chilean salmon farms. Likewise, there are differences between the employability practices in the companies studied, which in Uruguay (2007) was recognized since then as a challenge for the business sector. In spite of the public policy in this respect, the companies maintain significant differences in the commitment to the professional development and the behavior in the face of layouts, differing with the results of García et al. (2013).

In this sense, the authors assess the behavior of diversity in the studied companies, which is very important in CSR in relation to gender and race equity and other issues (Gil, 2013). The results show that not all companies have a similar behavior in this regard, which coincides with the results of Cuesta et al. (2002) and that are far from the desired state given the nature of this indicator. The differences between companies in managing the impact on the environment and the life cycle of products and services coincide with the results of Peña and Serra (2013), demonstrating the importance of the environmental edge of CSR in this analysis.

The results of the analysis of the integral indicators by companies and indicator one, from the Pearson Correlation Coefficient are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of the integral indicators by companies and indicator one. Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Companies	Integral indicators	Indicator 1. Regulations and strategies for the change of the productive matrix
1	399,6	10,5
2	640,36	22,5
3	631,56	18,5
4	586,48	22,5
Pearson´s r		**0,89645593**

Source: Prepared by the authors from statistical processing results

Pearson's correlation coefficient determined the existence of a high positive correlation (0.8964) between the variables studied, when comparing the average scores obtained by the companies in indicator one and the integral evaluations. This shows that the better the company's overall performance in CSR the better it will be able to implement the regulations and strategies for the change of the productive matrix (indicator one), corroborating the axiom initially proposed in the paper.

The same analysis applied to indicator two is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Analysis of the integral indicators by companies and indicator two. Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Companies	Integral indicators	Indicator 2. Product and market
1	399,6	11,5
2	640,36	17,5
3	631,56	11,5
4	586,48	17,5
	Pearson´s r	**0,502391974**

Source: Prepared by the authors from statistical processing results

The comparison of the average ranges established by companies with respect to indicator two determined the existence of a moderate positive correlation (0.5023), indicating that the positive integral performance of a company allows a superior performance in indicator two (product and market), although this is not as strong as the one established with the norms and strategies for the change of the productive matrix (indicator one). Take into consideration that the development of the product and the market as fundamental outputs for the productive transformation of the company, are subject to the management procedures applied by the company, understanding the knowledge and application of the rule as premises for it. The paper evaluates, with the objective of analyzing the influence of different CSR performance indicators in relation to the establishment of norms and strategies for the change of the productive matrix (indicator one) and the development of the product and the market (indicator Two) the correlation levels according to the Pearson Coefficient, which are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Relations between the indicators evaluated and indicators one and two. Pearson Correlation Coefficient

INDICATORS	Indicator 1	Type of correlation	Indicator 2	Type of correlation
Indicator 2	0,816496581	Strong positive	0,816496581	Very strong negative
Indicator 3	0,623623075	Moderate positive	0,07513241	Very weak positive
Indicator 4	-0,951558777	Very strong negative	-0,60235022	Moderate negative
Indicator 5	0,997916732	Very strong positive	0,8520434	Strong positive
Indicator 6	-0,011858158	Very weak negative	-0,58687002	Moderate negative
Indicator 7	0,732112617	Strong positive	0,46129086	Moderate positive
Indicator 8	0,951028707	Very strong positive	0,60003176	Moderate positive
Indicator 9	0,513045376	Moderate positive	0	Null
Indicator 10	0,960112136	Very strong positive	0,678703	Moderate positive
Indicator 11	0,991836598	Very strong positive	0,88345221	Strong positive
Indicator 12	0,791273644	Strong positive	0,31997661	Weak positive
Indicator 13	-0,213994935	Weak negative	-0,34519065	Weak negative
Indicator 14	-0,1696622	Very weak negative	-0,66619666	Moderate negative
Indicator 15	0,564552172	Moderate positive	0	Null
Indicator 16	0,883095639	Strong positive	0,53413056	Moderate positive
Indicator 17	0,789752047	Strong positive	0,35713653	Weak positive
Indicator 18	0,40824829	Moderate positive	0	Null
Indicator 19	0,850104462	Strong positive	0,93553604	Very strong positive
Indicator 20	0,547722558	Moderate positive	0	Null
Indicator 21	0,850390406	Strong positive	0,39056673	Weak positive
Indicator 22	0,988444757	Very strong positive	0,72042672	Strong positive
Indicator 23	0,944323055	Very strong positive	0,96015872	Very strong positive
Indicator 24	0,879567566	Strong positive	0,46848974	Moderate positive

Indicator 25	0,998703137	Very strong positive	0,7942575	Strong positive
Indicator 26	0,938053206	Very strong positive	0,56631111	Moderate positive
Indicator 27	0,701187964	Strong positive	0,26312133	Weak positive
Indicator 28	0,935068089	Very strong positive	0,55988526	Moderate positive
Indicator 29	0,996407267	Very strong positive	0,78614871	Strong positive
Indicator 30	0,881917104	Strong positive	0,6172134	Moderate positive
Indicator 31	0,833333333	Strong positive	0,40824829	Moderate positive
Indicator 32	0,551931954	Moderate positive	0,14044054	Very weak positive
Indicator 33	-0,395947416	Weak negative	-0,70328908	Strong negative
Indicator 34	0,31976474	Weak positive	0,7049344	Strong positive
Indicator 35	0,770154046	Strong positive	0,51449576	Moderate positive
Indicator 36	0,732214869	Strong positive	0,72371429	Strong positive

Source: Prepared by the authors from statistical processing results

Because of the importance of the indicator two, now it delves into some of the aspects with which it maintains a more significant type of correlation.

In this sense, it highlights in a negative way the relationship with the organizational culture, whose influence is recognized in the development of CSR by promoting "the generation of added value in products or services, creativity and innovation" (Aguilera and Puerto, 2012: 20). The high positive correlation found between corporate governance and the analyzed indicator corroborates the importance of the former for the development of CSR (Travassos, 2014; Salvioni and Gennari, 2016), in this case related to the transformation of the productive matrix.

Participatory management as a business trend that promotes the participation of workers as "key actors in achieving the objectives" (Alonso, 2015: 548) shows a moderate positive relationship with indicator two, a result that coincides with that of Medina et al. (2015), evidencing potential for their promotion in these companies in order to transform the productive matrix through CSR strategies. Positive correlations were observed from moderate to very high among some indicators related to the environmental performance of companies (19, 22, 28 and 29) with indicator two, which shows a concern of companies to enhance the environmental edge of CSR, coinciding with the results of Vernazza et al. (2014).

In spite of the importance of the role of social dialogue (Aragón and Rocha, 2009) and especially with interest groups in the implementation of CSR, in the companies that are analyzed this only influences moderately the responses to the social demand of transformation of production. Orjuela (2011) and Travassos (2014) expose the importance of communication and responsible relationships with their interest groups for the development of CSR. In the case of the competitors, the correlation established is of a negative type, showing neglect on the part of the companies to this important interest group of great influence in the aspirations of transformation of the productive matrix (Villena, 2015). Another key interest group in this analysis is that of suppliers (Ramírez, 2015), which is valued in indicators 23 and 25, which show a very high and high positive correlation, respectively, with indicator two, which shows that in this aspect companies have a better behavior, unlike the findings of Medina et al. (2015).

The involvement and financing of the social action of the companies studied are related in a very low and moderate way, respectively, with the indicator being analyzed. This aspect is very important if you take into consideration the proposal of Abad (2005) to relate the social action of the company with the development of its products and services, especially added value that incorporate design criteria for all, accessibility of agreement to production and distribution patterns, as well as customer relationships. On the other hand, leadership and social influence, together with participation in governmental social projects, positively influence the development of alternative products and markets, coinciding with what has been studied by Lozano et al. (2005) who demonstrate that the quadrant where development of corporate social responsibility strategies and promotion by the government results in a shared vision and the development of social responsibility initiatives with a combination of resources and public facilitation.

Conclusions

1. The Ecuadorian company is one of the fundamental actors for the fulfillment of the transformation of productive matrix as part of the established economic policy for the country sustainability, to which the development of CSR can contribute, according to the theoretical analysis carried out.

2. Descriptive correlational research carried out in four companies in the province of Pichincha analyzing 36 indicators, showed the existence of significant differences in the performance of CSR as a function of the change in the productive matrix.

3. Of the 36 indicators studied, eight are the most influential in the significant differences between companies: regulations and strategies for the change of the productive matrix; Ethical commitments; Social balance; Valuation of diversity; Relationship with outsourced workers; Commitment to professional development and employability; Conduct against layoffs and manage the impact on the environment and the life cycle of products and services. Of these, four are related to the labor edge of CSR, fundamental in the implementation of business projects for the transformation of the productive matrix.

4. The particular analysis of the two indicators related to the company's actions to change the productive matrix, and the integral performance in CSR allowed to observe a high positive correlation in the case of the implementation of regulations and strategies; and moderate positive with the development of the product and market, more subject to the management procedures applied by the company, understanding as premises the knowledge and application of the norm. This provides empirical evidence that the companies that perform better in CSR will be in a better position to develop the productive transformation established by the national economic policy.

5. Indicators such as organizational culture; corporate governance; participatory management; environmental performance; the relationship with interest groups, especially competition and suppliers; and social involvement through public projects, are some of the ones that are related more positively as negatively, with the process of productive transformation of the companies studied starting from the implementation of CSR strategies.

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