



Doing IT Right: Employees' Perspective on CSR

A quantitative study on the impact of CSR on employee
organizational commitment

Madhuri Muralidhar

Mariia Sirenko

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Supervisor: Jonas Lundsten

ABSTRACT

Although there have been many previous studies done on the influence of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in organizations, there has been relatively less research on the impact of CSR on the organization's employees. Studies conducted in this topic have looked at various industries such as banking, manufacturing and others but very minimal studies on the Information Technology(IT) industry. Considering the research gaps, this thesis examines the employee's perceptions and attitudes towards CSR and its impact on organizational commitment in the IT industry in the context of Sweden. In order to study this further, it was hypothesized that CSR has a positive impact on organizational commitment (OC) of employees in the IT companies of Sweden. In order to empirically test this, the questionnaire method was employed, and 164 completed surveys were conducted. The findings of this study support hypothesis that CSR has a positive correlation with employee commitment towards their companies. These conclusions indicate that IT firms require to strengthen and integrate CSR to attract and retain motivated, engaged labour force.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, organizational commitment, social identity theory, IT industry, social sustainability, employee commitment, employee retention.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR-STKH: CSR to social and non-social stakeholders

CSR-EMP: CSR to employees

CSR-CUST: CSR to customers

CC: Corporate Citizenship

CS: Corporate Sustainability

SD: Sustainable Development

IT: Information Technology

OC: Organizational Commitment

AOC: Affective Organizational Commitment

SIT: Social Identity Theory

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Sustainability is undoubtedly one of the most critical issues of present times (Keivani, 2010). Tracing its roots back to the Brundtland report which defined sustainable development as the “the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland report, 1987), has evolved significantly in the recent years to include ecological, social and economic considerations. Today, more than ever, there is an increased expectation of responsible use of business power (Turker, 2009a). The mounting social and environmental problems are pushing Governments, policy-makers, businesses, civil societies and individuals to embed sustainability thinking in business processes and actions for a sustainable future. Businesses are now increasingly paying attention to how they can align the sustainability agenda within their organization to increase competitiveness (Schönborn et al., 2019). In a study conducted by (UNGC & Accenture, 2016), it was shown that 97% of more than 1,000 leading CEOs believe that sustainability is crucial for success of their business and 89% of them acknowledge that corporate commitment to sustainability can have a real impact in their business and industry at large. Therefore, being socially responsible and having sustainable business models is crucial for business longevity and to attain sustainable development for the world. Internally, the human capital that the companies possess is indispensable. Therefore internal sustainability in organizations is as vital as external actions. This thesis aims to look through organizations’ sustainability quotient from the eyes of the employee and its potential impact on them.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a concept can be used as a broad frame for positioning companies and the corporate power they hold for enabling social change. CSR captures the essence of the responsibilities and accountability that lie within the realm of corporations in order to achieve sustainable development (Werther & Chandler, 2011). It is about going beyond fulfilling legal obligations to voluntarily contribute to the betterment of society and the environment (Werther & Chandler, 2011). According to the European Commission, CSR is defined as “the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society” for the objective of “smart, sustainable and inclusive growth” (European Commission, 2010). CSR has been considered a valuable tool to promote innovation, competitiveness and sustainable development by the European Union (EU) and accordingly, the EU strongly supports sustainable and responsible enterprises in this region (European Commission, 2011).

However, the concept is still evolving and has no clear definition accepted by all (Farooq et al., 2014; Turker, 2009a; Kakabadse et al., 2007). It is sometimes used interchangeably with terms such as Corporate Sustainability (CS), Triple Bottom Line, Philanthropy, Strategic CSR, and Corporate Citizenship (CC), to name just a few (Pedersen, 2006). They all mean to describe the same aspect of an organization’s responsibilities towards societies. It has moved away from being merely add-on activities to almost compulsory for many companies to implement. Nowadays, for reasons such as, improving brand image reputation (Verčič & Ćorić, 2018), risk management, ethical considerations (Pompper 2018), increase shareholder value, improve stakeholder relationship and employee retention (Goud, 2013) companies are willing to take up responsibility in varying degree (Schönborn et al., 2019).

Below figure illustrates the relationship between different concepts coming under the umbrella of sustainable development (SD).

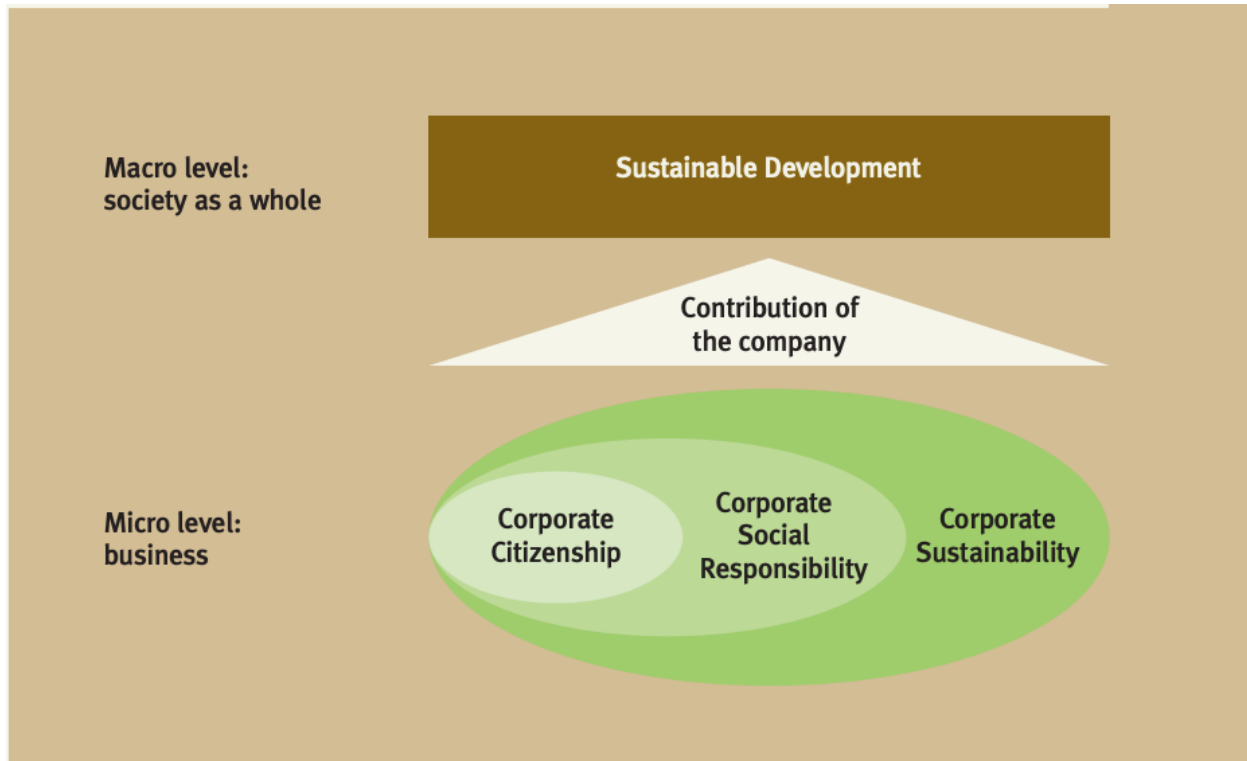


Figure 1: The relationship between CSR, CC, CS and SD (Loew et al., 2004)

From a research point of view, CSR has been explored in conjunction with various organizational aspects such as marketing, public relations and to create competitive advantage (Porter and Kramer, 2002), stakeholder management (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984), consumer perception (El-Kassar, Messarra, & El-Khalil, 2017), social performance (Caroll, 1979), business ethics (Solomon, 1993) and corporate citizenship (Matten & Crane, 2005). In the recent years, there has been a growing body of research on examining the influence of CSR on internal stakeholders i.e employees, their perceptions and attitudes, and the impact of CSR on organizational outcomes (Kim et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2018; Turker, 2009a; Brammer et al., 2007; Peterson, 2004).

For the purpose of this study, CSR has been defined as “corporate behaviours that aim to affect stakeholders positively that goes beyond mere economic benefits” adopted from Turker (2009a). To operationalize CSR and to measure its impact, Turker (2009a) developed a four dimension scale which includes stakeholders, employees, customers and government. Out of the four dimensions, stakeholders, employees and customers are known to be strong predictors of organizational commitment (El-Kassar, Messarra & El-Khalil, 2017) and henceforth used in this study. Given the importance of sustainability in today’s world and the relevance of employee commitment and with the company, the interconnection between these aspects is a subject worthy of study.

In this chapter, the concepts used and examined in this paper will be introduced. Firstly, a brief introduction to employee organizational commitment and its relation to CSR is highlighted, then it moves on to further explain its implications on employee retention in companies and its relation to sustainability.

Next, these concepts are discussed under the context of the IT industry and justification for choosing the IT sector. Further, a problem statement is elaborated to lead on to the purpose of this thesis. Next, a summary of all the essential articles used in this thesis is discussed, and the layout of the document is presented.

1.2 Employee commitment & Sustainability

85% of the workforce is not engaged or actively disengaged at work worldwide (Gallup, 2017). According to the Gallup study, on average 75 out of 100 employees had only a slight emotional attachment to their company in 2017, and this resulted in an economical cost between 77 billion euros and 103 billion euros. Low commitment should be a concern for businesses, as organizations with the highest employee engagement showcase higher productivity by 17% and are generating more profit by 21% than the ones with the lowest engagement among workforce (Gallup, 2017). Not only employee commitment is essential from a financial sense for companies, but it is also a societal concern. As people tend to spend more time at the workplace, low commitment and disengagement at the workplace have negative consequences on employee's wellbeing (Gallup, 2017; Hulin 2014). According to Edelman (2014) study on trust, it was found that, for the public to trust in a company, the most crucial factor was the views expressed by its employees (Gammon, 2014). Hence, for companies to thrive in the long run, employee morale, job satisfaction, employee engagement and employee commitment are essential factors that companies must acknowledge and strengthen.

The concept of employee commitment has been an area of interest and study for scholars and practitioners in the field of organizational studies (Kim et al., 2018). Considering the fact that employees are the face of the organization and one of the most important stakeholders of any given organization, it is relevant to study the employees' perception towards CSR in companies and how that impact their commitment in the company (Brammer, 2007). Stakeholder theory argues that the employees' commitment, knowledge and abilities are vital for generating a long-term value of a company (El-Kassar, Messarra, & El-Khalil, 2017). To foster employee commitment within the company, several scholars have noted that presence of CSR in companies can be instrumental in achieving this (El-Kassar, Messarra, & El-Khalil, 2017; Vilkè, 2014; Lee & Chen, 2018; Zhou, Luo & Tang, 2018). According to Joyner and Payne (2002), their study on employee perception found that 86 % of those who perceived their organizations to be high in CSR, were firmly committed and only 14 % of those who perceived their organization to be low in CSR were committed. CSR presents double advantage; that companies not only can leverage their corporate resources for the planet and invest in communities it operates in but also internally to provide more meaningfulness and value congruence for the employees at work (Glavas, 2016; Gupta, 2017). Committed employees bring organizational benefits and increase organizational performance which results in higher profitability, increased competitive edge and a better employer branding of the organizations (Verčič & Ćorić, 2018; Glavas, 2016; Harter et al. 2002, Schaufeli & Bakker 2004). Committed employees display a higher degree of involvement to the company in the way of bringing their authentic self and being more involved

in the workplace (Ferrer, 2015).

Not only employee commitment is enhanced through CSR, but also employee identification with the company (Brieger, 2018; Gupta, 2017; Kim et al., 2010). Studies have further confirmed that employee commitment has a positive influence on attracting job seekers and retaining existing employees (Yuthas & Epstein, 2012; Shuck, 2013). Thereby, committed employees are less likely to leave the organization and thus creating a sustainable employee base for companies which is mediated by CSR (Mahal, 2012; Shuck, 2013).

1.3 Employee Retention and Sustainability

Talent attraction and skills shortages are pressing issues for many firms around the world today (Wahl & Prause, 2013; Budria & Moro-Egido, 2014; Goud, 2013). Despite the economic slowdown and massive-restructuring, the war for talent continues (Beechler & Woodward, 2009). Human capital is central to the success of any business (Bhati & Manimala, 2011). Therefore, creating a sustainable employee base is crucial for business longevity and healthy working culture.

Companies that aim to be genuinely sustainable must not only focus on its impact on communities locally and globally but also pay attention to its internal sustainability and look towards its employees, who are one of the most important stakeholders for any organization. A recent report by Gallup (2017) noted that 85% of employees function below their potential and do not feel engaged at work. Aspects such as salary, benefits, lack of development and growth opportunities, rewards & recognition are some of the factors that contribute to an employee's lack of interest and contribution at work Gallup (2017). Employees and new hires, especially young professionals, are known to show a strong inclination to companies that foster positive work environments and meaningful work. A study by LinkedIn and Altimeter study shows that when employees feel inspired and empowered, they are 20% more likely to stay in the company (Gammon, 2014).

Scouting for talent is especially true for the Information Technology(IT) industry as they are always on the lookout for new hires and struggle to retain existing employees (Erturk & Vurgan, 2015). Arbetsförmedlingen, the Swedish employment agency has enlisted IT competencies as one of the most sought after skills for future employment (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2018).

1.4 Information Technology and Sustainability

IT companies are seldom thought about when it comes to sustainability issues. However, research shows that around 2% of global carbon dioxide emissions are generated from Information technology and can be compared with the aviation industry (O'Neill, 2010). Throughout their lifecycle; from manufacturing to disposal of IT pieces of equipment, vast amounts of energy and resources are consumed. It is estimated that a typical PC contains over 27 materials, including precious metals (Campbell, Ratcliffe,& Moore, 2013). It is typical for IT companies to have policies to replace PCs after 3-4 years and networking systems after 5-7 years leading to continuous production and upgrading of IT equipment (Campbell & Ratcliffe, Moore, 2013). Monitors/PCs and other devices are often left switched on even when not in use in the offices. Such practices coming from the IT industry worldwide puts enormous strain on natural

resources and energy consumption. When it comes to the after-use of IT products, safe disposal becomes a significant issue. E-waste poses health concerns and often requires strong chemicals for cleaning. In addition to the IT and network types of equipment in offices that consume energy, data centers make a massive contribution to the carbon footprint of many corporations. One hundred fifty million tons of carbon dioxide is released to keep the data centers operational worldwide (Campbell, Ratcliffe, & Moore, 2013). They are usually run inefficiently and grow at a rapid pace due to companies purchasing servers exclusively for individual applications and not using them to their maximum capacity. Therefore, for the reasons mentioned above, it is vital to include the IT industry in the sustainability debate. There have also been rising number of articles on the importance of green IT (Harmon & Demirkan, 2011; Campbell, Ratcliffe, & Moore, 2013; Hirschheim & Newman, 2010; Morgan, 2011). Given the substantial ecological footprint and a growing workforce globally, it would be worth to take a look at the social and financial sustainability challenges that this industry face.

IT companies face a number of organizational challenges. Employee turnover is one of the biggest problems faced by organizations' leaders and managers worldwide. It is especially true for the IT industry, as it is characterized by volatile environments and fast growth (Slaughter & Ang, 1996). IT industry is developing at a rapid pace globally, and it is expected to reach \$5 trillion in 2019 (Business-Sweden, 2017). Despite the economic breakdown of 2008, IT demand has been observed to increase in all sectors and industries, including both tech and non-tech industries (Hirschheim & Newman, 2010; Morgan, 2011). Given the fast growth rate and its impact on organizations' financial and operational success, retention of the IT employee is crucial (Wang, & Kaarst-Brown, 2014). The consequences of employee turnover in companies resulted in a loss of system knowledge and specialized work skills that are either difficult or expensive to replace (Tnay, Othman, Siong, & Lim, 2013). A significant component of IT budgets goes into staffing (internal and external), about 65% in Europe, 48% in SE Asia, 54% in Latin America, and 68% in the US (Luftman & Zadeh, 2011). In order to replace with new staff, it is estimated that about 50% of an employee's annual salary is spent on each new hire (Mbah and Ikemefuna (2012).

Based on reviewed scholarly work it seems evident that fulfilling employees' needs and satisfaction in order to retain them lie in the hands of the companies, and there are ways to do it in a sustainable manner. Therefore, it was chosen to discuss the problem that this thesis aims to address further.

1.5 Problem Statement

Combining all the factors above, it would be worth examining their interconnections empirically. As economies, jobs, and personal lives are becoming increasingly digital, and it is crucial to look at the IT industry through sustainability lenses. Among the Nordics, Sweden has the highest IT spend; about 40% of the share compared to other countries in the region (Business-Sweden, 2017). Stockholm alone boasts of over 22,000 technology companies employing 18% of the city's workforce (Mitzner, 2016). This certainly has not only financial implications for the company but also impacts brand reputation and employees wellbeing (Gallup, 2017; Hulin 2014). The human capital is one of the most significant assets for any company. Thus attracting the right kind of talent and retaining them is considered one of the challenges and many scholars have pointed out that companies performing well on the sustainability field are at an advantageous position. Therefore it is worth examining the employee's perception towards CSR and their commitment to companies. Although there have been previous studies done on the influence of

CSR in organizations, there has been relatively less research on the impact of organizations' involvement in CSR on the employees and their perceptions towards it (Kim et al., 2018; Farooq et al., 2014; Anthony & Hong, 2014). Studies conducted in this topic have looked at various industries such as banking (Albdour & Altarawneh, 2014), manufacturing (Kim et al., 2010; Farooq et al., 2014) and others in different geographical locations, but very minimal studies on the IT industry, especially in Sweden. This poses a significant gap in research, as IT growth is tremendous in Sweden and is considered an essential industry for employment. This study aims to investigate the impact of CSR on employees' organizational commitment in the IT sector with empirical data collected in Sweden. In order to investigate further, the following hypotheses have been designed.

H1: CSR to social and non-social stakeholders has a positive correlation with the organizational commitment of employees in IT companies.

H2: CSR to employees has a positive correlation with the organizational commitment of employees in IT companies.

H3: CSR to customers have a positive correlation with the organizational commitment of employees in IT companies.

1.6 Previous Research

For this study, primary and secondary literature sources were used. To define the relationship between corporate social responsibility and organizational commitment, secondary literature like publications, journals and books were used as primary sources. The search of the literature was performed through Malmö University library search, Lund University library search, Google Scholar web search engine, and WorldCat library search. In order to find related literature such keywords as sustainability, CSR, employee commitment and organizational commitment, IT industry, green-IT, Sweden were mainly used during searching sessions. The references used for this thesis are selected by the relevance of the content for the research, and only peer-reviewed publications were chosen.

Many previous studies have investigated the influence of corporate social responsibility in an organization, but there has been relatively less scholarship examining the impact of CSR on employees and their perception towards it (Kim et al., 2010; Lee & Chen, 2018; Kim et al., 2018). A highly popular and widely cited paper on this topic was a study conducted by Brammer et al., (2007) to examine how the employee organizational commitment is affected by three different aspects of CSR: employee perception of CSR in the community, procedural justice in the organization, provision of training to employees in organizations. Based on the model that draws on the theoretical framework of social identity theory, the researchers undertook a considerable survey on a sample of 4172 employees in the financial service sector in the United Kingdom. The model distinguished between the genders on all the three aspects. The results highlighted that external CSR is highly valued by the employees almost equal to job satisfaction and is positively related to organizational commitment. Other aspects of CSR undertaken in this study, namely procedural justice and employee training both influenced organizational commitment positively. However, it was interesting to note that female employees showed stronger preferences to procedural justice, and male employees showed higher preferences to the provisioning of training in organizations.

This paper showed implications for implementation of CSR strategies in organizations and more especially so for companies with a higher female labour force to pay special attention to procedural justice in the company.

Another study in this respect was conducted by Farooq et al. (2014) in Pakistan, focusing employees within companies manufacturing consumer goods. This paper examined the influence of CSR on affective organizational commitment(AOC) mediated by organizational trust and organizational identification. Scholars had theoretically based their research on social exchange and social identity theory. In their study, researchers conducted a survey on employees in local and multinational manufacturing companies and collected data from 378 employees. Structural equation modelling was employed to test hypotheses of the study, and it was found that both organizational trust and organizational identification fully mediate the CSR and affective organizational commitment in companies. Farooq et al. (2014) also noticed that organizational identification had a significantly stronger mediating effect than organizational trust on commitment. This study also employed Turker (2009a) CSR scales for measurement and out of the four components, CSR towards employees was found to be the strongest predictor of employees' trust, identification and commitment. In this paper, they find that unlike other literature on organizational behaviour, the concept of indirect social exchange, which implies that employees reciprocate the company's benevolent actions in a positive way, even though they are not necessarily the beneficiaries. Finally, the authors indicate the long term implications of intangible resources such as employee attitude and behaviours in creating a competitive advantage for the company by reduced turnover, increased commitment and improved performance in the company (Farooq et al., 2014).

One of the essential studies when positioning organizational commitment under the theoretical frame of social identity is a study conducted by Kim et al. (2010). This study is mainly focused on understanding the relationship between CSR, employee identification with their company and perceived external prestige and goes on further to establish that this relationship leads to employee organizational commitment. CSR has been studied with respect to two factors - CSR associations and CSR participation. They conducted a survey and distributed 150 questionnaires among companies in South Korea. The results reveal that CSR initiatives in companies increase employee-company identification, which, in turn, influences employees' commitment to their company. However, CSR associations influence identification through perceived external prestige and CSR participation has a direct influence on employee identification. Upon analysis, the study concluded that CSR performance is an effective way for companies to maintain a positive relationship with their employees.

A more recent study conducted by Kim et al. (2018) examined the impact of CSR on employees and the underlying mechanisms of it. They studied the influence of CSR on employee attitudes with a particular focus on organizational commitment. In the study, they hypothesized that perceived CSR in companies would enhance employee organizational commitment mediated by two factors, namely, the meaningfulness of work (MOW) and perceived organizational support (POS). To validate their assumptions, they conducted a two-wave time-lagged survey on 378 employees working for companies in South Korea. Results showed that meaningfulness of work and perceived organizational support sequentially mediate the association between CSR and organizational commitment and ultimately implicate that CSR in companies acts as an active component which is beneficial to enhance employee attitudes towards the company.

While most of the research under this topic has been conducted in various fields and industries, less attention has been given to the information technology sector. One of the studies undertaken in the IT field is done by Gupta (2017), where the author explores the relationship between CSR, employee-company identification, organizational commitment and employee engagement. The model places CSR and employee identification as antecedents to employee engagement, which is the mediating factor between them and organizational commitment. In this study, an online questionnaire survey was distributed among employees working in the ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) companies and structural analysis of 290 responses was conducted. The results confirmed the proposed model and established transparent causal relationships among the variables which managerial implications in the IT companies for them to strengthen and integrate CSR to have a more committed and engaged workforce.

1.7 Layout

he thesis is arranged in the following order:

Chapter One: Introduction. Introducing the reader to the topic, aim and purpose of the study.

Chapter Two: a Literature review. A brief overview of the development of the CSR concept and the Social Identity theory and employee organizational commitment.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology. The research method employed for the research, the variables of the research, sampling and data collection, the pretesting of the validity of the survey, and ethical considerations of the study are discussed in details in this chapter.

Chapter Four: Data analysis. Results of the data analysis with the use of SPSS.

Chapter Five: Discussion: The empirical evidence produced from the data analysis are critically assessed.

Chapter Six: Conclusions.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of CSR has been around for a long time, and the earliest definition was provided by Bowen (1953). He defined CSR as “... to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society” (Bowen, 1953, p. 6). He considered 100 biggest corporations as “a vital point of power and decision making”, imploring the potential impact they have on the society (Déroche & Penzenstadler, 2018). The ethos reflects during those times were mainly characterized by social underpinnings. Since then, many scholars have put forward their definitions and reasoning for what is to be considered the responsibility of the corporations towards societies. A long way since then, Carroll (1999) traced the evolution of the concept since the '50s and distinguished between the economic and the non-economic components of CSR (Turker, 2009a). He developed a model in the shape of a pyramid consisting of Philanthropic, Ethical, Legal, and Economic pillars and defined CSR as “The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has on organizations at a given point in time.” (Carroll, 1991). Since it is a commonly accepted fact the businesses’ primary purpose is to produce goods and services in exchange for profit, the economic component is not considered as a “responsibility” but rather an existential reason.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the economic component is omitted from the definition of CSR. The definition currently used here in this thesis is adopted from Turker (2009a), and it reads as follows: “corporate behaviours that aim to affect stakeholders positively that goes beyond mere economic benefits”. As pressure began to mount on companies to take on more responsibility for their actions, the paradigm shifted towards fulfilling obligations to not only shareholders profit maximization but also directed all the stakeholders of the company evolved. As per Carroll (1991), there is a natural fit between the concepts of CSR and stakeholders (p. 43). A seminal work on the perspective of stakeholder management was developed by Edward Freeman in the early 1980s and was called Stakeholder theory. It defined stakeholder in an organization as “those groups or individuals who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives or are those actors with a direct or indirect interest in the company” (Freeman, 1984). Stakeholders of an organization can be classified as internal, external and societal stakeholders (Werther and Chandler, 2011). Stakeholders that have direct impacts on the organizations and involve human entities belong to the primary social stakeholders' category.

On the other hand, non-social stakeholders do not involve human entities which typically consist of the natural environment, nonhuman species, future generations, and the pressure groups that defend them (Turker, 2009a). Over the years, the business community has started to gain a better understanding of the role and influence of various stakeholders on organizations. In parallel, there is a growing body of research concerning stakeholder’s theory in connection with the implementation of CSR in companies (Kim et al., 2018). Organizations design internal or external CSR initiatives depending on the type of stakeholders it intends to address. Internal CSR activities involve employees’ wellbeing, equality, fairness, organizational justice and business ethics (Brammer et al., 2007). Whereas, external CSR can be classified as activities and external involvement or partnership and charities with other relevant organizations referring to “the various forms of company involvement with charitable causes and the non- profits” (Kim et al., 2018).

For any organizational process or initiative to be effective, it must be measured to evaluate the impact. The same applies to CSR as well. There have been several attempts to measure the impact of CSR. However, all the previous measurement methods come with certain limitations, methods such as reputation indices and databases such as The KLD database (Kinder, Lydenberg and Domini), the Fortune Index and Canadian Social Investment Database (CSID) (Turker, 2009). Maignan and Ferrell (2000) argue against these databases due to their lack of theoretical foundation and limiting in terms of area of assessment and geographical distribution. Another standard method was the use of single indicators such as corporate crime index, Pollution control and others or a multi-indicators approach, which is a combination of these indicators together. This method is critiqued for its inadequacy to provide a holistic assessment of the liabilities and responsibilities of corporations towards the environment and societies (Maignan & Ferrell, 2000). Another method is to perform a content analysis of corporate reports regarding companies practices around environmental, societal, employee and consumer issues (Gray et al., 1995). This method gives an objective view of the CSR performance of companies; however, there is a risk that it might not be an actual reflection of reality. There has been empirical evidence in previous researches that highlight these discrepancies (Turker, 2009). Hence, reliability on these reports poses a significant risk for an accurate assessment. Another standard method is to use scales. One of the widely used scales were developed by Aupperle, Carroll and Hatfield (1985) that measured individual CSR values of managers in categories as defined by Carroll's pyramid model. Several other scales of measure such as Quazi and O'brien (2000), Perceived Role of Ethics and Social Responsibility (PRESOR) and scales by Maignan and Ferrell (2000). All the previously used scales either measured individual values rather than actual CSR involvement of organizations or were limited in their inclusion of stakeholders (Turker, 2009a).

Taking into consideration all the critiques as mentioned above to CSR measurement methods, scales developed by Turker (2009a) was found to be the most appropriate for fulfilling the aim of this thesis. Based on the CSR definition provided by Turker (2009a, p.413), which is "corporate behaviours that aim to affect stakeholders positively that goes beyond mere economic benefits", scales have been developed accordingly consisting of four subscales which measures CSR to social and non-social stakeholders, CSR to employees, CSR to customers and CSR to government. Therefore Turker (2009a) questionnaire is a useful measure to assess perceived CSR on organizational commitment on the individual employee level.

2.2 Organizational Commitment

Over the last couple of decades, organizational commitment has received significant attention. The increase in interest from researchers on organizational commitment was due to the idea that this construct is a significant part of employee's psychological conditions such as attitudinal, behavioural, and motivational perspective. (Albdour & Altarawneh, 2014). Morrow (1993) argues that organizational commitment is characterized by attitude and behaviour. Organizational commitment perceived as an attitude indicates feelings such as identification, connection and loyalty to the company as an object of commitment (Morrow, 1993). Scholars indicate that organizational commitment as an attitude can be described with "favourable positive cognitive and affective components about the organization" (Meyer et al., 1990, p.711). Whereas, the behavioural approach focuses on identifying the conditions under which a behaviour, once exhibited, is likely to be repeated, onwards with its implications on changes in attitudes (Drucker, 2006). Reichers (1985) claims that organizational commitment as behaviour can be noticed

“when organizational members are committed to existing groups within the organization” (p. 468). Accordingly, organizational commitment is the way of acting and conducting oneself in which members of an organization are linked to their beliefs that predict and sustain their involvement in the company (Miller & Lee 2001). Regarding motivational approach, O’Reilly (1989, p. 17) defines organizational commitment as “individual’s psychological bond to the organization, including a sense of job involvement, loyalty and belief in the values of the organization”. From such a perspective commitment is characterized by employees’ firm acceptance of organizational goals and values, and eagerness to exercise considerable effort in favour of the organization (Miller & Lee, 2001; Mowday, 1979).

The conception of organizational commitment was initially delineated according to Porter’s 1974 definition as: “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Peterson, 2004). Kohli and Jaworski (1990) claim that committed workers are willing to collaborate to achieve bigger organizational goals. Reichers (1985) mentions that organizational commitment correlates positively with the degree of employee’s involvement within the organization. Meyer and Allen (1991) describe organizational commitment as “a psychological state that characterizes the employee’s relationship with the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). Scholars define organizational commitment in an attitudinal way, which is relevant to this thesis as it is aimed at examining employees’ feelings of attachment and perceptions of organizational activities regarding social responsibility.

Meyer and Allen (1997) have defined three types of organizational commitment, as reflecting three broad themes: affective, continuance and normative. The affective commitment was defined by Meyer and Allen (1997) as “positive feelings of identification with, attachment to and involvement in the work organization” (p.67). Employees that are affectively committed tend to be emotionally involved with organizational activities, show high levels of performance, and are interested in an organization’s success (Drucker, 2006). Continuance commitment, or calculative, describe a situation when individuals recognize costs associated with leaving the organization and base their relationship with a company on it (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Drucker, 2006). The model was initially two-dimensional, but after additional research, Allen and Meyer (1990) distinguished a third aspect – a normative commitment which symbolizes participation in an organization due to existing social norms and standards of behaviour (Drucker, 2006).

In this study, affective commitment has been chosen as the basis to measure employees’ organizational commitment. Affective commitment is proven to be the strongest predictor of desirable outcomes for an organization such as: lower turnover rates and intentions, higher job performance levels, organizational citizenship performance, and absenteeism (Meyer et al., 2002; Bammers, 2007; Farooq et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2018). Moreover, affective commitment is the only dimension of three-component OC that may possess a positive impact on workers’ well-being as an outcome of being negatively correlated with stress and work-family conflict (Meyer et al., 2002). Overall, both companies and workers can benefit from sustainability-related and socially responsible activities that can positively influence the affective commitment of employees. Social identity theory is widely used as a theoretical framework to explain the mechanisms of the relationship between CSR and organizational commitment.

2.3 Social Identity Theory

Social science research on organizational behaviour concerning sustainability activities has recently shown growing interest in employees' attitudes. Numerous studies showcase that social identity theory is one of the most powerful frameworks to explain employees' responses towards sustainability activities in the company (Kim et al., 2018; Brieger 2018; Farooq et al., 2014; Turker, 2009). A self-concept of an individual consists of two specific dimensions: personal identity and social identity. Personal identity refers to the combination of specific individual traits and attributes such as personal qualities, talents and specialization (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). The second one is social identity, a concept introduced by Henry Tjafel (1981), which he defines as "...that part of the individuals' self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance of that membership." (Tjafel, 1981, p.255).

The social identity theory claims that people tend to classify themselves into social groups, which is powered by their desire to establish one's self-identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). According to scholarly work regarding basic human needs, individuals seek a sense of belonging, relatedness, association with a group, and identification (Brieger, 2018; Meynhardt, 2009). The feeling of belonging to a social group plays an essential part in an individual's self-image (Stets & Bruke, 2000). Respectively, social identification allows people to fulfil their psychological desire for self-categorization and a need to belong to a collective.

Within social identity theory, all aspects of an individual's self-image are influenced by memberships in social organizations, and because people usually develop secure connections through commercial relationships, they tend to define themselves primarily by participation in companies or organizations they work for (Anthony & Hong, 2014). With that being said, employees also prefer to identify themselves with social organizations defined by a positive reputation in the society (Brammer et. al., 2007). Moreover, when employees perceive organizational reputation and social performance as good one, it is easier for the company to attract and retain employees as well as affect their attitudes towards work positively (Peterson, 2004; Kim et al., 2018).

Mirvis describes three levels of employee involvement with corporate social responsibility and one of them is applicable from the context of social identity theory – the relational model. This model highlights that social and individual selves are strongly connected. An individual can have many roles; for example, a relative, co-worker, citizen and their self-image would integrate identities from various roles and memberships. In alliance with Turker's (2009a) study, Mirvis (2012) findings demonstrate that CSR brings about a conversation between the corporate and individual identity of employees, which influences their organizational attitudes and behaviour. Social identification is often driven by self-enhancement and individuals tend to associate themselves with social groups regarded as prominent and prestigious from their perception, so they can regard themselves in a positive light and satisfy one's need for self-esteem (De Roeck, 2016). Therefore, when a company is trying to additionally stimulate people's identities as global citizens or part of a community and society, they are more likely to expose their authentic self at work and be committed (Mirvis, 2012).

Employees' behaviour, as some scholars argue, can be driven by a hierarchy of human needs with a fundamental desire for safety and socialization (Brieger, 2018). Although once these milestones are

achieved in the hierarchy, future need for self-actualization and achieving one's full potential suggests that salary itself can keep an individual at work physically, but it will not keep them committed effectively. Glavas (2013) note that employees show higher involvement, creativity, and cooperation quality when they work for sustainability concerned and socially responsible organizations. Future employees showcase a higher level of interest to organizations concerned with corporate sustainability activities, in parallel, currently employed individuals display increased work commitment and engagement (Pompper, 2018).

Correspondingly, the organizational identification theory considered as a spin-off of social identity theory, indicates that employees are appealed to sustainability activities of a firm as it serves an alignment of moral values and provides an opportunity to realize a higher purpose in work (Galvas, 2013), hence more satisfactory outcomes on both personal and professional levels. Individuals tend to define their self-image in a social context (Barammer, 2007); therefore, responsible social performance and positive public image of an organization are likely to increase employees' willingness to identify with the company and actively commit. The arguments as mentioned above also support the assumption of Turker (2009a) study that the Social Identity Theory can be used as a fundament in explaining the relation between sustainability-related activities in organizations and employees' attitudes towards work, which will be used as the base in this thesis work.

3. METHODOLOGY

Methodology in social sciences describes how the research is conducted. It guides research practices and therefore explains what methods or techniques to use in order to conduct research. The methodology enables the researchers to design their research to be able to draw logical conclusions (6 & Bellamy, 2012). To give clarity to the reader, it is essential to explicitly put forth methodology including the principles that drive the selection and use of research methods for collecting and analyzing data in order to answer current research inquiry. The purpose of this research is to study the impact of CSR on employees' commitment to organizations in the IT sector in Sweden. Since there has been no previous study with this focus, the current study is explanatory. In the following chapter, methodological considerations will be presented and choices for this thesis. First, an ontological and epistemological standpoint of this research will be discussed. Secondly, this section will present the research strategy which will describe the choice of method for data collection and analysis.

3.1 Ontology

Ontology is the philosophical stance which is concerned with the question of reality or rather what is going on in the world. 6 and Bellamy (2012, p. 60) defines ontology as “a sub-discipline of philosophy, which is concerned with the question of what exists and what status we are ascribing”. It examines the researcher's position to describe an unobservable and conceptual phenomenon. It gives a basis to look at how the world operates and how they view social reality. According to Brown (2006), reality can be viewed as objectively as external to the individual or subjectively as internal cognitive development. To this end, ontology directs to choose objectivism or constructivism approach to viewing reality. Objectivism(positivism) approach is the “social phenomena, and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors” (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Whereas, constructionism refers to “ontological position, which asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors” (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

For this thesis, researchers have chosen positivism as sour ontological standpoint. The purpose of this study is to mainly investigate the impact of sustainability on the employee's self-identity and organizational commitment. Variables such as CSR and organizational commitment that have tangible realities will be discussed. Researchers believe that variables can be observed and tested through surveys. Therefore the ontological approach chosen for this study is positivism.

3.2 Epistemology

“Epistemology is sub-disciplines of philosophy which are concerned with the actual status of knowledge that can achieve either by observation or by inference” (6 & Bellamy, 2012). It can be said that epistemology is the study of knowledge production. Epistemological considerations guide researchers with the steps that are suitable for generating data about a particular phenomenon under study, which depends on the assumptions made on social reality. There are two types in which knowledge can be produced - positivist and interpretive. In the positivist approach, the data is grounded in reality by numbers and measurements, and it is purely factual; hence, there is less chance of bias (reference). Whereas, in the interpretivism approach, researchers take into account the differences in people and their attitudes and feelings. They interpret the reality as socially constructed and is usually characterized by

analyzing language constructs, shared meanings and consciousness (6 & Bellamy, 2012). According to (Saunders et al., 2009), the positivist philosophy is an appropriate approach for studies requiring data to be collected in the form of numbers and facts and further use statistical tools to analyze them. On the other hand, interpretivism philosophy entails data collection in the form of narratives, interviews and observations. (Saunders et al., 2009).

In this research, it is believed that the approach most suitable for knowledge creation about the impact of CSR on employee commitment and social identity is to measure and know the facts and figures in a concrete way. Had there been already such data existing in the research scholarship, this study would have taken a different approach to get a deeper understanding from a constructivist perspective. Since this is missing, it was decided to proceed with positivist epistemological position and use of theoretical knowledge to define the hypotheses and put them to test them under empirical analysis. Hence, for the purpose of this study and the way knowledge was viewed by researchers, the choice of epistemology standpoint is positivist.

3.3 Inference

The inference is the “(1) the process of making claims about one set of phenomena that cannot be directly observed (2) on the basis of what we know about a set of things that we have observed where (3) the choice of research instruments depends on a theory of how those instruments work” (6 & Bellamy, 2012). Accordingly, there are three ways in which inferences can be made in a particular study: descriptive, explanatory, exploratory. For this research, it was set out to understand the employee’s commitment and the influence of CSR in organizations on them. To be able to understand this relationship, the statistical approach was selected to explain the association between these variables. 6 & Bellamy (2012) refers to Explanatory inference as the type of inference undertaken to answer questions like “Why x has done y? Alternatively, what caused x to behave like this?”. They also go on to explain that this is the preferred choice of inference as “process of showing that two variables are strongly associated with each other”.

3.4 Research Design

In the following section, the research design, including research approach, research strategy, empirical data collection method, ethical considerations and a note on reliability and validity of this research will be presented. This section aims to explain and justify the methodological choices and standpoints of this thesis.

3.4.1 Research Approach

In the process of doing thesis research, the role and usage of theory play a significant part. It is vital to form the beginning to have a clear understanding of the usage of theory. There are two approaches to using the theory in research - deductive and inductive. In a deductive approach, a hypothesis is first formulated depending on what the researchers know, and then a research strategy is made to test the hypotheses. On the other hand, the inductive approach starts by posing a question from a position in which the researchers have no idea whether it might be plausible or relevant for the subject in question (6 & Bellamy, 2012). A research strategy is used in which the researchers aim to develop a theory by the help of empirical material to make their data analysis (Saunders et al., 2009).

This thesis is constructed on the basis of hypotheses formulation based on the theoretical framework discussed in the previous chapter. It builds on the work of research conducted previously by other researchers. By taking a closer look at the way this thesis has been developed, it can be said it follows a deductive approach. According to 6 & Bellamy (2012), deductive research begins with a hypothesis and aim to prove or disprove it and also one of the characteristics of deductive approach is that it builds upon previous research (6 & Bellamy, 2012). Hence, the research approach of this thesis is that of deductive.

3.4.2 Variable-Oriented Research

Choices for research design in social sciences come in two categories: Case-based design and Variable oriented design. According to 6 & Bellamy (2012) “The type of design that creates, collects and categorizes data for analyzing relationships between variables is called variable-oriented research (VOR)”. For the purposes of this thesis, researchers will base the research design on Variable oriented research design because it typically analyses relationships between variables from the set of observable data (6 & Bellamy, 2012). In this type of research design, statistical tools are used to conduct analysis on data and tests the relationship between two factors or two types of variables which are categorized as dependent and independent variables. “The outcomes will be treated as dependent variables (DVs), and the factors we believe are causing them as independent variables (Ns)” (6 & Bellamy, 2012). In this thesis, researchers try to understand the relationship and level of impact the CSR has on organizational commitment. In this case, the chosen variables are CSR (stakeholders, employees & customers), Organizational commitment and other demographic variables such as age, gender, income, position, education level, company size and tenure.

3.4.3 Independent Variables

The independent variable for this research is chosen to assess the degree of CSR involvement in companies on an organizational level. Therefore CSR encompassing three different components is chosen to be independent variables. To fulfil the purpose of this thesis, widely accessible and validated scales from Turker (2009a) have been used. Initially, Turker (2009b) created a 42-item scale to measure the level of CSR perception of employees. The researcher combined items produced in their exploratory study with different scale items from advanced measurement systems from Carroll (1979), Quazi and O’Brien (2000) and other studies. Initially, the CSR measurement scale contained 42 items (Turker, 2009b), then a pilot study aimed at testing the validity and reliability of the scale was conducted. Based on the results of a pilot study, several adjustments were made, and (1) eliminated highly inter-correlated items together with (2) unrelated items. Finally, a 17-item CSR measurement scale has emerged (Turker, 2009b). The updated scale is aimed to measure CSR across four dimensions: CSR to social and non-social stakeholders, CSR to employees, CSR to customers and CSR to government. In further scale, development author has eliminated the CSR to government factor due to weak strength (Turker, 2009b). Following the same fashion, the current research will employ the following three elements:

- CSR to social and non-social stakeholders (targeting actions towards the natural environment, a community within which the organization functions, the larger society, non-governmental institutions, and future generations).
- CSR to employees

- CSR to customers

Therefore, for this research, a 15-item CSR scale was employed, eliminating two items measuring CSR to government factor, from the publication of Turker (2009b).

3.4.4 The Dependent Variable

In this thesis, the dependent variable is the level of employee affective organizational commitment. In scholarly work from recent decades, several variations of the Questionnaire about Organizational Commitment were created (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mowday et al., 1979; Turker 2009b). Allen and Meyer (1990) authors of series of research papers about the measurement of organizational commitment, initially created a pool with 66 items which would primarily combine items from previously developed questionnaires and other authors' publications. In order to test the accuracy of a total of 66 items, Allen and Meyer administrated a survey to full-time employees from three organizations. After analyzing answers from 256 participants, scholars developed a final Organizational Commitment Questionnaire which would contain 24 items, with eight items for each of three theoretical components of organizational commitment: affective, continuance, and normative. Therefore, following the purpose of this study to explore the impact of CSR on employees' AOC, the affective commitment scale from Allen and Meyer (1990) study is adopted for this research. Responses were collected across a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to agree strongly.

3.4.5 Control Variables

Meyer and Allen (1997), in their study of organizational commitment, described three types of variables that were theorized as antecedents of affective commitment: work experience, organizational characteristics, and person characteristics. Variables regarding organizational characteristics consist of items about the structure of an organization, strategy of communicating an organizational policy to employees, and employees' perception of policy fairness (Meyer & Allen 1997). Variables about personal characteristics include age, gender, tenure with the organization, personality, and values characteristics (Meyer & Allen 1997). With regards to the scope of these research items such as informant's age, gender, level of education, position level, tenure, size of a company, and participant's salary were included into questionnaire and research design as control variables.

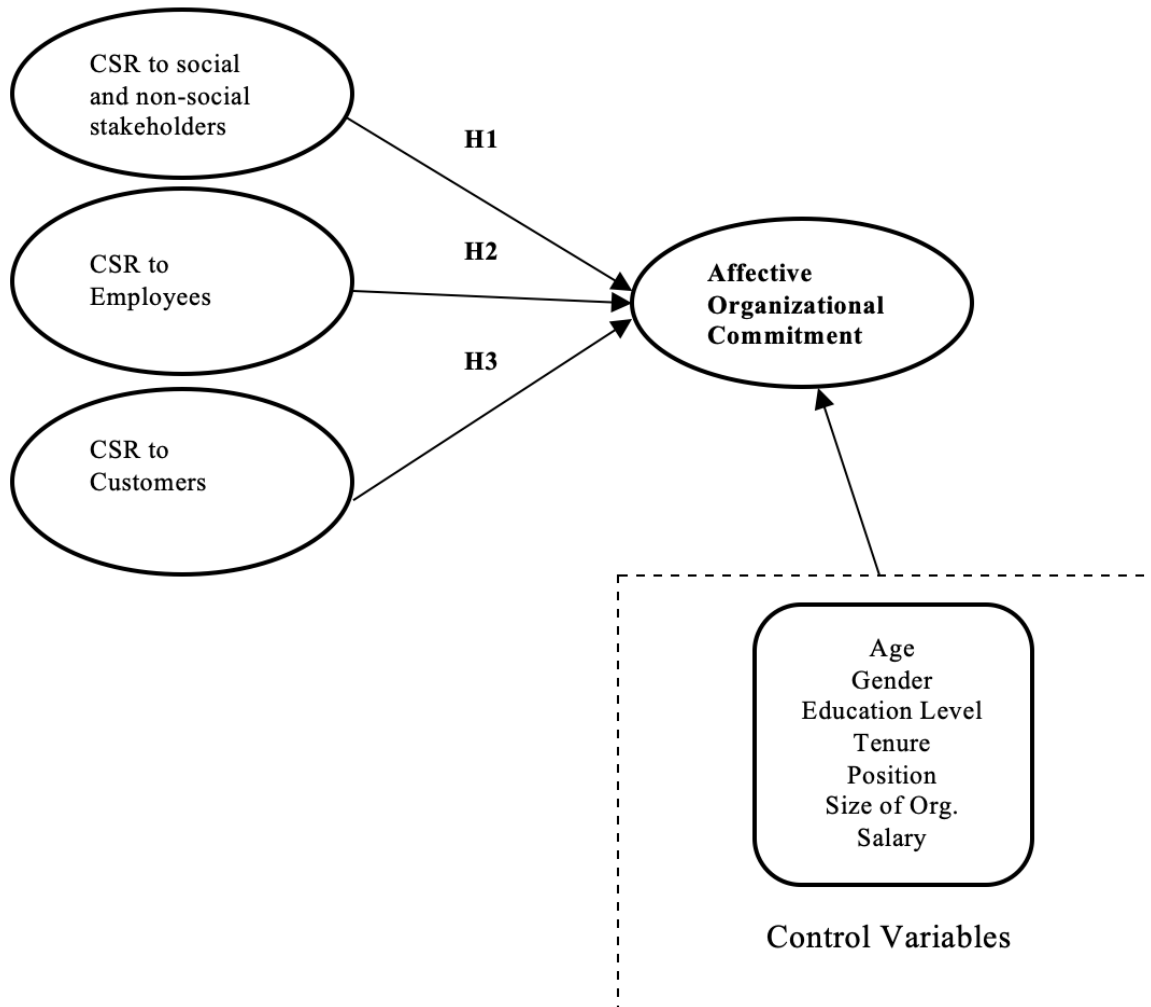


Figure 2: The conceptual model

3.5 Data Collection Method

A quantitative research method of the questionnaire was employed for this thesis to discover the impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on employees' organizational commitment amongst working professionals in IT companies in Sweden. Researchers choose quantitative method usually when they want to find out causes of social phenomenon, confirm a hypothesis about phenomena (Creswell, 2013), and to generate knowledge about the social world (Allen, 2017). Quantitative research tends to involve sets of data about a specific group of people, known as a sample population. The sets of data are expected to be rather large in order to ensure representativeness of the study; therefore, the results of quantitative research can produce an explanation of what is influencing selected groups of people (Allen, 2017).

3.5.1 Sampling

This research uses a method of a questionnaire to obtain the empirical material needed to explore the relationship between corporate social responsibility and affective organizational commitment of employees in IT in Sweden. Data collection for this study was performed during April and May 2019. In

relation to the purpose of this thesis, the sampling frame is targeting people working in IT companies in Sweden. A non-probability sampling strategy was used for this study, employing the combination of voluntary and convenient sampling. During the survey collection period, questionnaires were distributed both directly (via personal invitations to professionals working in IT companies in Sweden within researchers' network) and indirectly inviting people to complete the survey on social networks like Facebook and LinkedIn through public posts. More than 837 invitations to complete a survey were distributed via personal messages to people who meet the requirements of the survey on LinkedIn. It can also be said that respondent-driven sampling (RDS) strategy was employed for this study. RDS is an advanced version of snowball sampling in which initial informants provide researchers with suggestions for finding related respondents and also recruit new respondents for the study by themselves which creates a chain, reaching difficult-to-reach groups of people (Vogt, 2010). In this study, people from researcher's networks, working in IT companies in Sweden, distributed the questionnaire among their colleagues; some professionals contacted via LinkedIn platform also reached out to other potential informants, recruiting new respondents for this research. Data was collected through the use of the Internet, distributing a link to the questionnaire (appendix 2) together with the invitation letter (Appendix 1). All data were collected anonymously, and it remains in sole possession of researchers, has been exclusively used for research purposes and will remain in the same way. In total, 164 complete surveys were received. The summary of the participant's socio-demographic characteristics is demonstrated in Table 3.1.

3.5.2 Questionnaire Development

In this thesis study, a 30-item questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was distributed to informants. The survey consists of three parts, namely:

- CSR scale (independent variable), consists of 15 items that are divided into three blocks regarding corporate social responsibility to (1) social and non-social stakeholders, (2) employees, (3) customers according to Turker's (2009a) scale development study.
- Employees affective organizational commitment scale (dependent variable), consists of 8 items developed in the Allen and Meyer (1990) study.
- Socio-demographic data (control variable), consists of 7 items.

Perceived CSR and Employees' affective OC were measured across a five-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Responses for socio-demographic items were collected either through multiple-choice questions or open-ended questions.

Table 3.1. Summary of participants' socio-demographic characteristics

Item	Option	Percentage
Age	Under 20	0.0
	21 to 30	36.6
	31 to 40	49.0
	41 to 50	12.4
	51 to 60	2.0
Gender	Female	26.4
	Male	73.6
Education Level	Less than a high school diploma	0.0
	High school degree or equivalent	6.1
	Bachelor's degree	46.7
	Master's degree	41.8
	Doctorate (e.g. PhD)	1.2
Tenure with Organization	Other	4.2
	Under 2 years	44.1
	2-5 years	36.0
	5-10 years	15.5
	10-20 years	4.3
Position Level	Over 20 years	0.0
	Junior Level	13.3
	Lower-Middle	13.9
	Middle Level	53.3
	Upper-Middle	13.3
Position Level	Top Level	6.1
	Junior Level	13.3
	Lower-Middle	13.9
	Middle Level	53.3
	Upper-Middle	13.3
Size of Organization	Top Level	6.1
	Fewer than 10 employees	7.3
	10-49 employees	22.0
	50-249 employees	23.8
Salary in SEK (before TAX)	More than 249 employees	47.0
	15 000 – 25 000	1.6
	25 001 – 35 000	32.0
	35 001 – 45 000	40.8
	45 001 – 55 000	19.2
	55 001 – 65 000	4.8
	65 001 – 75 000	1.6

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Social science research place high importance on ethics while conducting research (Saunders et al., 2009). The research process needs to be conducted and reported in an ethical manner. To this end, researchers have acknowledged the and essential original source of knowledge and in this effort avoided any plagiarism in this thesis. The data from various sources is cited carefully, and references are provided in the reference list at the end of the thesis. During the data collection process, consent was obtained from

the participants before participating in the survey. It goes without saying that no respondent was coerced into taking the survey. The questionnaire they were provided contained a cover page with a note to assure the participants about the anonymity and security of their data. The data collected through surveys for analysis is kept confidential. In addition to this, data integrity was maintained, and no information has tampered in the process. The results obtained are an accurate representation of the data analyzed by SPSS.

3.7 Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the consistency or the degree to which the results of the research are trustworthy. It means to say that if the research is conducted again in the future under the same conditions, it should yield similar results (6 & Bellamy, 2012). The Cronbach's Alpha was deployed on each variable to measure internal consistency. This study is consisted of variables having a different dimension, and derived results are based on the relationships among these variables of three-component CSR and organizational commitment. Researchers believe that the results are consistent, and this ensures that the research conducted in the frame of this thesis could be replicated in the future.

Validity is concerned with the accuracy of findings and the degree to which the statements reflect the truth in the research (6 & Bellamy, 2012). The concept of validity pays attention, particularly to the efficiency of measurement of variables as expected. It is essential to keep in mind that there must be no bias during data collection and analysis in the research. To present a high level of validity, the researchers should make sure that the survey questions accurately measure the expected measurements to test the hypotheses without anyone's influence (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The questionnaire construction was based on already tested scales of CSR and organizational commitment; hence, the level of validity was quite high. Besides, a correlation analysis was also performed on research variables to contain the interrelationships between the variables and also show the significance amongst different variables, which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

SPSS version 25.0 was used in order to perform data analysis in this thesis. The data was collected by conducting a survey. The gathered empirical material was analyzed by applying the following statistical methods:

- Internal consistency reliability.
- Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficient analysis.
- Hierarchical regression analysis.

This chapter will showcase findings from the collected empirical data in the order, as mentioned above. More detailed and critical analysis based on results from this chapter will be described in Chapter 5.

4.1 Internal Consistency Reliability

The data for this thesis study includes the CSR scales, measuring perceptions of employees regarding organizational sustainability-related activities towards social and non-social stakeholders (CSR-STKH) (1), employees (CSR-EMP) (2), customers (CSR-CUST) (3), Affective Organizational Commitment (AOC) scale, and the socio-demographic data. Responses of informants varied depending on whether they agree or disagree with provided statements; answers were collected with 5-point Likert-scale where one strongly disagrees, and five corresponds “strongly agree” answer.

To analyze the internal consistency of each scale used in this study, the average of inter-item correlations and the Cronbach’s alpha was examined and reviewed. Cronbach’s alpha is a statistical formula that is often used by scholars to illustrate that tests and scales that were constructed or adapted for research studies do fit for purpose. The average inter-item correlation for AOC, CSR-STKH, CSR-EMP, CSR-CUST, and (see table 4.1) showed the value higher than the suggested value of minimum 0.20 (Piedmont, 2014). Correspondingly Cronbach’s Alpha values were all higher than the advised level of 0.70 as a significant level of reliability (Taber, 2018). Only the CSR to Customers’ Cronbach’s Alpha value is slightly below 0.70, which could be explained as due to a small number of items (Tavakol, 2011) only three questions, in a scale.

Table 4.1. Reliability analysis results

Scales	Number or Items	Average inter-item correlations	Cronbach’s Alpha	Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items
AOC	8	0.436	0.863	0.861
CSR-STKH	7	0.582	0.906	0.907
CSR-EMP	5	0.585	0.876	0.876
CSR-CUST	3	0.430	0.689	0.694

Table 4.2. Correlation coefficients Analysis Results

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.AOC	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)										
2. CSR-STKH	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.441** .000									
3. CSR-EMP	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.589** .000	.552** .000								
4. CSR-CUST	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.430** .000	.428** .000	.557** .000							
5. Age	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.129 .113	-.152 .061	-.068 .405	-.103 .204						
6. Gender	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.125 .113	.138 .079	-.009 .913	-.003 .965	-.161 .047					
7. Education Level	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.075 .338	.029 .710	.076 .334	.041 .600	-.028 .730	.007 .934				
8. Tenure	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.047 .556	-.001 .995	-.050 .526	.003 .970	.276** .001	-.107 .180	.004 .963			
9. Position Level	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.022 .783	-.196** .012	.003 .968	-.026 .739	.370** .000	-.188** .016	-.076 .330	.215** .006		
10. Size of Organization	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.062 .433	.215** .006	-.036 .652	-.029 .716	-.079 .332	.148 .059	.036 .644	.052 .514	-.244** .002	
11. Salary	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.027 .768	-.026 .772	.073 .420	-.060 .505	.496** .000	-.160 .076	.043 .632	.189* .035	.478** .000	.093 .300

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.2 Correlation Coefficient Analysis

The correlation coefficient analysis of dependent and independent variables was performed, and its results are summarized and presented in table 4.2. As a rule for social sciences analysis “correlation is considered to be very low if the coefficient has a value under 0.20 and is considered as low if the value ranges between 0.21 and 0.40. A coefficient value of above 0.70 is considered high.” (Singh, 2016). The CSR to employees had the highest positive correlation to the employee organizational commitment at 0.59 (significant at the 0.01 level) among the three components of the CSR in Turker’s (2009a) scale. The correlation coefficient between organizational commitment and CSR towards social and non-social stakeholders showed the second highest value at 0.44. The smallest value out of three component scale has a correlation coefficient between CSR to customers and AOC at 0.43, however, is significant at the 0.01 level. With regards to the correlations between employees’ organizational commitment and the variables representing socio-demographic characteristics of informants, as demonstrated in table 3.1. Among seven items: age, gender, education level, tenure with an organization, position level, size of an organization, salary; none was significantly correlated to organizational commitment.

In order to see the correlations between the organizational commitment variable and separate items of three-component CSR scale, a break-down analysis was performed. The correlation coefficient analysis between organizational commitment joint variable and the 7-items of corporate social responsibility to social and non-social stakeholders scale is presented in table 8.1. The highest positive correlation coefficient of 0.461 appeared between OC and the item “The company I work for targets sustainable growth, which considers future generations.” is significant at the level of 0.01. It is followed shortly by 0.406 (significant at the 0.01) for the item “The company I work for contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of society”. The lowest value of correlation coefficients was found between OC and the item “The company I work for supports non-governmental organizations working in problematic areas.” at 0.226. Results from the correlation coefficient analysis between organizational commitment and the 5-items of the CSR to employee scale are demonstrated in table 8.2 (see Appendix 3). The highest positive correlation coefficient of 0.581 (significant at the 0.01) emerged between OC and the item “In the company I work for, the managerial decisions related to the employees are usually fair.” The lowest value of correlation at 0.419 (significant at the 0.01) appeared between organizational commitment and the item “The company I work for supports employees who want to acquire additional education.” The CSR-CUST scale has only three items, and the results of the correlation coefficient are presented in table 4.2

4.3 Hierarchical regression analysis for Hypotheses

As it is evident from the previous passage, results of the correlation coefficient analysis showcase that all three dimensions of the CSR variable contain positive and statistically significant correlations with OC, by that supporting all relationships assumed in three hypotheses in this thesis. A two-step hierarchical analysis was performed in order to assess if three CSR dimensions have any contribution to the level of organizational commitment once the control variables are added into the analysis models.

4.3.1 Hierarchical regression analysis for the Hypothesis 1

The first step of the hierarchical regression analysis was to enter the control variables into the prediction model. Combined control variables contribute to the variance in employees AOC with 0.5% at the adjusted R² level (significant at the 0.05) (see table 4.3). There were no significant positive relations between individual control variables and employees' OC with significant at the level of 0.01 (see table 4.4).

In the further analysis step, the independent variable (CSR-STKH) was entered into the model. The adjusted R Square constituted 28.4%, and the R² change was 26.8% which signals that the added CSR-STKH variable to the model enlarges the model's predictive capacity of anticipating OC by 26.8% (see table). The standardized Beta coefficient of the CSR-STKH was 0.486 and the significance at the level of 0.01 (table 4.5). According to ANOVA test results for the second step of the model, the F-value is at 6.854 with significant at the level of 0.01 (see table 4.4). The parameters mentioned above of the hierarchical regression analysis confirm the significance of the whole model and support the 1st Hypothesis.

Table 4.3 The hierarchical regression analysis for Hypothesis 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.253 ^a	.064	.005	.92811	.064	1.088	7	111	.376
2	.577 ^b	.333	.284	.78731	.268	44.251	1	110	.000

a. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age.

b. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age, CSR-STKH

Table 4.4 The hierarchical regression analysis for Hypothesis 1: ANOVA table

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.560	7	.937	1.088	.376 ^b
	Residual	95.614	111	.861		
	Total	102.174	118			
2	Regression	33.989	8	4.249	6.854	.000 ^c
	Residual	68.185	110	.620		
	Total	102.174	118			

a. Dependent Variable: OC

b. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age.

c. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age, CSR-STKH

Table 4.5 The hierarchical regression analysis for **Hypothesis 1: Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1.	(Constant)	1.976	.752		2.629	.010			
	Age	.019	.016	.128	1.159	.249	.124	.109	.106
	Gender	.297	.202	.138	1.473	.144	.131	.138	.135
	Education Level	.138	.119	.107	1.161	.248	.106	.110	.107
	Tenure	-.022	.027	-.076	-.800	.425	-.053	-.076	-.073
	Position Level	.014	.105	.015	.133	.894	.066	.013	.012
	Size of Organization	-.105	.091	-.113	-1.151	.252	-.124	-.109	-.106
2.	(Constant)	.880	.659		1.335	.185			
	Age	.034	.014	.230	2.432	.017	.124	.226	.189
	Gender	.095	.174	.044	.544	.588	.131	.052	.042
	Education Level	.055	.102	.043	.543	.588	.106	.052	.042
	Tunure	-.023	.023	-.081	-1.004	.318	-.053	-.095	-.078
	Position Level	.086	.089	.091	.959	.340	.066	.091	.075
	Size of organization	-.207	.079	-.223	-2.619	.010	-.124	-.242	-.204
	CSR – STKH	.486	.073	.562	6.652	.000	.458	.536	.518

a. Dependent Variable: AOC

4.3.2 Hierarchical regression analysis for the Hypothesis 2

The first step of the hierarchical regression analysis was to enter the control variables into the prediction model the same way as it was done in the previous section. During the second step, the CSR-EMP was added into the model. After the second step, the adjusted R Square explains 38.7 % of the variance of the employees' OC. The R Square Change constitutes 36.5% (see table 4.6). The standardized Beta-coefficient of the Corporate Social Responsibility towards Employees was 0.627 with significant at the 0.01 (see table 4.8) and the ANOVA test's F-value for the second step of the model showed 10.332 and was significant at the 0.01 (see table 4.7). Such parameters confirm the significance of the whole model and therefore support the second Hypothesis.

Table 4.6 The hierarchical regression analysis for **Hypothesis 2: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.253 ^a	.064	.005	.92811	.064	1.088	7	111	.376
2	.655 ^b	.429	.387	.72825	.365	70.284	1	110	.000

a. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age.

b. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age, CSR-EMP

Table 4.7 The hierarchical regression analysis for **Hypothesis 2: ANOVA table**

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.560	7	.937	1.088	.376 ^b
	Residual	95.614	111	.861		
	Total	102.174	118			
2	Regression	43.835	8	5.479	10.332	.000 ^c
	Residual	58.339	110	.530		
	Total	102.174	118			

a. Dependent Variable: AOC

b. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age.

c. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age, CSR-EMP

Table 4.8 The hierarchical regression analysis for **Hypothesis 2: Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1.	(Constant)	1.976	.752		2.629	.010			
	Age	.019	.016	.128	1.159	.249	.124	.109	.106
	Gender	.297	.202	.138	1.473	.144	.131	.138	.135
	Education Level	.138	.119	.107	1.161	.248	.106	.110	.107
	Tenure	-.022	.027	-.076	-.800	.425	-.053	-.076	-.073
	Position Level	.014	.105	.015	.133	.894	.066	.013	.012
	Size of Organization	-.105	.091	-.113	-1.151	.252	-.124	-.109	-.106
2.	(Constant)	-.019	.636		-.030	.976			
	Age	.029	.013	.200	2.297	.024	.124	.214	.165
	Gender	.315	.158	.146	1.987	.049	.131	.186	.143
	Education Level	-.037	.096	-.029	-.387	.699	.106	-.037	-.028
	Tunure	-.005	.021	-.019	-.255	.799	-.053	-.024	-.018
	Position Level	.055	.082	.058	.666	.507	.066	.063	.048
	Size of organization	-.101	.072	-.109	-1.414	.160	-.124	-.134	-.102
	CSR – EMP	.647	.077	.627	8.384	.000	.594	.624	.604

a. Dependent Variable: AOC

4.3.3 Hierarchical regression analysis for the Hypothesis 3

The 3rd Hypothesis was tested by following the same procedures described in the previous two sections. In the second step of the analysis, the CSR-CUST was added into the model. The Adjusted R Square constituted 27.7%, and the R Square Change was at 26.2% (see table 4.9). The CSR-CUST' standardized Beta-coefficient appeared at 0.521 and was significant at the 0.01 (see table 4.11). The F-value of the ANOVA test constituted 6.647 in the second step of the model while was significant at the 0.05 (see table 4.10). These parameters of the performed analysis confirm the significance of the model and therefore provides support to the third Hypothesis.

Table 4.9 The hierarchical regression analysis for **Hypothesis 3: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.253 ^a	.064	.005	.92811	.064	1.088	7	111	.376
2	.571 ^b	.326	.277	.79131	.262	42.697	1	110	.000

a. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age.

b. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age, CSR-EMP

Table 4.10 The hierarchical regression analysis for **Hypothesis 3: ANOVA table**

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.560	7	.937	1.088	.376 ^b
	Residual	95.614	111	.861		
	Total	102.174	118			
2	Regression	33.295	8	4.162	6.647	.000 ^c
	Residual	68.879	110	.626		
	Total	102.174	118			

a. Dependent Variable: AOC

b. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age.

c. Predictors (Constant): Salary, Size of Organization, Position Level, Tenure, Education Level, Gender, Age, CSR-CUST

Table 4.11 The hierarchical regression analysis for **Hypothesis 3: Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1.	(Constant)	1.976	.752		2.629	.010			
	Age	.019	.016	.128	1.159	.249	.124	.109	.106
	Gender	.297	.202	.138	1.473	.144	.131	.138	.135
	Education Level	.138	.119	.107	1.161	.248	.106	.110	.107
	Tenure	-.022	.027	-.076	-0.800	.425	-.053	-.076	-.073
	Position Level	.014	.105	.015	.133	.894	.066	.013	.012
	Size of Organization	-.105	.091	-.113	-1.151	.252	-.124	-.109	-.106
2.	(Constant)	-.817	.770		-1.061	.291			
	Age	.024	.014	.161	1.709	.090	.124	.161	.134
	Gender	.385	.173	.178	2.228	.028	.131	.208	.174
	Education Level	.047	.102	.036	.457	.649	.106	.044	.036
	Tunure	-.020	.023	-.070	-0.862	.390	-.053	-.082	-.068
	Position Level	.055	.089	.058	.613	.541	.066	.058	.048
	Size of organization	-.089	.078	-.095	-1.138	.258	-.124	-.108	-.089
	CSR – CUST	.650	.099	.521	6.534	.000	.497	.529	.512

a. Dependent Variable: AOC

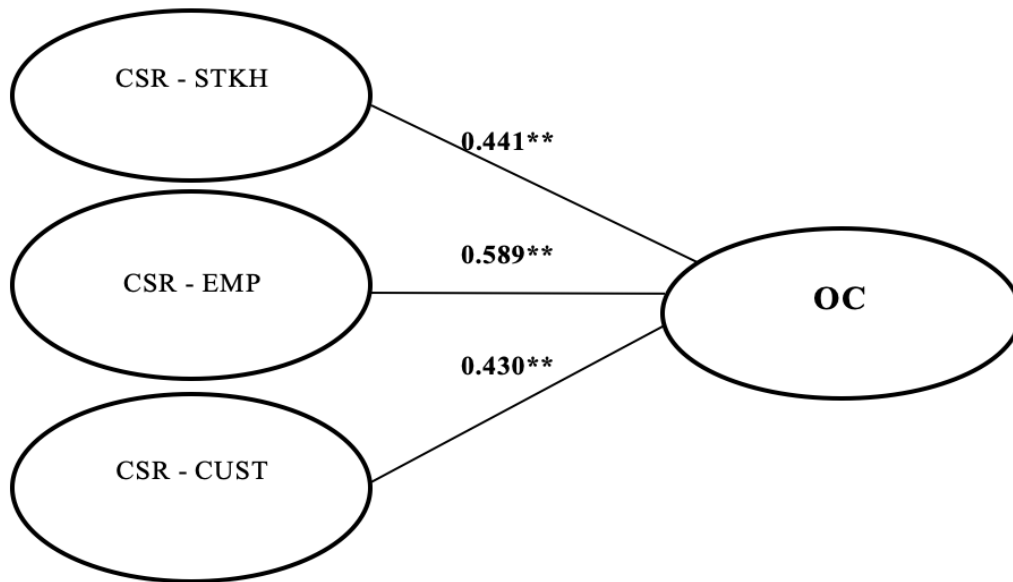


Figure 3. Hypotheses bivariate correlation coefficients
 **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 3 demonstrates the correlation coefficients between affective organizational commitment and three dimensions of CSR measured in this research. Correlation coefficients are positive and significant, which supports the hypotheses of this thesis. Both correlation coefficient analysis and hierarchical regression analysis provided support to the hypotheses of the thesis, which will be discussed more in the following chapter.

5. DISCUSSION

As presented in Chapter 4, results retrieved from data through analysis with SPSS showcase support to all three hypotheses of this thesis, hence illustrating that corporate social responsibility has a positive correlation with employees' affective organizational commitment in IT companies in the context of data collected in Sweden. In the discussion chapter, the results of this study are compared to the already existing body of research. Also, the theoretical and practical implications of this thesis study are elaborated on.

The results obtained from the empirical data suggest that workers' perception of CSR activities within an organization have an impact on the organizational commitment which is in line with finding from previous studies such as Glavas (2016), De Roeck (2016), Gupta (2017). These results correspond in particular with Meyer et al. (2002) study which claims that the CSR is as impactful as job satisfaction in relation to organizational commitment along with labour retention, staff performance, and labour health (Brammer, 2007). From the results of the current study, all three dimensions of CSR have been proven to be positively correlated with affective organizational commitment. Out of the three dimensions, two of them, namely CSR to social and non-social stakeholders and CSR to customers are characterized as the ones representing external CSR and targeting external stakeholders. This is worth mentioning, as it showcases the importance of social identity approach, as it espouses the idea that people are willing to identify with organizations that have a positive and prestigious public image (Mirvis, 2012). Therefore, brand image and a positive reputation of companies are critical not only for the outside public image but also to instill a sense of pride and trust within amongst employees. Previous studies that have explored this topic have known to find that employees develop the feeling of attachment and commitment as the indirect benefit of CSR (Kim et al., 2018; Verčič & Čorić, 2018; Farooq et al., 2014; Brammer 2007).

The internal dimension of CSR in this study, CSR to employees demonstrated the highest positive correlation with affective organizational commitment, whereas the CSR towards customers shown the lowest correlation with AOC. Plainly, such a variation in results can reflect on the fact that all participants of the research are employees; therefore, the strongest correlation is between AOC and CSR to employees. Although such results could also symbolize that for Swedish employees of IT companies fairness to customers and the community they work within goes without saying and is a solid part of any business, therefore, CSR to Customers had the weakest (still significant) ties with organizational commitment and not the fundamental component of choosing the employer or becoming emotionally attached to the company. On the other hand, CSR to employees, which has the highest positive correlation indicates that organizations focusing on employees send strong signals to employees that their organization is caring and respectful of them (Farooq et al., 2014). This is in accordance with social exchange theory which espouses the view that employee's positive perception towards the organization is reciprocated and results in a strong sense of attachment to their company (Kim et al., 2018)

Coming to analyzing the correlation with control variables, items like age, gender, level of education, position level, tenure with a company, size of an organization and salary, none of them have demonstrated a significant level of correlation with AOC. These findings of the study differ from the results of previous studies on the impact of CSR on organizational commitment, as reviewed in the first chapter. Kim et al. (2018) research findings show a correlation between position level and AOC at a significant level.

Research presented in Farooq et al. (2014) publication showcase correlation between age of informants and affective organizational commitment at a significant level. One of the potential explanations could be the fact that both Kim et al. (2018) and Farooq et al. (2014) conducted their research among employees of manufacturing companies; hence, findings might reflect industry-specific tendencies. Another possible explanation is cultural differences since the results of this study are based on the data collected from IT companies in Sweden only on the contrary to the above mentioned peer-reviewed studies. Such findings support the need for further research on the impact of sustainability responsible actions on affective organizational commitment in IT industry organizations.

The correlation coefficient analysis between AOC and individual items of each three dimensions of CSR scales was performed in order to see which questions and values were most essential to participants of this study. The correlation coefficient analysis between organizational commitment and the 7-items of CSR to social and non-social stakeholders scale showcase the highest positive correlation coefficient for the item “The company I work for targets sustainable growth which considers future generations.” which was shortly followed by the item “The company I work for contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the wellbeing of society”. This could indicate that employees highly value genuine dedication toward sustainability goals and related activities, which makes them commit towards their company. Another reason for high correlation value for the above-mentioned items could be explained by sustainability discourse prevalent in Sweden as Sweden is generally considered to be in the forefront of Sustainable policies and actions (Buser & Koch, 2014). The lowest value of correlation coefficients was found between OC and the item “The company I work for supports non-governmental organizations working in problematic areas.” This draws special attention as it has shown that employees can discern between authentic sustainability action from mere philanthropy; which is in light of recent critics on CSR and claims that it is rather artificial and a greenwashing attempt (Chandler, 2016).

Results from the correlation coefficient analysis between organizational commitment and the 5-items of the CSR to employee scale demonstrate that the highest positive correlation coefficient emerged between OC and the item “In the company I work for, the managerial decisions related to the employees are usually fair.” This may signal that affective organizational commitment can be boosted once an employer establishes trust with workers and will strive for fair decisions regarding people working at their organizations. The concept of trust as a mediation mechanism in the scheme of CSR impact on OC was already explored and proved to be plausible in the study conducted by Farooq et al. (2014). Hence, organizations should implement principles of social responsibility internally also, in order to establish an atmosphere of fairness and trust at the workplace and enhance affective organizational commitment among employees.

5.1 Managerial implications

The results of the presented research have important practical implications for IT companies in Sweden. The main managerial implication of this thesis is that organizations should increase their involvement with corporate social responsibility activities in order to positively impact employees’ affective commitment. The investment made in CSR has a payoff on employee’s attitudes and behaviours. Employees’ attitudes and behaviours are the intangible assets of a company that are valuable, rare and difficult to imitate or replicate. Which, in turn, creates a competitive advantage for the firm. One of the ways to convert intangible assets into negotiable forms of value is by fostering and creating a space in

which employees' feel more aligned with the organization and be able to identify themselves with the company. Organizational Identification significantly affects components, such as employee commitment, motivation, and turnover intentions, which are important for competitive advantage (Meyer et al., 1993; 1997; Gupta, 2017). Respectively, the outcomes of this thesis demonstrate that in the context of IT companies functioning in Sweden, CSR attitudes are also positively related to employee commitment, which in turn may lead to a better organizational performance of employees (Meyer & Allen, 1991) and increase organizational trust (Farooq et al., 2014). A possible explanation for this is lying within social identity theory (Brieger, 2018), which argue that people tend to identify with organizations that obtain a beneficial image. Due to the positive image of an organization (enforced by socially responsible corporate actions), employees' value membership in the company higher, therefore, commit stronger (Glavas, 2013; Turker, 2009b). This in turn mediated by strong CSR practices helps in achieving increased productivity, owing to factors such as improved employees' motivation, knowledge sharing practices through pieces of training, reduced absenteeism, and extra-role behaviour, as well as financial benefits because of employee retention. Hence, managers in organizations must take cognizance of these aspects and invest in socially benefiting CSR programmes not restricted to communities and external stakeholder management but also internal stakeholders.

5.2. Limitations and future directions

In line with the nature of social science research, this paper also comes along with certain limitations. Firstly, this thesis is limited in the sense of a number of variables used for exploring this topic. A bivariate analysis of two main variables, i.e. CSR and AOC, has been conducted. Although three dimensions of CSR namely CSR to stakeholders, CSR to employees and CSR to customers have been examined, it would have been interesting to include one or more mediating variables for a richer analysis of the subject under examination. Literature review of previous articles referred in this thesis have used mediating variables such as employee engagement (Gupta, 2017), meaningfulness of work and perceived organizational support (Kim et al., 2018) and organizational trust (Farooq et al., 2014) to name a few in their research on the impact of CSR on employee commitment. Due to time limitations, high complexity and limited knowledge of researchers, this thesis is restricted by only two variables. However, this prompts for future research on mediating factors affecting organizational commitment amongst employees. Secondly, this study was conducted amongst a sample population in Sweden; therefore, the generalizability of results for the entire IT industry is not possible. Further studies can encompass other geographical and cultural varied contexts for generalizing results. Lastly, this research focuses on employee's perception rather than actual participation in CSR. It would be further worthwhile to assess the employee participation and involvement in CSR to examine its impact on their commitment towards their companies.

Despite the limitations, this thesis fulfils the research gap present in Sweden regarding the micro-level analysis of employees' perceptions towards CSR in IT companies. The outcomes of this paper can be an impetus for future research in many of the above mentioned logical directions.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The growing demand for businesses to be and act in more responsible ways has highlighted questions about external and internal sustainability of organizations. One of the most important stakeholders; employees, their attitudes and behaviours are vital for businesses and corporate sustainability. Given the brief background, this thesis based on an interdisciplinary framework combining the socio-psychological theory of social identity to the organizational phenomenon of employee commitment. It aims to integrate the macro-level concept of CSR with micro-level variable related to employee's affective organizational commitment. Even though the research on CSR and AOC has gained the interest of several scholars in the past decade, there have been very few studies on employees' perception of CSR in the context of IT companies. This paper aims to fill this gap by conducting a cross-sectional study of IT companies in Sweden. Based on Social Identity Theory literature, the bivariate link between employee perception of CSR and affective organizational commitment is studied within a model that divides CSR into three dimensions: (1) social and non-social stakeholders (2) employees (3) customers. The three hypotheses were tested through hierarchical regression analysis. Outcomes of empirical data analysis demonstrate that the above mentioned three dimensions of CSR; employee, customer and stakeholders have a significant positive impact on affective organizational commitment. This has several implications for organizations and leadership to strengthen their sustainability profile through strong CSR across the company because of which employees identify themselves and display a higher degree of commitment. Micro-level organizational aspects such as self-identity and affective commitment have a further positive influence on employee retention, thereby, creating a sustainable and motivated workforce.

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8. APPENDICES

Appendix I. Cover letter for questionnaire

Dear Participant,

We invite you to take part in a research study conducted by students of Leadership for Sustainability Masters Program at Malmö University. The aim of this study is to determine the extent to which organizations' dedication towards sustainability influences employees' commitment to the organization.

If you are a full-time employee at an IT company in Sweden, we ask you to volunteer and complete this survey. The questionnaire should not take any more than 5-8 minutes of your time. This survey is anonymous and the collected data will be used for academic research purposes only.

It is also worth mentioning that there are no correct and incorrect answers. In this research, we are only trying to better understand other people, their views and experience, therefore your genuine responses are highly valuable.

If you have any queries regarding participation, please, do not hesitate to contact us: (Madhuri Muralidhar at madhuri.m.dhar@gmail.com) and (Mariia Sirenko at sirenko.mariia@gmail.com).

Thank you for your kind participation.

*With best regards,
Madhuri Miralidhar and Mariia Sirenko
Leadership for Sustainability Masters Students*

Malmö University

Appendix II. Questionnaire

For questions 1-23, please indicate on the 5 point scale the extent to which you agree or disagree to the statements

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. The company I work for participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment.
2. The company I work for makes an investment to create a better life for future generations.
3. The company I work for implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment.
4. The company I work for targets sustainable growth which considers future generations.
5. The company I work for supports non-governmental organizations working in problematic areas.
6. The company I work for contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of society.
7. The company I work for encourages its employees to participate in voluntary activities.

8. The policies of the company I work for encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers.
9. The management of the company I work is primarily concerned with its employees' needs and wants.
10. The company I work for implements flexible policies to provide good work and life balance for its employees.
11. In the company I work for, the managerial decisions related to the employees are usually fair.
12. The company I work for supports employees who want to acquire additional education.

13. The company I work for respects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements.
14. The company I work for provides full and accurate information about its products to its customers.
15. In the company I work for, customer satisfaction is highly important.

16. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
17. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.
18. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
19. I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one. (R)
20. I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organization. (R)
21. I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization. (R)
22. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
23. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization. (R)

For the questions 24-30 please choose the option that corresponds to your answer and fill in the open ended questions

24. What is your age (please specify) _____

25. What is your gender

- Female
- Male

26. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (If currently enrolled, highest degree received)

- Less than a high school diploma
- High school degree or equivalent
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate (e.g. PhD)
- Other (please specify) _____

27. How many years/months have you been working with your current company? (please specify) _____

28. Your position in the company

- Junior Level
- Lower-Middle
- Middle Level
- Upper-Middle
- Top Level

29. Number of employees in your company

- Fewer than 10 employees
- 10-49 employees
- 50-249 employees
- More than 249 employees

30. Please indicate your salary (before TAX) in SEK (specify) _____

Appendix III. Analysis Tables

Table 8.1. Correlation Coefficient Analysis between Organizational Commitment and CSR to Social and non-social stakeholders

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Affective Organizational Scale	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)							
2. The company I work for participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.326** .000						
3. The company I work for makes an investment to create a better life for future generations.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.366** .000	.697** .000					
4. The company I work for implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.324** .000	.765** .000	.564** .000				
5. The company I work for targets sustainable growth which considers future generations.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.416** .000	.630** .000	.726** .000	.643** .000			
6. The company I work for supports non-governmental organizations working in problematic areas.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.226** .004	.459** .000	.500** .000	.539** .000	.453** .000		
7. The company I work for contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of society.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.406** .000	.531** .000	.667** .000	.543** .000	.579** .000	.637** .000	
8. The company I work for encourages its employees to participate in voluntary activities.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.396** .000	.495** .000	.534** .000	.486** .000	.507** .000	.475** .000	.619** .000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8.2. Correlation Coefficient Analysis between Organizational Commitment and CSR to Employees

		1	2	3	4	5
1.Affective Organizational Commitment Scale	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)					
2.The policies of the company I work for encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.445** .000				
3. The management of the company I work is primarily concerned with its employees' needs and wants.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.498** .000	.686** .000			
4. The company I work for implements flexible policies to provide good work and life balance for its employees.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.433** .000	.444** .000	.429** .000		
5. In the company I work for, the managerial decisions related to the employees are usually fair.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.581** .000	.582** .000	.616** .000	.631** .000	
6. The company I work for supports employees who want to acquire additional education.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.419** .004	.578** .000	.503** .000	.501** .000	.617** .000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8.3. Correlation Coefficient Analysis between Organizational Commitment and CSR to Customers

		1	2	3
1. Affective Organizational Commitment Scale	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)			
2. The company I work for respects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.284** .000		
3. The company I work for provides full and accurate information about its products to its customers.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.406** .000	.365** .000	
4. In the company I work for, customer satisfaction is highly important.	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.323** .000	.318** .000	.473** .000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).