***Why SMEs are adopting CSR***

1. Introduction

**Draft**

**1.1Background**

Identity is part of human nature, and it is a way in which we associate our selves and differentiate each other. (Airey 2019, p.5)points out 'the origins of identity design began in the times of the earliest human tribes. Predominantly within the African culture, tribal marks are used to categorise each lineage. A customary act of Egyptian potters was imprinting an impression on their plates as a guarantee of quality. These are two different ways one can understand identity, identity as a form of descent and product. Brands understand identity and use it to their advantage when constructing a product. Brands innovate to generate an appeal to separate themselves from competitors. McDonald's is a global fast-food chain that identifies as family-friendly and unhealthy. (Statista 2020) reports customers associated McDonald's with friendly, convenient and family-' the fewest respondents chose healthy. 'Unhealthy' is a negative connotation; hence, McDonald's has released several healthy eating ads and have added fruits to their happy meals moving forward. Corporate Identity is meaningful because there is a distinct contrast of one product and another when we consume for experience, and it is the emotional reaction we receive.

Corporate identity has several aspects one being visual identity. It is what a customer sees, and customers relate symbols to a brand's identity. Visual identity comprises of the colour, logo, and font.Collins (cited in Airey, 2019 p.7) states' brands exist in the minds of people who interact with them". End users associate themselves to a brand because of the quality of service offered, making a brand attractive. BI (brand identity) usually is more profound than what we can see, but also it includes the tone of voice, mannerisms, what we hear, smell or feel.

**1.1.1 The History of Corporate Identity and Identification**

CI is a relatively new topic. It was discovered because of globalisation and did not evoke much interest until Ackerman published his journal "identity strategies that make a difference" in 1988. Identity and differentiation are relative to one another when doing business because corporate identity highlights the unique aspects of an organisation compared to the rest. Ford Automotive industries are the first institution that designed cars that are aerodynamic and sleek. Successful companies such as Ford tend to differentiate from the rest. The perks are customer awareness, improved sales, brand switching and better cashflow. However, differentiation must be implemented in a way that is challenging for various enterprises to replicate. Differentiation must delve deeper than changing aspects of a product but devise new expectations and requirements of the market and pulls other contestants to improve their standards.

Corporate identity and identification have too different meanings. Corporate identity is the ability of a company to differentiate itself, which was previously mentioned above in contrast to corporate identification which is just as important. Corporate identification is a method of visually and verbally presenting an enterprise and a stamp of approval recognised by other institutions of a businesses distinctiveness.

**1.1.2 Ackerman (1988) conducted a case study that showed**

Identification strategies are crucial.Identification is beneficial but also has some challenges.an experiment was conducted on two companies.The first company PPI is a computer software business.In order to include identification .The first objective of PPI was to appease to its employees. Innovation, creativity, invention and quality are four things PPI focused on.They replaced the name of PPI to Stepstone and changed their operating software.By doing so Stepstone formally known as PPI were able to engage a broader audience. On the contrary to the benefits to identification strategy it has obstacles.An institution called Junior Achievements a non for profit organisation decided to provides education services.The traditional way of teaching was practical and it was developing into an academic style. Junior Achievements had issues when financing , supporting students and improving the learning program.

**1.2 A different technique of Identification**

Building strategic alliances as an aspiration to transform a company is a great form of identification because the institute is supported by other business’ which specialises in the same sector. As you can see above PPI and Junior academy have done so by themselves.Strategic alliance has an edge to other companies because institutes can rapidly enter the market rapidly , change operation system , set new expectations , deal with high demand , and develop strengths

**1.3 Managing identity**

To excel at a goal , work, or business there must be consistenty. Identity and Identification involves creation and methods of internally and externally changing the representation of an organisation.For a business which has transformed it must quiz it self on five key steps. Carefully ensuring that they are reflecting on change

**1.3.1 Five key steps**

**1.Value analysis:** Reflecting on how the business is creating value through Internal and external interviews and analysing their past and their present.

**2.Positioning:** Positioning is the core value of the business which stakeholders are aware of and these values are translated into advertisements , engagement with the business and workforce.

**3.Identification system:** Identification is the visual representation of a brand it includes the brands logo , colour and signs.Identification can be translated to advertising , name of the brand and products.Identification is reforming a brand which broadens its audience

**4.External and Internal Audience:**  To promote Identity the internal audience should be a resource to develop the identity of the institution and example would be an operations manager changing the product style to enforce a new identity

**5.Monitor new identity program:**  Monitoring new identity program is the last protocol that should be sanctioned. Monitoring analyses the four steps mentioned are completed , holds the institution responsible , and established a deadline.

**1.4 The hidden mystery behind how Corporate social responsibility complements corporate identity**

Identity is differentiating oneself. A form of differentiation would be enforcing CSR as an identification technique.The Case study conducted by Ackerman illustrates various methods of identification.One being strategic alliance.CSR is effective in presenting a new identity.Corporate social responsibility heavily influences the corporate identity of an institution. CSR is a concept that unites the social and ecological demands into business procedures with respects too stakeholders.

( Khanji et al ,2010 p.119 ) state CSR does not only improve the financial performance of a business but how a brand is recognised.CSR constructs an organic environment of ‘doing what is ethical' within the organisation.CSR identifies the company as moral .The advantages of an organisation following CSR regulations are niche clientele , regulations from the government and portraying admirable characteristics. CSR is becoming acceptable in business, and shoppers are responding to these changes. Regulations from the government such as labour exploration have forced institutes to adjust and lastly, admirable characteristics are noticed by the public.

**1.5 Problem statement**

Various research about the impacts of Corporate identity of MNCs have been published.However

the importance of CI and firms embracing CSR as strategy for CI are disregarded in SMEs. SMEs contribute to economic growth of a community ; they provide employment and a niche within they market they operate. More research needs to be conducted to highlight the importance of SMEs supporting CSR to display transparency and if it is favourable or disadvantageous. Institutions which focus on CSR sometimes choose between ethics and earnings.This is important because it is known as ‘greenwashing’ a term that means organisations giving a false impression of honourable goals which they accomplish. This thesis aims to analyse if SMEs are favoured from the strategic approach of CSR as identification or unfavourable.

**1.6 Research Question**

-What affects your business ethics?

-Being fixated on CSR ,what benefits has it provided to the community?

-Compared to non CSR businesses what have been the benefits?

-To what extent do stakeholders believe in your mission?

**1.7 Limitations of study**

This study is a new topic and is limited to a conclusion ,if CSR is advantageous because there is a scarcity in statistics , surveys are biased, and institutions are possibly greenwashing. Furthermore this research is constrained to three companies which concentrate on CSR as their identity and business value.

(Morsing et al, 2009 p.1) argues the world is more concerned if brands such as M & S or Walmart are supplying fair trade or organic goods. My research aims to show that this is not only the case for large firms, but small firms are also adopting this strategy of building their identity although my study can not be concluded with just one SME. The field of SME concerning CSR and CI lack research.

**1.8 Abbreviation**

**CSR Corporate social responsibility**

**CI Corporate Identity**

**BI Brand identity**

**VI Visual identity**

**SME Small medium enterprise**

**MNC Multinational firms**

**1.9 Organisation of study**

This thesis is divided into six chapters of the contents of which are as follows:

Chapter 1- Chapter 1 has presented the introduction , problem statement , research questions , limitations of study and Abbreviations of key terms.

2. Literature review

Chapter 2 provides extensive review of literature and research relevant to Chapter 1.Chapter 2 consist of (a) Social identity theory, (b)Social identification and the organisation, (c) Conclusion of social identity in institutions, (d) The origin of CSR (e) Pressure of CSR in SMEs (d) A review of challenges and realisation within SMEs (f) The importance of corporate social responsibility

**2.1 Social Identity theory**

**2.1.1 Social identity theory**

Social identity is a segment of CSR and it is applicable to both SMEs and MNCs. The Social identity theory presents individual affinity to a particular group on the basis of value and beliefs.

Social identity is acknowledging that one belongs in a group and categorising oneself into a social class Hogg et al (1988 cited in Stets 2000 p. 225). A social group classifies interests as identification and classifies individuals into in and out-groups dependent on similarities between on person and another. Social identity has two important segments which are self categorisation and social comparison.Categorisation of an individual in a social class is either because of similarities or differences in norms on might have.Categorisation of individuals occurs because of one self and connection off in group members.Closeness of members are circumstances of attitudes , beliefs and values, behavioural norms ,style of speech and other habits.Classification also occurs because of the difference of one self and out groups.Social classification empowers one self , knowing one is within the in-group is perceived as positive and one which is in the out-group is viewed as negative (Stets, 2000, p. 225).Persons are born into constructed societies which make up different social classes.As a result their social identity is based off social categorisation.New experiences are the reason for a change in social identity ,infrequent activities becomes common and shapes oneself which is the cause of uniqueness.

**2.1.2 Social identification and the organisation**

Individuals seek to identify themselves by reflecting on who they are. Reflection leads to identifying within a particular group or organisation.Thus, organisational identity is associated with social identity. Denhardt (1987 cited in Ashforth 1989) Searching for an identity conjure up family which creates a sense of belonging , connection , empowerment and timelessness. Organisations welcome individuals who want to be part of the group and these institutions allow for individuals to identify themselves from in a collective ,this is known as social categories .Institutions contribute to the positive emotions of an client .For example the correlation between happiness and the gym are high because of belonging to a group , increase in morale and relating with other members.Within a corporation there is the need to belong which is why one identifies within corporations although there are negative aspects because a group may benefit from success and status such as job promotion , salary bonuses and awards although others colleagues may be overlooked because of the popular individuals. In a group there is a strong urgency to belong.Groups such as ethnic minorities want to be accepted with in-groups ,these members with have similar interests, behaviours and values.Ethnic minorities do not want to be overshadowed because they want to be acknowledged within an organisation . Compared to out-groups which are members with different mannerisms , values and beliefs which are usually overlooked.

**2.1.3 Conclusion of social identity in institutions**

To conclude social identity theory ,there are 3 outcomes.(Ashforth 1989) First individuals choose an activity in harmony to a fundamental aspect of their identity with support to institutions exemplifying their belief and values.Identity of one self increases the support to a company that embodies their beliefs .An example is when someone assigned to a religious role , has religious beliefs, it is more likely that the job role will be done properly.‘Thus, it is likely that identification with an organisation enhances support for commitment to it’(Ashforth ,1989, p. 26). The second result of social identity is group formation and how individuals may dislike a member ,however because they are in a group they are committed to their assignment. Furthermore different norms and values may be considered by group members because of the group they are in.Although they personally do not agree with these norms.Finally social identity associates with a group, which disregards their own beliefs for the benefit of their group distinctiveness, group value ,rivalry and competition with out groups. Tajfel (1969 Acited in Ashforth 1989 ,p. 26) as an individual identifies with in-groups their values become more astounding and viewed as unique and distinctive. SIT widens the understanding of organisational behaviour because individuals with similar interests disregard their morals because identification can happen with a lack of interest , relational attachment , or interaction and have powerful affect on ones conduct. In conclusion , social identification alters a persons identity to conform to organisation values.

**2.2 Corporate social Responsibility and SMEs**

**2.2.1 The origin of CSR**

Bowen initially envisioned corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within the modern era in 1950. It has augmented from a mere unwavering hypothesis to a sole determination of techniques (Maldonado-Erazo et al. 2020). Wickert (2016) notes that two philanthropic attributes are observed within the concept where CSR is categorized as a standardized procedure that commences by developing a goal, progressing to the design of the tactic to attain the goals, and finally ascertaining the techniques to evaluate the outcomes the effects generated from the actions established. The second aspect represents a current tactic that has evolved towards tactical philanthropy,where the entity's capacities or exclusive expertise are utilized to generate initiatives with a significant effect on society and optimize the benefits towards the organization (Wickert (2016). Since Bowen's 1950 ideology, many scholars have attempted to describe CSR's core dimensions through literature reviews, theoretical reasoning, and content evaluation. Based on some researchers (Agudelo et al. 2019), CSR is a management doctrine infusing the organization. All entities engage in strategic CSR, whether they are aware or not. It is only that some entities engage in CSR better. In most general terms, Stoian and Gilman (2017) note that CSR pursuits that entities and managers take to safeguard and enhance the community's welfare with the organization's interest. The definition by Amaeshi et al. (2016) expands on the perspective of CSR. It implies that the organizations must foremost presume the key economic roles and discretionary overhaul of government bodies to be virtuous in all their pursuits. They consider the effect of their behaviour on shareholders in the local communities. Currently, CSR is incorporated in SMEs. Still, the integration's progress is not much visible with the same intensity as that of the larger corporations partly because of informal communication networks and the shareholders' vicinity. The paper aims to conduct a systematic literature review on the reasons why SME's have adopted CSR.Strategic Dimension of Corporate Social Responsibility in SME's based on Corporate and Social Identities.

**2.2.2 Pressures of CSR in SMEs**

(Kapstien 2000, p.105) Society are embracing corporate social responsible actions because of NGOs and government pressure. Within society, institutions both Large and small are also affected by requirements to set CSR as a primary objective.However the inability to administer CSR in SMEs are overlooked due to financial ,political ,social and environmental constraints especially in developing countries. Ethics is forced down upon various organisation without an understanding of the difficulties these organisations are facing within their region.An example is the United Kingdom and Nigeria.Nigeria has political issues, environmental problems and lack of funding from the government. Which makes it practically impossible for a country such as Nigeria to adopt clear CSR objectives. The government is unwilling to fund these objectives which make it impossible to fund CSR goals such as constructing wind turbines instead of oil production.Therefore pressures to have sustainable practice should include advantages and disadvantages in regions and identification of differences of large and small firm in order to justify aid of NGOs (Kapstien 2000, p.106). Firms are at an immense disadvantage when ethics are necessary, because socially responsible investors , consumers, environmentalist and humans activist have the power of the media to portray these businesses as irresponsible. Although it is acceptable to edify consumers of improper practices, it can affect SMEs prestige because they are defenceless to political situation , finance and social capital. SMEs are in continually in a feud of ethics and business

**2.2.3 A review of challenges and realisation within SMEs**

Based on Lee et al. (2016) arguments, CSR's notion within the SMEs has been

reduced to the social dimension scope. However, Lee et al. (2016) assert that most researchers have conducted systematic reviews of the literature to identify other aspects supporting SMEs' concepts. Juarez (2017) notes that although the strategic dimensions and definition varies, sustainability, discretionary, economic, ethical, stakeholders, and social are the perspectives that are regarded in the current work. Juarez (2017) further asserts that it's imperative to explore SME's traits to understand CSR's comprehensive dimension. In this case, SME's traits can be viewed from three perspectives the task scope, the firm configuration, and the managerial characteristics. Martinez-Martinez et al. (2017) note that SME's are significantly susceptible to their consumers, traders, rivals, and regulatory agencies because of the limited fiscal and human resources based on the task environment. The literature also argues that SME's have an informal and minimal structured organisational configuration with centralised decision making.

Furthermore, SME's tend to have a particular type of administrational traits related to the owner-manager feature with informal management framework and individual management (Martinez- Martinez et al. 2017). As a result, Martinez- Martinez et al. (2017) notes that SMEs have a superior comprehension of the regional culture instead of the preeminent entities, making them possess formidable links with the regional communities. Doshmanli et al. (2018) note that the above attributes in one way or the other may impact how SMEs approach CSR sustainability.

**2.2.4 The importance of corporate social responsibility**

On the specifics of CSR's strategic dimension in SME's Gainulina and Setiawan (2017) notes, other traits vary from the other larger entities' view. One of the essential characteristics is the

vicinity to the local communities and consumers. A study by Sarkar and Searcy (2016) proposes proximity as criteria for assessing the stakeholders. Yet, Larran Jorge et al. (2016) also argue that proximity helps establish network links and suitable venues, particularly the interpersonal engagements through which the CSR capabilities and expertise are shared. The other specific traits within the context are. The passion for individual motivation (Larran Jorge et al. 2016) are critical responsibilities of owners or the SME managers, strong regard for the workforce as essential stakeholders, and collaboration through the social capital and informal links. Reasons for the implementation of CSR in SME's are based on corporate and social identity. The background information for the study is gathered from prior studies in corporate social responsibility in SMEs. A percentage of researchers have explored what stimulates SMEs to operate in an inconsiderate manner. In the corporate social responsibility implementation literature, numerous ideologies have been used to explain the implementation reasons. The three theories are social capital theory, institutional theory, and stakeholder theory (Hoi et al., 2018). The stakeholder doctrine emphasises how SMEs can satisfy the anticipations of its stakeholders. Institutional ideology is utilised to capture the procedure in which the SME's are impacted by their structured surrounding to embrace specific perceptions and beliefs. In line with that, De Grosbois (2016) conducted a study and concluded that structured surrounding impacted the United Kingdom's and Dutch SME's strategy. Finally, the social capital theory focuses on social capital's influence, which offers Small and Medium Enterprises to adopt and implement corporate social responsibility guidelines and processes.

3. Methodology

This chapter delivers a credible research approach for the literature. Displaying primary research as suitable conduct in this study

**3.1 Research approach**

There are three different research approaches known as explorative, descriptive or a test of hypothesis. Explorative research is research which has not been concluded and investigated to have understanding of the research nor grants a conclusive result. Explorative research begins with a popular idea and uses this research to identify problems to then focus on forthcoming research. Descriptive research describes characteristics of a business or society. Descriptive research does not answer why something happened but what something is. Lastly hypothesis testing is speculating regarding a population sample.Hypothesis testing is used to test the validity of an idea by using sample data

A few studies have been conducted on SMEs accepting CSR strategies in comparison to MNCs.Pressure from NGOs and Government are some of the reasons firms are remodelling and accepting CSR as one of their objectives.SMEs are unknowingly incorporating CSR because of their internal practices which include health , safety and labour force perks. Unconscious acts of CSR can be associated to social identity in organisations, this means identifying to the value and beliefs of a company and the institution grants positive emotions to employees. Being a fairly new topic affiliated to CSR with limited data suggests explorative research is relevant approach to this literature.

**3.1.1 Inductive research**

In this literature inductive research was conducted to develop further understanding of SMEs accepting CSR as a practice because of its unfamiliarity. The Inductive research method collects data relevant to the topic and analyses the data to form patterns to explain why these pattern occurred. While the deductive study suggests a hypothesis based on current theories and then designs a research method to test the hypothesis.Thus, inductive shifts from limited generalisations of a topic to comprehensive conclusions and deductive research shifts from comprehensive generalisation to individual generalisation.

**3.2 Qualitative and Quantitative analysis**

The research chosen for this study was a qualitative method due to its harmonious effect with the topic. Qualitative research is gathering data through primary research such as interviews , questionaries , focus groups , observations and recordings. Furthermore qualitative research is a method of analysing primary data in depth and concluding based on the language and non-numerical data. In comparison quantitative research is a method of collecting and analysing numerical data, quantitative analysis is used to find patterns and make accurate judgement on the population.

Qualitative research an is excellent study dependent on the topic of research.The benefits of qualitative study are its openness and ability to gather important information from a small sample size in order to come to a general conclusion.Which speeds up the process of evaluating data and saves time. Although qualitative data is an excellent form of study it has major bias towards the interviewer and sample. Sample may be biased due to internal influence and pressures to appeal to interviewer as businesses may already design and specify who is the interview before the procedure. Lastly the sample size is relatively small and a conclusion can not be drawn up with a qualitative method rather a speculation or generalisation. In Opposition quantitative research is a popular study for scientific research. Quantitative research often has a large sample size due to the nature of research and the evaluation from data can be compared to a population to draw a conclusion.Furthermore statistics are straightforward and less open to error and have more validity due to the data to back up argument. Finally quantitative research is not cost or time effective and being solely focused on statistics, it may fail to observe other relevant factors. Structural bias when conducting quatitative research may lead to inappropriate sampling method ,hence an insufficient conclusion

For this literature the analysis that was preferred is a qualitative method because the topic of choice associates to a small business and a lack of research within this field. The ability to gather deep understanding of why SMEs accept CSR as one of their strategies is why this chosen method is relevant. Hence , CSR is unnecessary for the success of a business but a pressure from external bodies. This study forces SMEs to disclose why this strategic approach is relevant although identity is a factor for one to identity to these institutions . Our study will analyse and justify SME conceptualisation.

**3.3 Data Collection**

The data has been collected from primary sources.Through interviews and qualitative surveys.Primary research is new research which is being conducted by a researcher and mediates a researcher and institution or interviews. While secondary research is data that has been collected but is analysed by a researcher to draw a conclusion.

**3.4 Case study**

A case study is a comprehensive review of an individual , institution , group , place or event.

Case studies are typically used in qualitative research problems to identify , evaluate and conclude on a fixed topic. Case studies are used to deduce a research problem with a generalisation from a sample.

Through primary research from precise case studies of SMEs, we have established why various SMEs like Magway , Lucy & yak ,and Grind coffee support CSR objectives. These case studies are relevant to form an opinion because of their affinity towards CSR ambitions. Each business chosen has a particular importance in CSR objectives . The intent of these case studies were to gain a comprehensive knowledge on what CSR is to the business because CSR differs , is entrenched and is a belief organisation and individuals. Magway fixates on carbon emissions ,Lucy & Yak concentrate on social ethics akin to Grind coffee. Therefore their objectives and methods of which they approach CSR differ.

**Magway**

Magway is an online retailer which delivers goods through a sustainable method. However, Magway has limited CSR scope and cannot negotiate with suppliers to construct a rigid CSR climate. Magway explored CSR through their delivery pilot vehicles, and Magway currently cooperates with Amazon and eBay because they are the largest online retail business. Magway also aims to aid workers. Delivery drivers are working 20hours a day in South Korea. There is insufficient capacity to meet demand, and this is an international challenge they aim to address. We propose Magway supports small business which endeavours to meet CSR objectives. We believe their negotiation process on who they deal with needs to be modified to strengthen CSR objectives. Magway should focus on dealing with suppliers who are also fixated on CSR. Hence Magway must consult institutions that have prestige CSR status to foster their reputation.

**Lucy & Yak**

Lucy & Yak are an apparel company with an enthusiastic passion for their workforce ethos, and their focal point is social and environmental. Their factories are located in India, although they have expanded to Yorkshire with a large warehouse. However, Lucy & Yak recognised the problem was low minimum pay in India and unsanitary premises for workers. Presently Tailors are paid four times the state minimum wage, and some of the tailors live comfortably working part-time. Tailors in India have been moved to a sizeable hygienic warehouse and use solar power to promote their CSR ambitions. This case study focuses on the CSR objectives of Lucy & Yak. It explores Lucy & Yaks business and CSR dynamic and also social responsibilities. Lucy & Yak negotiation with suppliers who address CSR has been their primary objective. They are transparent with suppliers, they make an effort to meet factory owners in person, and profit is not a constitutional factor for Lucy & Yak. Still, their customers guarantee that they are fulfilling CSR roles. To further its CSR mission, Lucy & Yak could allow customers to recycle clothing they purchased after a few months or years. It would appeal to shoppers because the CSR process is now directly related to customers. Thus, buyers have a part in the business

**Grind**

Grind has admirable social and environmental impact . Their coffee pods are made from biodegradable plastic and the lids are made of PLA and paper. Furthermore tins , pods, and packaging are certified compostable or recyclable.Ultimately Grinds socially favours farmers ,they work directly with farms around the world and offer two fold of the fair-trade price. Grinds remarkable approach to CSR both social and environmental grants low vulnerability of CSR framework. The Coffe manufacturer has passion for high quality products and appealing to partners around the world and internally

**3.5 Research quality**

Chapter 3 supports methods of data collection that are appropriate for the study and elaborates on why these methods are valid in comparison to other research approach. With an overall justification of what a study includes. Furthermore case studies were used to comprehensively understand each institutions perception of CSR. However a case study lacks full exploration of the topic , thus we feel further investigation should be fulfilled. Although the later chapter should explore each business thoroughly.

4. Empirical Study

In this chapter we focus on SME support of CSR.

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