UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Meader, Lesle J. (2009) Corporate Social Responsibility and the influence of organisational communications on employee engagement: A case study of Experian (UK) plc. [Dissertation (University of Nottingham only)] (Unpublished)

Access from the University of Nottingham repository:
http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/22981/1/Les_Experian_Management_Project_Final_Draft%5B5%5D.pdf

Copyright and reuse:

Corporate Social Responsibility and the influence of organisational communications on employee engagement: A case study of Experian (UK) plc.

Leslie J. Meader

2009

A Management project presented in part consideration for the degree of MBA in Corporate Social Responsibility

Executive Summary.

This report aims to build on previous research centred on the impact of CSR on employee behaviours and explore the role of communications in this model (Bhattacharya et al, 2008: Gond et al, 2006).

The report evaluates the theoretical arguments in the literature review section by correlating the theory to the data collected from within the case study company. Principally the data comes from employee opinions and perceptions of the company's CSR strategy, and the communications pertaining to the CSR strategy using semi-structured focus groups.

A meta analysis of a recent (2009) employee survey from the company as well as a desk top analysis of various company documents provide a contextual analysis of the company. Insights from social identity and signalling theory are used to correlate the finding highlighting the complex relationship employees have with their company.

The report assesses the impact of a recent communications campaign which rolled-out the company CR Report (2009) to all employees to identify the impact of the communication on employees' engagement behaviours. The research identified that due to the use of a company intranet communication medium, the employees missed the communication and remained largely unaware of the company CSR strategy.

The conclusions identify that employees are likely to have a stronger identification with internal CSR over external CSR activities. They also find that the employees of the case study company do not perceive their engagement to be affected by the CSR activities. However, the employees do concede that were the organisation to engage in irresponsible or unethical practices it is likely that this would negatively affect their feelings of organisational commitment and engagement.

The recommendations propose improvements to the internal communications strategy and make further recommendations to link the strategies of HR, CSR and Communication functions to determine a 'sustainability' strategy with a greater focus on internal CSR in order that the company might benefit from greater levels of engagement; organisational commitment and advocacy behaviours.

Acknowledgments

An undertaking of this kind is not something that is completed in isolation without the kind gift of feedback, assistance and support graciously offered by many individuals along the way. However the following must be singled out for their exceptional efforts and rare patience:

Sincere thanks must go to:

- My supervisor Dr Jean-Pascal Gond for his feedback; comments; guidance; good conversation and occasional coffee.

- Annemarie Shillito, Head of Global Corporate Responsibility, Experian plc. for enabling me to gain access to some incredibly bright individuals who helped me to understand Experian in greater depth; For her generous insights into CSR from a practitioner's perspective; and for allowing me the freedom to pursue my own lines of enquiry.

- The focus group participants, all of whom, I hope, will be given the opportunity to review this report and decide for themselves whether or not they agree with my own findings.

- Ms Joan Holdham, who proof-read the first presentable draft; offered very kind feedback; and provided me with thoughtful insights and suggestions.

- My dear wife Sarah, who had to suffer many long days and nights on the single handed and frequently thankless task of running the Meader household. Whilst at the same time enduring my long winded ramblings and explanations of theory for which she feels little connection.

- And finally, to my three sons, Owen, Rory and George who have been the most delightful and welcome distraction and filled my life with balance and joy during a year of intense MBA study.

Table of Contents.

List of Appendices.

Introduction and Research Question(s).

Since Milton Friedman's (1970) scathing attack in the New York Times on early forms of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or corporate philanthropy, the shareholder primacy norm model he advocates has firmly taken root with business professionals and corporate investors. Subsequently the CSR profession has been on the back foot in order to justify its role in the modern workplace.

Many have defended the role of CSR, in particular Porter and Kramer (2006) suggested that the dependence of corporations on society and vice versa implies that corporate decisions and social policy must follow a "*principle of shared value*". They further assert that neither should make choices that benefit its interests at the cost of the other as this will lead to a short term gain but will ultimately undermine the long term prosperity of both.

CSR has developed from purely philanthropic gifting to a strategic function within many Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) striving to demonstrate its business credentials in a modern business environment.

Scandals affecting companies like Enron, Shell (Brent Spar), McDonalds ("*McLibel*") and Nike to name but a few all add to a public mistrust of the modern MNC. There is a growing demand from the public and Non Government Companies (NGOs), particularly in western society, for companies to transparently demonstrate adherence to their espoused values in order to maintain license to operate (DTI, 2004)

As large controversial MNCs such as British American Tobacco and Shell develop their CSR reporting capabilities they can indeed gain kudos and respect and even a place on the FTSE4good and Dow Jones Index but the public or at least the media and NGOs are not fully convinced (Francis Beckett, 2003) and this adds a further level of complexity. Can we trust what companies tell us or is it all just spin and corporate Public Relations (PR)?

Businesses are held in such low esteem by a more demanding and better educated public and media (WEF, 2005), trust for business leaders is showing at an all time low (Lewis, 2003). Further exacerbated by recent media reports on the current credit crunch crisis it is hardly surprising that the general public are frequently sceptical or at worst totally disbelieving of the CSR reports produced by many MNCs.

Much has been written about CSR and its impact on a company's competitive position in the market-place. The empirical studies carried out to date have been largely inconclusive with a roughly fifty-fifty split determining CSR as having a measurable effect on corporate performance or conversely, CSR having no impact on corporate performance. This suggests that a direct link to increased shareholder value through CSR performance has yet to be proven empirically. Furthermore much has also been written about stakeholder theory with the focus centred on external stakeholders and comparably little research has focussed on the key internal stakeholder – the employees.

This report aims to build on previous research centred on the impact of CSR on employee behaviours and explore the role of communications in this model (Bhattacharya et al, 2008: Gond et al, 2006).

The way a company can effectively embed its CSR practices into the values of the corporation and in its daily operations is very much dependent upon employee engagement as well as procedural engagement through daily operational routines and standard operating procedures. It is clear that communication plays an extremely important role in the dissemination of the CSR strategy across the organisation, yet to date this has received scant attention in the field of CSR.

With that in mind this paper focuses on employee engagement, principally focussing on the communications element of the model and how the communication process can establish and maintain greater employee commitment and engagement which can be observed through employee attitudes and behaviours. This will be explored principally by examining the impact communication of CSR has on signalling and social identity theories and the expected influence this has on employee attitudes and behaviours.

Even though much has been written on the impact of CSR on employees' attitudes and behaviours (Bhattacharya et al 2007; Gond et al, 2006; Peterson, 2004,) to date there has been minimal data collected from inside companies to evaluate employees' perceptions of their company's CSR activities. Therefore, with the aim of evaluating the research carried out to date on CSR drivers of employee engagement and commitment, and the influencing role organisational communication plays in that engagement; an investigation of the opinions of the employees from within the target organisation is undertaken to attempt to understand the perceptions of the target company's CSR program.

This paper undertakes a case study of Experian (UK) plc. posing the following questions:

Does CSR enable continued employee engagement, if so how?

It then goes on to enquire:

Does the effective communication of CSR impact the signalling, engagement and advocacy behaviours of employees, if so how is this manifested?

Literature Review.

Defining CSR.

Attempting to uncover a definitive term to describe CSR is where the difficulty surrounding the communication of this field starts to present itself. A number of academics have authored papers attempting to tackle this definition (Melé, 2007: Carroll, 1999). However, CSR continues to have a broad definition, this in part appears to stem from the key actions associated with CSR. Without a clear argument for CSR it is then difficult to create a clear communicable definition. It is also likely that the definition and focus of CSR may be different for each organisation.

Porter and Kramer (2006) Define four broad arguments for CSR "*moral obligation, sustainability, licence to operate and reputation*", which echoes the Carroll and Buchholtz (2000) pyramid model proposing the nature of CSR responsibilities.
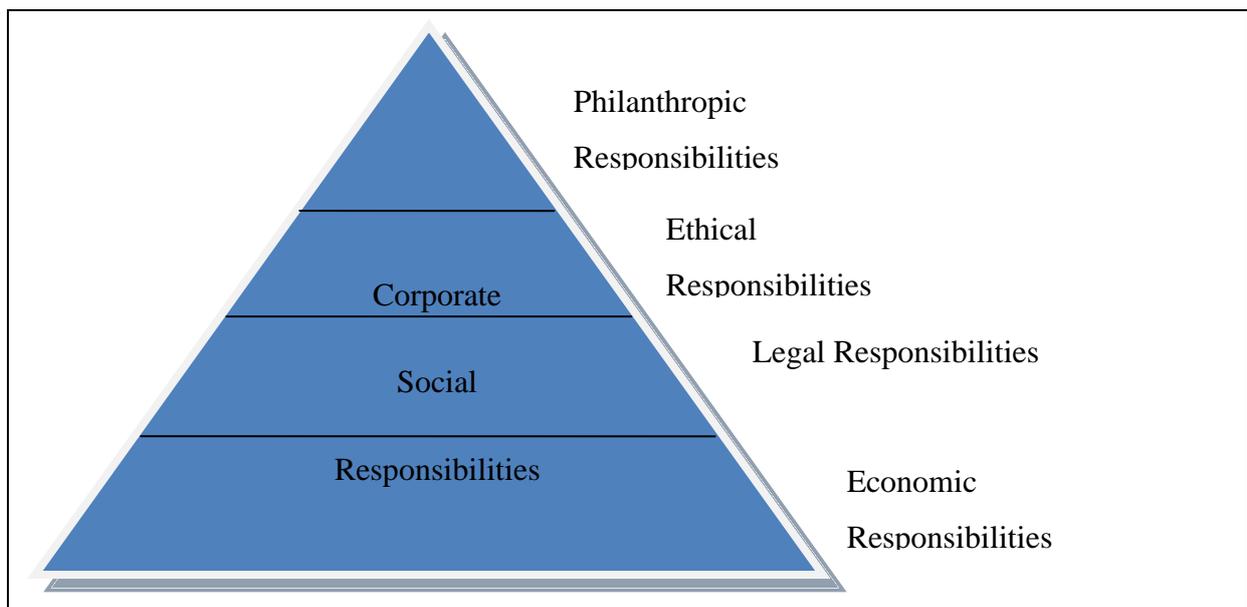

Figure 1. Carrol & Buchholtz, (2002) Model – The Pyramid of Corporate Responsibility reproduced from Crane et al, (2008, p.66)

The following statements expand on these responsibilities:

- Economic responsibilities - the organisation must remain profitable, this being the foundation on which to build the other responsibilities "**required** by business and society"

- Legal responsibilities – obey the law this is "**required** by society"

- Ethical responsibilities – operate ethically; avoid harm "**expected** by society"

- Philanthropic responsibilities – be a good corporate citizen, contribute to the community "**desired** by society" (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2000; Carroll, 1999:)

The dependence of business on society and vice versa implies that corporate decisions and social policy must follow a "*principle of shared value*". Furthermore neither party should make choices that benefit its interests at the cost of the other as this will lead to a short term gain but will ultimately undermine the long term prosperity of both (Porter and Kramer, 2006). Accordingly, increase in CSR activity by companies has not been taken on entirely voluntarily. Pressure from government, activist NGOs, and media, in particular, has identified external stakeholders who aim to hold companies accountable for social issues and to hold companies conduct to account when it is deemed unacceptable (Bhattacharya at al, 2008; Porter Kramer, 2006).

Previous research suggests that the returns from being socially responsible can include a greater commitment from current employees; a greater ability to attract potential employees; with a particular focus on attracting graduates to the organisation (Scott, 2004; Turban and Greening, 1996). Moreover, other works have recognised a strong link between organisational commitment, employee retention, reduced levels of absenteeism and increases in productivity (Meyer et al 2002). This is particularly important when considering resource based theory (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). Competitive advantage can be achieved by attracting and holding onto employees who's intimate product knowledge and expertise are resources that are difficult to substitute and hard to imitate. Furthermore the managers are required to identify, nurture and develop the critical talent that exists within the corporation to ensure commercial success.

External and internal CSR.

It is clear that CSR has many definitions and can be focused on various strategic objectives for a given company with focus on either both the external stakeholders or internal stakeholders of the company. External CSR might be described as corporate philanthropy, this includes contributions to the local community and the interactions an organisation has with the environment; as well as the ethical position taken by the organisation towards external stakeholders and customers (Carrol, 1979). Internal CSR is more centred on the employee's well being and that of being a good employer (Gond et al, 2006).

Earlier studies have indicated that organisational commitment might be influenced both positively and negatively by employee perceptions of external CSR (Brammer et al, 2007). In view of the relationship between organisational commitment, retention, employee turnover, job performance and employee wellbeing, this is an important link to understand (Meyer et al, 2002). Even though there is only an indirect benefit from external CSR to employees, a positive relationship to organisational commitment was noted seeming to support the contribution of social identity theory to employee commitment (Brammer et al, 2007; Gond et al, 2006). See section on social identity theory (p. 23 -25). Therefore, it would seem clear that in order to engage its employee population the company has to be clear on its definition of CSR in order that it can clearly articulate its CSR strategy and purpose.

Corporate citizenship.

Corporate Citizenship is defined as "*a company's management of its influences and relationships with the rest of society*" (Marsden, 2000, p11). Friedman's assertion is that in a well governed and well ordered society all businesses should focus on is running their business well, paying their taxes and generally being a good neighbour. (Marsden, op cit). However, most large MNCs operating at a global level have increased their powerbase to such an extent that they are more powerful; have the resources, sometimes exceeding those of small nations; and they are generally less encumbered by the bureaucracy that hinders governments. Even rich nations' government have to abide by their own bureaucracies, politics and party leanings, and are less able to act globally than MNCs (Marsden, 2000).

Poor nations can find themselves at the mercy of large MNCs and under pressure to put short term gain ahead of environmental or social issues. In developed nations, there has been a decline in traditional social support systems e.g. of extended family to care for family members, and trade unions to address employee wellbeing issues. Leading to an increase in the levels of social exclusion, with individuals and sectors of society excluded from opportunities to positively contribute to their communities. This can manifest itself by acute poverty, higher levels of organised crime and religious fundamentalism (Crane et al, 2008; Marsden, 2000).

There are no effective international authorities to oversee these needs. More NGOs and governments are realising that business, in particular, large MNCs, as well as being a contributor to some of the key issues affecting the planet and society, can play a big part in the solution to a large number of the world's social and environmental challenges and the social costs of their corporate activities. (Crane et al, 2008; Marsden, 2000)

Business generally flourish in a healthy and stable environment. As a result a number of business leaders are involved in global councils to establish good codes of conduct for business to adhere (UNGC, 2008). However, many observers are suspicious and resentful of corporate involvement in areas still deemed to be the preserve of governments, state agencies or NGOs and are concerned about the motives of these large companies. Some feel that the good citizenship efforts of large MNCs only serve to legitimise their activities, which in turn justifies the corrupting influence large corporations may have on the democratic process (Crane, et al 2008).

Definition of stakeholders.

Unlike the traditional shareholder model famously espoused by Friedman (1970), the stakeholder model takes the responsibilities of the company further and suggests that the corporation is responsible for more than just increasing shareholder value but should be responsible for returning stakeholder value.

There is much academic debate on who the stakeholders of the company are. Freeman (1984) defines stakeholders as "*any group or individual who can effect or is affected by, the achievement of the organizations objectives*".

Freeman and Reed (1983) assert that stakeholders should be defined as *"those groups on which the organisation is dependent for its continued survival"*.

Mitchell et al (1997) argue that three variables identify the entities managers should take into consideration when identifying stakeholders. These are the stakeholders' power to influence; the legitimacy of the relationship with the company; and the urgency of the stakeholders' claim on the company. Furthermore they argue that having identified the existence of these stakeholder groups their model can identify which groups of stakeholders require attention and which do not, acknowledging that the environment is dynamic and stakeholder salience can change over time (Mitchell et al, op cit).

By combining the strategic CSR foundations and strategic CSR outcomes a company is able, from both an economic and strategic view of CSR, to gain a competitive advantage. Furthermore, the centrality or the "fit" between a company's CSR policy and its business objectives is key to the program receiving priority and increasing likelihood of yielding future benefits which would ultimately translate into profits (Burke and Logsdon, 1996).

However critics of CSR feel that Corporations are only set up for one purpose, that is economic return, and that any citizenship role will interfere with their ability to go about their business in a profitable manner (Crane et al, 2008).

For a large number of companies the main focus of CSR would appear to be the external stakeholders of the company rather than the internal stakeholders (of which the employees are a key group). Employees not only have an opinion in the way the company is run but are also critical to ensuring the company's CSR strategy is put into practice. The employees are critical to the success of the CSR program. Moreover, when they are fully engaged by the company's CSR activities, employees can act as important advocates for the company.

In some parts of Europe, France in particular, the internal stakeholder is considered the main target of the CSR policy. Of the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) who have signed up to the United Nations Global Compact the employees were ranked first (consumers were ranked second) as the group with the highest influence on the way a company manages the expectations of society (Gond et al, 2006). However this might be good corporate rhetoric on the part of the CEOs rather than a reality.

For excellent stakeholder relationships to manifest, high levels of trust, quality communications and mutual respect need to be present. As a company drives its dialogue with one group of stakeholders it needs to apply the lessons learned through the process of engagement to add value to other stakeholder relationships (Thorn McAllister, 2005, p. 52-53). This would seem to suggest that the efforts maintained by the company to develop and nurture its external stakeholder relationships can also be applied to internal stakeholder relationships. The relationship with employees can be fostered to develop the CSR strategy further.

However, due to the lack of additional financial imperative, it might not be possible to compare external stakeholders' perception of a company and the impact this has on their intention to buy or utilise the services on offer. An employee has a requirement to provide for themselves or a family impacting on their ability to choose whether they want to be associated with a particular company. Therefore, there may have to be a compromise between the employees values and those practiced by the organisation (Gond et al, 2006).

Never-the-less, being familiar with the concerns and needs of the internal stakeholders smoothes the information flow, which will eventually lead to a greater level of consistency in the expectations and values of the internal stakeholder group. The stakeholder model assumes that there is an open, two way communication process between the organisation and the stakeholders (Thorn McAlister, 2005, p.53).

The CSR competency framework, an initiative by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, is attempting to drive a focus on good HR practices as a focus for companies' CSR activities (DTI, 2004). The CSR Competency Framework contains examples of twelve UK businesses' best practices and demonstrates how CSR and human resource management combine to improve corporate performance. It is something of a paradox that on the whole employees are frequently neglected as a key stakeholder of the organisation (Gond et al, 2006).

Competitive advantage through CSR.

Freidman (op cit) famously asserted that there was no place for CSR in business and that the sole purpose of a company was to enhance shareholder profits. However, many proponents of CSR have identified that, if aligned to the strategy, CSR can indeed have a beneficial

effect on the financial performance of the company. At a fundamental level, academics and CSR supporters would contest that corporate social responsibility not only affects bottom line performance of the company but also affects the environmental and social performance commonly referred to as the 'triple bottom line'. There has generally been little evidence to support this view with the empirical studies that have been carried out being inconclusive. Burke and Logsdon (1996) suggest that the reason for this is that these studies have been too focused on the financial performance of the company's short term profits in particular. They further argue that much of the CSR behaviour measured was non-strategic in nature, which might be valuable to the wider stakeholders of the organisation but added little value to the short term interests of shareholders (Crane et al, 2008).

Since the early seventies there have been a significant number of empirical studies aimed at addressing the links between CSR and the financial performance of companies. The findings of these studies point toward a positive association and there is little evidence that CSR activities are negatively associated with financial performance. This would seem to confirm that CSR activities are legitimate in that they do indeed contribute to the financial performance objectives of the company and therefore wealth maximisation for shareholders. Some still argue that the resources diverted toward CSR activities might have been better used to create even more wealth, but also concede that there is little evidence that CSR destroys value (Margolis and Walsh, 2003).

It is generally accepted that maximising shareholder wealth is compatible with meeting the growing demands of stakeholders. For instance, if a company engages in some form of community project by donating resources and improving the lot of the local community then it is likely that in turn it will be easier to attract quality applicants, thereby reducing hiring costs, cutting down on pilfering and potentially improving quality. This is described by Jensen (2000) as 'enlightened value maximisation' suggesting that this concept of CSR will maximise the long term value of the company (Crane et al, 2008).

Burke and Logsdon (1996) take this argument further, proposing that company's can leverage sustainable advantage through strategic CSR. They identify five dimensions which are "*both critical to the success of the company and useful in relating CSR polices, programmes and processes to value creation by the company*". These five dimensions are; Centrality, Specificity, Proactivity, Voluntarism and Visibility.

- Centrality considers that the closer a CSR policy or programme is aligned to the goals, missions and objectives of the company the more consistently it could be expected to return future benefits for the company. The greater the centrality or 'fit' of actions or programmes the more likely that they will be prioritised and consequently return the expected value. This congruence is a key element of the engagement of employees as they will know better than most if the CSR aspirations of the company fit with the internal values of the company.

- Specificity refers to a company's ability to gain competitive advantage through the actions of its CSR activities without also advantaging other company's via the free-rider effect. For example a company engaged in a local community adult literacy project might benefit by developing the population base from which it intends to hire personnel in the future, however, other company's in the locality will also benefit from this activity.

- Proactivity indicates the company's ability to anticipate and respond to anticipated changes in the market and non market environment. The earlier a company can position itself to take advantage of changes in the environment, the greater chance it has of maintaining and increasing long term value. Engaged employees may well assist in this area as the stronger the psychological contract between employee and company, the more likely employees are going to engage in proactive behaviours (Rousseau, 1989), effectively enabling the company to benefit from employee networks more widely.

- Voluntarism, which is closely linked to proactivity, reflects a company's behaviours which have come about voluntarily and not as a result of meeting an externally imposed requirement. This might include exceeding current legislation in an attempt to curb the introduction of more stringent compliance requirements. For example, voluntarily engaging in campaigns to promote moderate alcohol consumption, might help the alcoholic beverage industry avoid more stringent product labelling requirements similar to those legislated for tobacco products.

- Visibility represents the company's ability to receive recognition for the activities it has undertaken both internally within the organisation and externally. Visibility is a double edged sword. Favourable visibility might lead to increased earnings or share

price whereas negative visibility might result in tougher legislation or NGO attention toward the company's activities.

However, in the strategic context this is suggesting that in order for companies to maximise the benefits of their CSR activities stakeholders must be sufficiently aware of the programmes or policies in which the company is engaged. The strategic outcome of an integrated CSR strategy is value creation, which ensures that the economic benefits of the strategy will be measurable in the long term performance of the company (Burke and Logsdon,1996; Crane et al, 2008). Visibility and ownership are key components in the communication of the CSR strategy. This will be explored further in section Communication of CSR (p. 27-8) which address the affect CSR has on the company's internal stakeholders and the communication role therein.

How CSR affects employees behaviours.

The requirement for companies to engage in corporate social responsibility activities is increasing (Kapstein, 2001), and has encouraged questions on the perceptions of these activities on the stakeholders. The contribution of CSR to organisational commitment is considered to be as strongly linked as job satisfaction (Brammer et al, 2007).

All corporations within a sector are competing for the same resources. There are only a finite number of 'quality' employees in the hiring pool (Bhattacharya et al, 2008), except possibly during times of high unemployment. It is generally accepted that good CSR programmes help companies to attract and retain talent. Talented, motivated people want to work for a company that demonstrates good corporate citizenship behaviours in which they can thrive personally. This strengthens the attachment to the company and is shown to increase job satisfaction, employee retention and productivity (Bhattacharya et al, 2008; Brammer et al 2007 Peterson, 2004).

Employees' perceptions of the company's social responsiveness, values, and business ethics play a significant role in shaping employees' perceptions of the attractiveness of the organisation (Greening and Turban, 2000). Generally, the senior management of a given corporation understand their CSR strategy in broad terms, but often fail to grasp the specific detail of the CSR strategy. In Particular the managers fail in those social initiatives which pertain to employees' perception of the company (Bhattacharya et al, 2008).

However, due to the diversity in execution, the favourable response of the employee is dependent upon the perceptions and character of the individuals. Bhattacharya et al (2008) suggest that employees suffer from a lack of awareness of the CSR program. Some employees may be actively engaged, whereas others may be completely unaware. There is often a broad description of the CSR strategy however, it is frequently difficult to find out the specifics of the program. Often the CSR activities are to be found hiding on an obscure web page not easily accessed or obviously in view. In their study Bhattacharya et al found that of the 90% of respondents to their survey who felt CSR was important for their company only 50% of those had a clear idea of what activities the company undertook in any detail. Secondly, there is no clear understanding of the psychosocial needs the employees are fulfilling by engaging in CSR.

Bhattacharya et al's (2008) survey identified four additional, fundamental needs that employees seek to fill by engaging in CSR activities. These are:

- Self enhancement opportunities including emotional reward, learning new skills which could enhance career prospects or increase efficiency. They found that employees can feel less stressed if they feel they can balance the needs of family and work.

- CSR offered opportunity for values integration, that is to say that it could lead to employees feeling that the company placed the same importance on personal values as they do.

- For remote workers, in particular, the opportunity to engage in CSR activities enabled them to feel more connected with the company and gained valuable bonding with other employees they might not otherwise interact with.

- Finally the more the company was engaged in CSR activities the more employees felt they were shielded from criticism of their corporation's business. The CSR activity effectively acted as a licence to operate through education of external stakeholders in the good corporate citizenship behaviours of the company.

Companies frequently have a limited understanding of the returns to be gained from employee engagement in CSR. There is a need to understand the links between CSR

initiatives and outcomes. Employees who feel engaged and emotionally fulfilled are likely to identify more strongly with the organisation. Moreover, CSR has a tendency to be hierarchical. There is a large difference between the chief executive's and the employees' opinions regarding the ownership and role of CSR initiatives (Bhattacharya et al, 2008).

Companies often keep their employees removed from the details of the company CSR program, failing to communicate the specifics in a clear and consistent manner. The CSR programmes are frequently devised without explicitly taking account of the varied needs of the employees that can be realized by such programs. Furthermore, the psychological mechanisms that correlate to positive returns from their employees are frequently not well understood when devising and executing the CSR programs (Bhattacharya et al 2008).

Bhattacharya et al (2008) recommend 5 steps for optimal employee engagement

Employee reactions to CSR.

CSR Management Factors	Traditional Approach	Optimal Engagement
Measurement and Control	Not clearly defined	→ Contingent input output approach
Internal Marketing Advantage	Change employee attitudes	→ Fulfil employee needs
Implementation	Uniform across company	→ Tailored to employee segments
Key indicator	Job satisfaction	→ Identification
Value Creation	Top down	→ Co-created
Employee Role	Enabler	→ Enactor
Company Role	Enactor	→ Enabler

(Table 1: Reproduced from Bhattacharya et al,(2008), p. 42)

- Contingent input output approach when making decision related to CSR

Monitor the outputs of CSR using internal surveys to specifically identify which programs deliver the most value to employees and the company by proxy. Measures of internal outcome and external outcomes can be gathered and reported both to senior management and to the employee cohort to ensure the CSR activities are providing value to the organisation.

Mangers should be encouraged to consider the multipliers, which can exaggerate or negate the impact of the CSR activities. These factors may be specific to both the employees and the company (Bhattacharya et al, op cit).

- Understand the needs of employees and aim to fulfil those needs

In the same way as marketing activities, the CSR activities should be correlated to the specific employee demographic, psychographics and firmographic variations. Suggesting that the CSR program will have a greater value to employees if it meets their expectations coloured by age; gender; interest and activities they like to be involved in; or opinions; issues relating to seniority; functional area; or department. Bhattacharya et al (2008) propose targeting those segments which present the greatest value, present or future.

- Improve employee identification with the company

Due to the strong links to personal values, CSR can strengthen employee identification with the organisation more than many other activities of the company. Measuring employee identification may have a greater relevance than attempting to measure 'job satisfaction' (op cit).

- Involve employees in the creation of CSR value

Involving the employees in the planning and implementation of the CSR programs might assist managers in discharging additional employee needs that are otherwise difficult to fulfil through the employees formal role. For example, policy formulation or leadership roles

- Change the CSR role of the company from that of enactor to that of enabler

If at all possible the employees should be regarded as the enactors of CSR strategy. It is expected that this will engender a feeling of ownership and strengthen the employees sense of ownership of the CSR activities which in turn will engender a greater level of commitment toward the companies CSR strategy and help drive the positive behaviours than can result (Op cit).

Employee engagement and commitment.

"*Employee commitment stems from employees who believe their future is tied to that of the organisation and are willing to make personal sacrifices for the organisation*" (Thorne McAlister et al, 2005, p 21).

Due to difficulties linking CSR to financial performance and the inconsistent and even contradictory findings, a number of studies focused their attention on the impact of CSR activities upon the key internal stakeholders, i.e. the employees. The findings suggest that increased employee engagement and commitment will lead indirectly to greater financial performance though increased efficiency; a reduction in the costs associated with recruitment and retention; and a reduction in destructive behaviours i.e. pilfering and sabotage etc. (Bhattacharya et al, 2008; Brammer et al, 2007; Gond et al 2006;Bhattacharya and Sen 2000).

One of the difficulties in measuring the effect of social performance on corporate performance is the failure to recognise which stakeholders are important. If there is a theoretical reason to expect a correlation between a measure of social performance and a resulting outcome then it is likely to be relatively easy to identify.

Peterson (2004) suggests one could expect that a measure of social performance based on the existence of employee friendly programmes and polices would be positively associated with employee related measures such as a list of the best employment companies. On the other hand news of social irresponsibility and abnormal levels of stock returns are established indicators of investors' behaviour as stakeholders of the company. In this instance, there is a strong theoretical link between a negative outcome and a negative measure because investors might respond to socially irresponsible behaviour of a given corporation (Peterson, 2004; Thorn McAlister 2005, p. 21-22).

For some consumers there can be a perception that product quality can be influenced by the manufacturers' performance on social issues (Jones, 1997; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Smith, 1996, quoted in Peterson, 2004). Research has also shown that job seekers prefer companies that have strong socially responsible traits, one reason given for this finding is that working for a socially responsible company reflects well upon the potential employees own social identity (Abinger and Freeman, 2000; Greening and Turban, 2000). Thus, there appears to be evidence that the various stakeholders can be influenced by the reputation of a company's

social performance whether that is positive or negative performance (Peterson, 2004; Thorn McAlister, 2000 p. 21-22).

The relationship between social performance and employees' attitudes and behaviours that are influenced by the social performance of a company is therefore an important relationship to understand. Particularly, if those outcomes relate to a positive work attitude, such as increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, lower staff turnover, increased commitment etc. (Meyer et al, 1989).

Allen and Meyer (1990, p21) propose that there are three levels of commitment.

- Affective commitment "*an emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organisation*";

- Continuance commitment "*the perceived costs associated with leaving the organisation*";

- Normative commitment "*reflect*[ing] *a perceived obligation to remain in the organisation*".

Each can be attributed to labour turnover and an employee's intention to remain with the company. However, there is a stronger relationship between affective commitment and the sought after employee outcomes, good attendance, superior job performance, reduced conflict, lower levels of work and home related stress, that are desirable to most employers (Meyer, 2002).

This correlates with earlier research on the psychological contract. Rousseau (1989) defines the psychological contract as "*an individuals belief regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party. Key issues here include the belief that a promise has been made and a consideration offered in exchange for it binding the parties to the same set of reciprocal obligations*" (p123) this would seem to correlate with the assertion by Allen and Meyer (1990) that a stronger level of affective commitment will create a stronger bond between employees and the company they work for than a commitment based upon obligation or sunk costs in terms of time served or the costs and aggravation of leaving the company.

Furthermore, studies have shown that in an organisation showing high levels of commitment to the respect and goodwill of its employees, this is frequently reciprocated and results in greater levels of employee engagement and support for the company objectives. The studies also found that only one in three employees is truly loyal to the organisation they are employed by (Thorn McAlister, 2005, p. 21-22).

Signalling and social identity theory.

Social identity theory might present a reason why there is a relationship between the two variables (Maignan and Ferrel, 2001). Social identity theory asserts that individuals tend to associate themselves and others into various groups, e.g. membership of companies, gender, interests and hobbies (Tajfel and Turner, 1985). Social identity theory can indicate the measure of employees' engagement within a company. The theory indicates that individuals see themselves as belonging to various social categories. How an individual perceives of themselves is influenced by their affiliation to social organisations this includes the company an individual is employed by (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). It is further influenced by an individual's cognitive association with a company or the perceived overlap between the individual's identity and the company's identity (Elsbach, 1999).

As such, individuals are motivated by their own self enhancement needs. They tend to associate themselves with companies which enhance their self image (Dutton et al, 1994). Research by Fuller et al (2006) indicates that an employee's positive identification with a company is likely to foster constructive behaviours.

One explanation for this behaviour is that individuals might bolster their self image through association with perceived successful groups. Membership of a successful group might enhance an individual's self-esteem (Smith et al, 2001). It is often possible to observe how some employees and students demonstrate overt signalling behaviours by wearing corporate wear outside of work or the educational establishment. Company fleeces, jackets, and company ID badges signalling their affiliation to their workplace or university emblazoned sweatshirts demonstrating a level of educational achievement are often worn to signal that the wearer perceives that they belong to a 'superior' company or feel that their educational credentials set them apart from lesser educational institutions (Dutton et al, 2006).

Thus, according to social identity theory, individuals with strong opinions on corporate responsibility and the social performance of business would expect to identify more strongly with a company that demonstrates itself to be a good corporate citizen (Peterson, 2004).

Commitment to the company could be expected to be particularly strong if the employee perceives it to have a good reputation for corporate social responsibility (Chatman, 1991). Conversely, the opposite might occur in the case of a poor reputation in terms of CSR, this may have a negative effect on employee commitment (Dutton et al, 1994).

There may also be employees for whom corporate social responsibility has no affect, they may be indifferent towards a company's CSR activities. This could be particularly acute in times of significant organisational upheaval or layoffs and during periods of poor financial performance (Maignan and Ferrell, 2001).

High commitment Human Resource practices such as participation in decision making, promoting visibility within the organisation and providing opportunities for growth are likely to have a greater effect on non-professional employees *"locals"* than professional employees *"cosmopolitans"* (Gouldner, 1957, p. 290-291; Fuller et al, 2009). Coff (1999) takes this further and posits that to attempt to foster organisational identification within the ranks of non professional employees is a wasted effort and that the company should focus on those activities which demonstrate that the company values its employees and holds them in high regard. Furthermore, resources expended upon the perceived prestige of the company is likely to be wasted if targeted at non-professional employees (Coff, op cit).

However, if the company has a high level of professional employees the social standing or prestige of the company is likely to have a greater relevance and appeal. This suggests that professional employees are more likely to place value on the reputational capital of the company than non professional employees (Gouldner, 1957; Coff, 1999).

Therefore, when taking into account the internal stakeholders it is important for the company to identify the types of employees they have in order that the focus of the CSR strategy is aligned to those areas most valued by its employees.

Communication.

"*Communication is concerned with facilitating the achievement of organizational goals*" (Dolphin, 2000, p. 5-6).

There has been much written about communication as a wider topic, however this section is focused on the study of organisational communication and it's impact on the engagement of employees toward organisational goals in particular.

Francis (1989, p. xi) defines organisational communication as "[T]*he medium through which managers lead, direct the activities of others, harness human creativity, coordinate specialists and control activities, and understand the needs and wants of those who work within the companies and those who use the companies goods and services*".

Direct communication represents behaviour alignment as a result of formal or written processes. Indirect communication represents the alignment of behaviours stimulated by informal processes or symbols. For example modelling behaviour exhibited by supervisors that subordinates seek to emulate (Hartman, 1996).

Some of the most important communications to take place within a company are not necessarily the formal announcements or the information posted on the company intranet but the "*actions or inactions*" of the leaders of the company (Francis, 1996, p. xi).

"*Properly sent and understood alignment messages can bring greater clarity and alignment about the meaning of specific cultural attributes by reducing members ambiguity and by limiting the number of plausible interpretations.*" (Tietze et al 2003; Clegg, 1990;; Weick, 1995, in Hartman 1996, p. 406).

Francis (1989, p. x) expands on this by proposing four objectives of organisational communication;

- "*Share a compelling vision*" (ensure all employees know what is important to the organisation and can buy in to the organisational mission and goals).
- "*Integrate the effort*" (enable everyone to focus their energy in the same direction).
- "*Sustain a healthy community*" (ensure that the employees feel the desire to strive to attain the goals of the organisation rather than work against it).

- "*Make intelligent decisions*" (enable the employees to integrate their efforts and respond to the market pressures and forces facing the organisation).

"*An organisation is a community of people which operates on an emotional level*" (Francis, 1996, p. xi)

Invisible but powerful forces "*defuse*" managements' best efforts. Clarity about the vision for the future is critical and can only come from the top. Without effective integration companies cannot combine their resources to get things done. The 'esprit du corps' needs to be continuously nurtured by the senior management, 'unhealthy' companies fail to command good will (Francis, 1996).

Case studies on corporate communications suggest a strong correlation between improved communication with employees and the improved performance of the company (Dolphin, 2000). Therefore, it is clear that communication by implication can have an impact upon strategy and by correlation on the competitive advantage of a company which, ultimately impacts its long term success (Dolphin 2000; Francis, 1989; Thorn McAlister, 2005). Good internal communication must lead to improved competitive advantage.

Communication of CSR.

Research has shown that, in the main, employees are unaware of their company's CSR efforts. They may have an idea that their employer is in some ways socially responsible but they frequently know little or nothing regarding the specifics of the CSR activities (Bhattacharya et al, 2008).

Influence of employee opinion and subsequent behaviours can only be attained when the focus of the CSR strategy has been consistently and coherently communicated via the appropriate medium to ensure all employees receive the same information. The communications about the CSR strategy will only be seen as window dressing or corporate PR if the actions of senior leaders are incongruent with the desired outcomes of the CSR strategy (Gond et al, 2006). For example, if the strategy espouses work life balance, but the senior leaders consistently model behaviours which pressure employees into working excessive hours the value frequently espoused by corporations that "our people are our greatest asset" will be treated with cynicism at best and complete contempt at worst.

In today's technologically advanced age companies need to be aware that employees can find out about the company's responsibility endeavours (or irresponsibility) from a variety of external sources which are outside of the control of the internal communications department. External sources are often seen to be more objective therefore can be seen as more credible than those communications from internal PR teams, which are often viewed as feel good rhetoric rather than objective information (Bhattacharya et al, 2008).

Whilst the feel good factor of community programs is important for morale and can motivate employees, on its own it can come across as being driven purely as a PR exercise and offer limited value to employees own feelings of well being (Bhattacharya et al, 2005). It is important therefore, for the company to engage in activities that can promote its stance on CSR externally that can give it more credibility internally in order to validate the efforts of the company in the eyes of its employees.

Many companies perceive that explicitly communicating their CSR activities will enhance their reputational value. Matten and Moon (cited in Morsing et al, 2008, p106) express their concern at what they term "*this general Americanisation*" of CSR as a move away from the more implicit CSR practices in Europe. This is attributed to the welfare state in most European economies as having the lead role to address the societal issues and the CSR activities expected to address those issues implicit with being a good employer. Contrary to the US, where corporate philanthropy and gifting has traditionally been an explicit expectation of CSR strategy.

Following a study by the Reputation Institute in Denmark, Morsing et al (2008) advocate combining two key approaches. "*Expert CSR communication processes*" and "*endorsed CSR communications*" (p106). *Expert CSR communication processes* involve directing the communication of CSR issues at knowledgeable stakeholders with the intention of using these experts to communicate the CSR to less knowledgeable stakeholders as trusted or respected advocates of the company CSR activities which is then referred to as *endorsed CSR communications*; and is considered as key to avoiding being seen as only entering in rhetorical CSR.

As well as using external experts a second group of advocates recommended by the study were the employees. One of the study participant companies, Novo Nordisk, reputed to have a 'best practice' reputation for CSR uses this approach claiming "*You cannot open an issue of*

our corporate magazine without finding CSR related articles" (Rulis, M., cited in Brammer et al, 2008, p.106). Furthermore, in order to engage employees in the CSR activities employee well being is considered as the central tenet of the CSR strategy; this is engaged with and communicated first before moving on to community and the wider environment and finally engaging and communicating on international CSR issues (Morsing et al, 2008).

Employees are considered as central to the CSR activities with other external activities having little credibility if they don't fit with the company reputation regarding employee well being.

Summary of literature review.

The model below attempts to summarise the literature review: The definition of CSR, its focus, whether that is predominantly internal or external and the cultural requirements of the employees are impacted by the congruence of both the direct and indirect communication processes of the senior leaders. Furthermore, the employee's perception of their social identity, influenced by the employee's self enhancement needs and whether they are 'cosmopolitans' or 'locals', are likely to impact whether the employee engagement is resulting from the companies definition of CSR. Cosmopolitans are more likely to be influence by a strong external reputation for CSR. Locals, on the other hand are more likely to be influenced by an internally focussed CSR strategy. The earlier research seems to indicate that if there is alignment with the employee's own values, organisational commitment and positive engagement will result. As a consequence the behaviours of the employee are likely to be positively influenced resulting in greater levels of production; well being; advocacy etc.

Conversely, if the resulting employee behaviours manifested themselves negatively e.g. reduced productivity, high employee turnover, sabotage etc. By working backwards through the model one would expect to uncover a misalignment of either the communications or social identity and signalling processes with the employee's expectations or values. This situation might be expected to occur as a result of incongruent or poor communications. E.g the CSR program not fulfilling the employee's social identity and self enhancement needs and possible mismatch of CSR expectations. This might lead the company to review the centrality, specificity, proactivity, voluntarism and visibility elements of the company CSR

strategy, with a view to re-establishing congruence by engaging with the employees in redefining the CSR focus such that the desired employee behaviours and attitudes are re-established.

Figure 2, CSR's effect on employee behaviours as defined by the influence of communication; signalling and social identity theory upon organisational commitment (adapted from Gond et al, p. 32)

It would appear from the research that clear corporate communications on the definition and expectations of the CSR strategy is a key component of engaging employees in CSR. Those companies actively engaged in CSR will show greater levels of employee engagement than companies not engaged in CSR.

Employees are sceptical of new initiatives therefore in order to address this scepticism internal communication of CSR ought to be focussed on employee well being over external stakeholder issues. Those companies that have engaged with their internal stakeholders are more likely to have employees demonstrate greater advocacy and signalling behaviours. Which, through expert advocacy behaviours might increase the credibility of the companies' external CSR activity.

Clear, effective communication and engagement of the employees in defining the CSR strategy is a key component to ensuring employees are fully engaged in the CSR activities of

the company. It must be relevant, congruent and have addressed employee well being issues before addressing the wider external CSR objectives in order to gain high levels of employee commitment and the resulting positive employee behaviours.

Methodology Including Summary of Research Objectives.

This project has two key research objectives; the primary research objective is to contribute to the research on employee engagement through CSR (Gond et al, 2006; Bhattacharya et al, 2007), and secondly to assess the impact of organisational communication of the company's CSR strategy on employees. The report aims to evaluate the earlier theoretical arguments by investigating the CSR activities of a case study company. Principally it will do this through the collection of employee opinions and perceptions of the company's CSR strategy, and the communications pertaining to the CSR strategy. The employee opinions and perceptions will be gathered from semi-structured focus groups.

The organisational imperative for this research is to provide Experian (UK) plc. with a series of actionable recommendations underpinned by thorough academic research.

Literature search.

In order to put the report into a contextual setting and to generate rich research data against which to evaluate the findings, a review of academic literature was completed drawing upon concepts from previous researchers who have studied, in particular, the areas of CSR; employee engagement; social identity and signalling theory; organisational behaviour and communications theories.

A variety of sources were chosen including searches from academic journals; professional journals and publications; and prominent CSR, communications and psychology texts to give background information and highlight areas of limited research. This was completed primarily through a search of library on-line searches, EBSCO, internet and intranet articles.

Company history, CSR review and meta analysis.

A review of Experian plc's company history was carried out primarily using data gathered from the Experian intranet portal and company documentation and reports. Data was also gathered from unstructured interviews with the Global Head of CSR; the Global Talent Manager and the Head of People Communications and Community, Experian (UK). The employees' perceptions of the effectiveness of the communication of CSR were evaluated from the participants' responses during the focus group sessions.

A meta analysis of the employee survey (2009), and the global and regional action plans resulting from the survey, was carried out to identify correlations with the findings from the literature review and also to identify any trends that might require further investigation during the focus group sessions, with a view to identifying further correlations for analysis and discussion.

A desktop review of company literature and a review of the company history, structure and key operational activity were completed in order to provide a contextual analysis of the case study company. The data were principally gathered from the Experian intranet portal, and from the Datamonitor website. Data were also provided by the principal Experian contacts; Head of Global CR; Global Talent Manager; and Head of People Communications and Community.

Focus group methodology.

Focus Group is a qualitative methodology for gathering data. It follows a structured or semi structured interviewing methodology and is carried out in a group setting (Fontana and Frey, 1994) It has the aim of stimulating discussion with the purpose of surfacing ideas that might not have otherwise come to light in a formal one to one interview. (Morgan, 1988 quoted in Harman, 2004) Focus groups are used to understand the points of view and underpinning logic from respondents' perception. As a data gathering method focus groups increased in popularity through the late eighties and early nineties continuing to present day and are employed as a useful research tool by many of the social science disciplines. Goldmand (1962, quoted in Hartman, 2004, p403) describes focus groups as *"group depth interviews"* They enable the interaction of the group, which enables the interviewer to gain profound information. They rely on the stimulation of ideas through member interaction.

There are five fundamental assumptions when undertaking focus groups (Lederman 1990)

1. People are valuable sources of information.
2. People are able to discuss themselves and articulate their thoughts, feelings and behaviours.
3. The moderator can facilitate the generation of data.
4. The group dynamic will produce reliable information.
5. In certain situations group interview can be more effective than one to one.

Their main use is to determine the attitudes, preferences and perceptions of the participants through the encouragement of ideas.

In a situation when it is likely that there is minimal knowledge of a particular focus area and when the data might not be at the forefront of a respondent's mind a focus group can be a particularly effective method of collecting qualitative data (Zeller, 1993, in Hartman 2004) as a data gathering method they can also be used to confirm data collected by other means (Lederman, 1990).

The advantages of a focus group approach for this project is that it is expected that it will provide rich data, stimulate more ideas than a simple interview, allow the interviewer to check the understanding of a number of areas of the staff survey. It also has the added benefit of being a relatively inexpensive, flexible and stimulating method of data gathering (Fontana, Frey, 1994;Trebi 2003).

The size of the focus groups is restricted to no more than 10 participants. Six to ten participants is considered the optimal group size in order to generate adequate discussion whilst keeping the process manageable and enabling all participants to contribute. (Kress and Shoffler, 2007; Hartman, 2004).

A cross section of employees from all levels were sought to generate the spread of opinion from across the organisation and satellite locations. The groups were made up of new employees (<2 years of service); long service employees (non management); junior employees and middle managers. One focus group was held per day enabling the interviewer to complete a cursory review of the notes in between sessions. The sessions were transcribed in full.

The aim of the focus group is ultimately to understand the underlying processes and identify the key variables explaining the relationship that companies engaged in CSR will show greater levels of employee commitment than companies not engaged in CSR. Furthermore it aims to evaluate whether these relationships are at play and what the factors are explaining them. In so doing it will help identify the various levers with which Experian can reap the benefits of its CSR strategy through the adoption of specific employees' behaviours. More specifically it evaluates whether those employees who feel committed to the organisation are more likely to demonstrate advocacy and signalling behaviour externally.

The focus groups findings add rich data to the employee survey data by revealing dimensions that cannot be reached through an on-line survey (perception, and deeper understanding of employees' viewpoints etc.) Also the focus group findings attempt to understand if employees' perception of CSR has been influenced following the communications roll out of the 2009 CR report.

The focus groups were entirely anonymous and none of the discussion details were be reviewed by anyone other than the interviewer. The value added for Experian in taking this approach was firstly, to allow the employees the opportunity to provide sincere indirect feedback on the CSR policy (and communication of the policy), and secondly the focus group findings could be synthesised into the report to summarize the key learning and their implications for CSR management. The synthesized report will enable Experian to gain a clear overview of the perceptions and evaluation of the CSR strategy by various internal audiences.

The configuration of the focus group is semi structured. The 'Primary Questions' were pre-planned allowing the facilitator to create a link to the research objectives. The semi-structured approach gave the interviewer the option of following up with additional probing questions in order to gain a better understanding of a response or to stimulate ideas from other participants.

Although very familiar with the objectives of the project the facilitator was unfamiliar with the participants or case study organisation. This ensures impartiality and reduces the risk of bias.

In order to enable all participants to hear the facilitator as well as each other the room was set up in a horse shoe seating arrangement, this is the preferred seating plan suggested by Harman, (2004).

The facilitator used a small recording device to enable him to concentrate fully on the responses of the focus group participants and to allow for a completely accurate transcription afterwards.

Focus group session overview.

The interviewer introduced himself and the purpose of the focus group and asked the attached questions (appendix i) recording the answers for later transcription and analysis. All participants' comments and views were given anonymously.

To enable complete openness and sharing during the focus group sessions all of the participants were given a number in place of using their own name and the transcripts were synthesised into the report with any identifying data removed to ensure full anonymity. The analysis of the tapes seeks to compare, contrast and identify recurrent themes following a qualitative content analysis procedure (Hartman, 2004)

In order to assess the context of the CSR communications within the broader context of corporate communications generally the interviewer started the focus group by asking the participants general questions about Experian and how they perceive CSR is communicated to all employees. Also, to gain a broad understanding of the participants' views regarding their perception of the effectiveness of communication within Experian, with particular focus on UK operations. This included questions regarding the relevance, method, timing and feedback mechanisms employed by Experian.

The questions then moved on to discuss CSR communications more specifically in order to gain an understanding of the participants' understanding of what CSR is in a general sense. What might be the business benefits to a company following a CSR strategy? How their perceptions of the CSR strategy marry with their own expectations? Finally, the discussion centred on the relevance of the Experian CSR strategy to themselves as employees.

Moreover, the focus group participants were asked if the CSR strategy of Experian influenced their own perceptions of the organisation, whether that was in a positive or negative manner, and whether they felt this had any impact on their level of engagement with the company.

The focus group participants' opinion were also sought as to whether they perceived Experian to be a good corporate citizen compared with other companies and whether or not the CSR activities of Experian influenced their decision to remain with the company.

Finally the interviewer asked the participants whether the CSR activities of Experian led them to engage in advocacy behaviours externally on behalf of the company.

Findings and Discussion.

Contextual analysis of case study company: Experian (UK) plc.

Company overview.

Experian (UK) plc a division of Experian plc. is headquartered in Ireland, and provides decision making and credit checking tools, marketing and internet marketing solutions.

Experian operates in 38 countries and sells to clients in over 65 countries globally. It has four primary revenue streams: credit services, decision analytics, and marketing solutions, interactive and central activities.

CSR has been an ongoing strategic aim of the corporation for some years, however 2009 represented just the second full year of CSR activity at Experian since the de-merger from GUS in 2006 (Experian, 2009).

Since the de-merger in 2006 Experian has been involved in nearly twenty merger and acquisition activities and in 2007 launched a global re-branding of the corporate image, brand positioning, logo and advertising campaign (Datamonitor, 2009).

Meta analysis – People Survey 2009.

A meta analysis of the 2009 people survey for Experian (UK) plc. highlights three key areas of engagement that warrant further investigation in the focus groups (See appendix ii and iii):

- Corporate Citizenship, which had the highest beta weighting .33 as a driver of engagement, this is consistent with earlier findings that CSR is a key driver of employee engagement (Bhattacharya et al, 2008; Gond et al, 2006)

- The actions of Senior Leadership (beta weighting .29) this would correlate strongly with the views of Francis (1989) and Hartman (1996) who place a higher value on the actions of leaders as a driver of engagement through indirect communications over direct formal communication methods

- Talent Management and Career Progression (beta weighting .28), this might indicate an alignment with the hypotheses of Gouldner (1957) and Fuller et al (2009) that providing opportunities for growth are likely to have a greater effect on non-professional employees "*locals*" than professional employees as a measure of engagement through CSR explained by social identity theory.

The results of the survey are reported to all employees through a cascade process and action plans are drawn up for each region with objectives and completion dates against each. The action plans have high visibility and are reported up to CEO level. There is an indication that the actions are tracked and reported to the senior leadership at regular intervals (see appendices iii and iv).

CSR at Experian.

The CSR focus is on four key areas; principally targeting the external stakeholders of the company, singling out customers through the development of products and services and the stewardship of data as the primary responsibility. Secondly it focuses on the internal stakeholders recognising the employees are a key driver of corporate success and a vital link with the local communities and finally focussing on environmental management, identified principally as a cost control and risk assessment measure (Experian, 2009).

The Strategy has three strands, embedding a "*social, ethical and environmental (SEE) perspective*" into all aspects of the day to day operations (risk management), product development and community responsibilities. (Experian, 2009, p. 4)

The report then identifies six key responsibilities;

- good stewardship of data;

- creation of social and economic benefit through products and services;

- ethical interactions with consumers;

- being a good employer;

- minimising the environmental impacts of doing business; and

- being a good corporate citizen.

It appears that the emphasis of the CSR strategy emphasises external CSR activity with five of the six responsibilities being directed at the external stakeholders and one responsibility focussing on the internal stakeholders.

Communication of CSR at Experian.

The communication roll-out plan for the role-out of the CSR strategy indicated that at a defined time an intranet communication would be launched to highlight to employees that a 2009 report was available in both hard copy and soft copy for all employees to read and comment upon. Furthermore the plan indicated a cascade process via the management to all employees in department briefings and one to ones. With regular and ongoing communications identified for each quarter thereafter. The role out plan incorporated group and divisional variants (see appendix v).

Focus group findings.

As earlier stated the focus group discussion targeted a number of areas. Starting with a general discussion on company communication, before moving on to discuss communication of CSR more specifically, in particular, to discover whether the recent role-out of the Corporate Responsibility report had engaged its target audience. The discussion then moved on to discover what employees understood about some of the more widely used CSR terminology in more detail. Finally, it concluded with a more focused discussion about their perceptions of the benefits of following a CSR strategy, and how the employees perceived the company CSR activities engaged them in terms of organisational commitment, and advocacy.

Communication.

How would you rate the company communication with you?

There has been an acknowledged history of poor communication which the Management of Experian were actively taking steps to address. *"I think there's a clear focus that*

communication was not as it should be […] there has been an improvement, but there needs to be further improvement, so I'd say there have been positive efforts made".

Other respondents agreed

"We had a lot of communication before that was around fluffy stuff, if you like. You know there was a hell of a lot around award winners and all this kind of stuff which is great and we should be communicating and celebrating successes. I think what people really want to know is what am I here to achieve? What am I here to contribute to? You know what's the bigger picture but what does it really mean for me? And we're still not there yet with comms [Communications] I don't think".

"[I]t's interesting that in terms of the way things are communicated, we've managed in kind of blogs and kind of different formats, podcasts and things like that. And I didn't know that they particularly existed so it's how that's communicated through to new starts as to know where to get the information from."

"I think from a global level often you hear about something more as its happening or may be after it's happened as opposed to sometimes having you know a bit of insight. Especially being as our tag line is "a World of Insight"".

"I find it quite limiting at times. It's restri[ctive]-, it's... Seems like it's overly filtered. I know when I've previously tried to publish something on to the Intranet there's sort of almost quite an obstructive path to get there. You have to get sign off from certain people and to make sure it fits into a certain news unless something previously wasn't registered on like…around that subject area".

"I would say the word to describe corporate communication is inconsistent. I think different messages are communicated at different levels and within different businesses. So often you're getting conflicting information or inconsistent information dependent on where you fit within the business".

"It's a little bit different I think for me just because of the area of the business I work in have got their own kind of way to communicate everything to everyone. So we get a little bit more I think than may be everybody else does".

"Within my business unit it's been a push recently to promote good communication and they're trying their best but [it] *kind of falls short a little bit. A bit too much detail. People becoming unengaged within the hour. To actually put an hour in for the whole communication once a month and I think it's just a little bit too much"*.

"I think there is also bit of a tendency to… Anything that might be construed as negative seems to be in the Evening Post before we find out about it as the employees".

"I think it's important that we have a variety of different mediums to communicate messages because not all messages need to be communicated in the same way. I think the problem that we have now is nobody knows which medium they're supposed to use to communicate what message. So we have this issue that number two just said where there are so many different sources that you can go to, you don't know how to go to the right one to find out what you need. It's that whole "You don't know what you don't know"."

"I know that people do need to take a responsibility to look on the intranet and look at various publications to see how we do as a business, but sometimes there may be too much information out there that isn't necessarily always understood and that might put people off."

The recent redundancies were discussed in every focus group as an example of the issues surrounding communication within Experian. There was an acknowledgement that the corporation was trying to address the previous poor communication and was actively learning from previous mistakes. However, it was still missing out on opportunities to fully close the communication loop. The redundancies in particular, demonstrated to the employees a perceived lack of caring towards them which left many of the attendees frustrated by the communications effort. To some this indicated a lack of empathy shown by the leaders of the organisation toward them, which compounded by a perceived lack of direction impacted the employees feelings of trust in the leaders of Experian.

"I think the company is getting into a routine of communicating things it knows well. But when it comes up to different challenges it hasn't always got the communication right. So a couple of examples come to mind like the redundancies that we did at the beginning of the year. It was probably the first time the company had done that. And whilst it did make a conscious effort of doing it there were a lot of sort of things that were left in limbo. So we were told that redundancies were happening and so many around the business, there was no

conclusion to that of how many did we actually make? Were there as many as we thought originally were going to be made?

Because I believe that's the case and that's a great positive message so I'm not sure it followed through."

"So you know if some of these like redundancies or…okay you know a few directors have gone recently, there's not been any announcements at all. So people who know them think "Well surely they're going to say something soon"."

"Doesn't really give you a lot of confidence [about] *what else are we not finding out about."*

How well informed do you feel that you are about the company business strategy?

Global level communications were perceived to be less effective than local (UK) business unit. However the respondents' views were that there was still a significant disparity in the level, content and timing of corporate communications.

"….there may be some gaps in terms of how those strategic objectives get cascaded down and you know actually interpreted at a divisional level."

"It's been communicated at a level that this is our strategy, however people at grassroots level don't really understand what that means and how that impacts them. And I think there's a big gap there that needs filling."

"Well I was just thinking that I feel to a certain extent from a strategic perspective it's improved somewhat in that [name removed]*is putting regular updates on the Intranet. And I think she's been relatively clear about the areas that we need to focus on as a business in this current year."*

"Cascading for managers just varies. You know I have one manager that was very efficient would send me everything, even though I was copied anyway, which was slightly annoying at times. But now I have a manager that doesn't bother copying me in[.]*"*

"I think that we've been given a sort of a very general strategy whereby they've talked about stabilisation, improving our core assets. But I'm sure Experian's got bigger plans and more

detailed plans but I don't necessarily feel that they will ever get shared to us again until…often until it's happening or it's happened"

"I don't know much about the global strategy at all and I think sometimes it's difficult to even know how the areas are made up, never mind understand their strategy."

"Yeah I think it's quite high level. So we've been given you know the strategy is kind of three different strands, diversify, invest and core inefficiencies. And getting any kind of lower level is quite difficult I think."

"Yeah we get quarterly updates as to what's happening, where the company's standing and where the area that we work in, in general. How they intend to move forward, what they want to grow by, how they intend to do that, that sort of thing."

"I know before when we've had people like [name removed] *coming in and he did his presentation a lot more corporate, it's like "I haven't got a clue" and then you switch off from it and you sit there for an hour and you "think I've wasted an hour of my time". I don't know whether he picks up on that or not."*

The make-up of the organisation is confusing and difficult to establish from the corporate literature. This is possibly leading to a sense of disengagement from the core organisation. It is difficult to feel part of an organisation when it is difficult for an employee to see where they fit in to it and how their objectives fit with the success of the organisation as a whole.

"You know you think you might talk to one specific area and they have their own plans of what…or have interpreted exactly what those things mean. And another area of the business has interpreted it completely differently."

Some areas fare better than others

"[…]once it's been morphed into a local strategy, that's communicated very well at a local level and everybody understands what's happening in our business and where our money comes from. So I can only think that that's how it works."

"Yeah we get quarterly updates as to what's happening, where the company's standing and where the area that we work in, in general. How they intend to move forward, what they want to grow by, how they intend to do that, that sort of thing."

"I think we just generally assume that we know our strategy, our strategy is bound to be in line with group's and it doesn't really affect us so as long as we know our bit then we are okay"

"I notice [name removed] *updates seem to have disappeared recently, have you noticed we don't have many?"*

How well informed do you feel you are about the Corporate Responsibility strategy?

Among the three focus groups' participants, with the exception of one individual, no-one was aware of the Corporate Responsibility strategy. Three focus group participants had '*googled*' 'Corporate Responsibility' prior to attending the focus group in order to have an idea of what the discussion was going to focus on.

The focus group interviewer showed the participants the 2009 Experian Corporate Responsibility Report, with the exception of one participant no-one had seen the report before. The general response was "*first time I've seen that.*" Some members of the focus groups had a "*vague recollection of something being mentioned on the internet*" and another remembered seeing the 2008 edition of the report. Considering the general perceptions surrounding generic communications this was not an altogether surprising finding and was consistent with earlier research. However, as earlier posited, if company's wish to reap the benefits of their CSR activities stakeholders must be sufficiently aware of the programmes or policies in which the company is engaged (Burke and Logsdon, 1996)

"I think I'd heard there was a 2008 one, that's the first time I heard about it and never seen anything about it since. So there's been no publicity internally within the business to actually do anything as a…you know… to do anything about it. So… "

At the time of writing this report the internet communication informing the employees of the 2009 publication had received 18 'hits'(Experian Intranet, 2009). With a population of just over three thousand staff this represents very few employees (less than 0.6% of the employee population). Which, would indicate that the medium used to communicate the CSR message internally was ineffective. Due to the lack of awareness of the report it was congruent that the focus group participants had no formal knowledge of the Corporate Responsibility strategy.

"I think with policies probably around a lot of this stuff as well. So you know you have to go on every year and do your data management, information security etc. But again it's not branded under corporate responsibility, it's just specific policies. If they were all brought together to say, you know "This is you know covering our corporate responsibility, we need to ensure x, y or z. This is our strategy, this is…". You know I'd say that went out and there is no communication, nothing up on the Intranet, no email to say you know this is our 2009 corporate responsibility"

This would seem to indicate the seminal problem surrounding the communication of CSR. Without a clear definition of what is under the banner of CSR, employees and the business leaders will struggle to articulate what they aim to achieve from the CSR activities, and how these fit into the companies goals in a coherent, easy to understand and memorable message (Melé, 2007: Carroll, 1999).

"I think a lot of those things are done on an individual basis. So there's communications specifically around you know data management etc. There is, you know, specifically around involvement in the community but it's not…there's no kind of branding you know this is all under the umbrella of corporate responsibility. So it doesn't look like a joined together strategy. It just looks like random pieces of business that is happening in various areas."

"Experian is a big company I think quite often a lot of initiatives and ideas are put out there and initially given a real good push but they fade out and they dwindle away or things aren't followed or the pushing's not kept on. And I think a lot of times people within Experian they jump on these initiative bandwagons and they're really keen and I think if you keep doing it often enough and then you keep seeing them fade away eventually you get a bit disheartened yourself and you keep thinking "Yeah oh well actually I won't bother because in six months time chances are it'll disappear again" and more than likely it will."

What methods of communication used by Experian with you do you think are particularly effective?

"I think it also depends on the business unit you're in. Because obviously [name removed] *does the brown bags* [lunch or breakfast meetings] *and* [name removed] *does cost divisional breakfast things but then apart from that I think it depends in which business you're into to what interaction you do get from senior management."*

"When we were going through all the redundancies the MD did Podcasts which I thought worked very well because everyone kind of, well everyone that I knew around me was like "Right got to listen to it". So I thought that was a great way of getting through to everyone. And it was on there and it was easier to listen to because you can still carry on pottering about…"

"Yeah rather than having to read through everything. So I thought the Podcasts were really good. And I think that would be the way forward for like really important announcements. Especially when it's like Charlotte taking the time out to actually do the reading of what she's wrote herself."

"I think those Podcasts were great. You had the transcript as well so you can refer back to it at any point in time. But what I thought was really really good is that she often made mistakes when she was reading it out. So to me it sounded really genuine because you know she was delivering not just a speech that someone had written for her, it was actually coming from her and nobody can speak directly and get it word for word perfect right away. And I thought that, that to me came across very genuine."

"[Name removed], for example he's doing, his brown bag sort of breakfast meetings or lunch meetings. And you sort of go along to those and you can ask him any questions. And a few of the Exec Team have started to do a few more sort of open sort of presentations where they'll talk to us and at the same time receive questions and feedback."

"If email was used properly it can be very good. But I had an email the other day telling me that the fridge at [location name] *was messy and it would be confiscated if it wasn't respected, which is not the right use of email in my opinion."*

"[T]hose quarterly reviews I think are really good that they're doing. It keeps people up to date as well because to be honest when you get emails sometimes you think "Oh I'll read it later" and then it's too late. Or you'll just stick in a folder to read it and you won't bother. That's the problem I have with emails to be honest, so I like the face to face thing as well."

"I don't like the emails. I think it's, there's too much email traffic going around. So we're replacing our Intranet site and our local SharePoint sites with one site that everyone in our area can access. Because you can create alerts in there that can automatically notify you of things."

"I'm aware of two areas of the business. One where it's…they have a Champion and it's, it seems to be working very well and watching their results and then… My area of the business where I'm totally confused what they're doing."

"We've got a corporate responsibility site, SharePoint site set up at our local office and we do have activities on there and sort of that the green issues and so on and so forth so… We do try."

The previous comments highlight the importance of a clear communication strategy. The indirect communications need to be considered as well as the direct communication methods, this is important for the alignment of the senior leaders' words, written and aural, and actions. It is critical to ensure all communications are relevant, timely, congruent and consistent (Francis, 1996; Hartman, 1996).

If you could improve Experian communication with you what suggestions would you make?

"I think one of the examples that I can give to back up something that I mentioned earlier about this whole North America can email all their employees. North America were just able to send out an email to all users "This is our stance given the current situation with Swine Flu". We weren't able to do that, we relied on it going on an Intranet that people then had to go and read."

"We used to have, I can't remember it being prominent any more, but we used to have a little box with important messages that you'd have to click away. So if something was rel[avent]-, you know in my field a rollout of a new software or something like that everyone needed to be alerted to, then that would stay there until you clicked it off and then you get the next one when it came up."

"Well for me personally it's the sit down update, maybe a quarterly or monthly or something. Whether it's by our MD or our Managers or something, I like to sit and physically see things."

"I think a lot of that's to do with being open and honest, you know some people feel they can be and some people feel they can't. It's about personalities when it comes to team leadership quite often is my experience."

"I mean the business needs to be more open or it needs to be closed, whichever it needs to do it, there needs to be consistency across it. I think that's the overall feel here is that there's not enough consistency going on."

"And I guess that sessions like this are really good that you can air your voice and say "Well it's there but is it happening" and your lis[tening]*… and somebody might listen and think well there's a little bit more work to do."*

This would seem to echo the findings of the survey data's key driver of engagement identified under Leadership. There was doubt that the leaders would act on the survey results (beta weighting .27) this might indicate that the employees did not feel that they were listened to by the senior leadership as measured by the actions closed from the employee survey. Which is contrary to the evidence available from the desk top review of documents demonstrating the high level of effort made by the senior leaders to define action plans to address the survey findings (see appendices iii; iv; and vi).

Corporate Responsibility.

What do you understand by the following terms; Socially Responsible; Corporate Citizenship; Corporate Responsibility; Integrity; Business Ethics?

The responses showed that at a synergised level there is quite a sophisticated notion of CSR amongst the employees, this correlates with Porter and Kramer's (2006) view of the four broad arguments for CSR "*moral obligation, sustainability, licence to operate and reputation*", which further echoes the Carroll and Buchholtz (2000) pyramid model; philanthropic, ethical, legal and economic responsibilities of company's.

"We recruit to all different types of people; we've got social responsibility to people in Nottingham. We've got social responsibility to our employees and environment; that's what it means to me."

"I think particularly there's a big emphasis on making sure you're a green company, and I think that now more than ever that's a big part of social responsibility."

"[O]nly slightly but that's off my own back being an Environmental Champion within the business."

"I think one of my main thoughts is that it should be because the company believes in it rather than they think that's going to win them business. Because sometimes companies I think personally don't really care about that and it's just so they look good in a pitch."

"I think they're all the same, I think they've just got different names. It's basically about an company's business adding value to human rights. You know like you said environment health and safety"

"For me it's like everybody has their own moral code which is completely unique to the individual. And I think it's about the business having its own moral code and then following that moral code, executing it, proactively implementing it. And people within the business being seen to action that as well."

"I have an idea of what it is and we try and put it across, people know it's there, they know that they can do certain things and they will get support. I don't think a lot understand that it branches out to Health and Safety aspects and just them at work as well; I think it is generally seen as the environment, the voluntary work, the charity stuff."

"Corporate responsibility for me is about the business running its affairs in an ethical manner."

"I could hazard a guess around areas that I would expect it to cover but I don't know whether, what my interpretation of it is, is accurate."

"I think it's taking care of all the stakeholders of the business, looking after those, making sure everything's running as it should. Suppliers that don't use slave labour to local people around the area, putting money back into the local economy to environment stuff, just generally trying not to have a harmful effect and if possible help."

"People are fair, people are just, are honest, they treat people fairly, they treat people equally and they do that in an honest and trustworthy way."

"Along the lines of may be not doing business with countries where, you know where they're doing unethical, having unethical practices."

"[B]usiness ethics can be also how it deals with sensitive issues and so may be redundancies, things like that…and the bigger picture going forward… obviously it's going to follow legal

requirements but does it also fit into keeping morale as high as it could be, may be instead of doing it in a backhand way."

"Everything is done above board to legal compliance requirements."

"I think treating people fairly is very important, doing the moral correct thing."

"Rather than just staying within the law you do better than staying within the law. Because quite often what happens is that people stick to the letter of the law and say, "That's it." But that might still not be ethically fair to people."

"I think I suppose it's whether it's a question of asking well is it profitable or is it ethical? We could do something that could be very profitable but is there a real ethical reason why we shouldn't be doing it? And that's where I suppose the responsibility comes in to ask that question every time, particularly Experian does something involving sensitive data."

"Involved in the community or giving back something to local community."

"Environmental issues, keeping the lights switched off etc saving money, being green."

"The company taking a kind of interest in the wider community almost so be it through community involvement schemes or environmental issues. Just giving something back to your environment around you and people."

"A point I'd like to raise is that the corporate responsibility thing seems to be rather localised. And if we were truly corporate responsible we'd be involved in some of the schemes which I know happen where you can purchase parts of the rainforest in Brazil and you can gain advantages via tax and so on and so forth via the government. That's really making a difference. Rather than planting a few trees in you know in…locally."

"[M]aybe reflecting the company's image appropriately. Or behav-, having certain behaviours that are expected of you, you know whilst working for the company."

"I think the social responsibility would be more to the human effort may be instead of the environmental. So say the employees or such. So okay do you have sort of good healthcare benefits for certain people or do we have…you know do we involve people on a grand scale

for having Christmas do's, or whatever it might be to make sure that people are socially involved. And there is a responsibility for the business to deliver that."

"I'm not quite sure what I'm supposed to say but social responsibility to me means looking after my immediate team members and making sure they're okay."

"Kind of underpinned by strong morals as well, standards."

Of what you understand about Corporate Social Responsibility, do feel Experian is a good corporate citizen? If so in what ways do you feel it is/is not?

The following comments would appear to correlate with the earlier finding that whilst the feel good factor of community programs is important for morale and can motivate. On its own it can come across as being driven purely as a PR exercise and offer limited value to employees (Bhattacharya et al, 2005).

"I think it's got some way to go on quite a few of those. Probably more because it's been a very small organisation that's grown up very quickly, okay over 25 years but in some corporate companies that is a short period of time. And it only recently became a PLC which in effect changes the way it works."

"[B]*efore I started working here I saw Experian as a very socially responsible organisation with the sponsorship of local events and things like that. And I haven't changed my viewpoint since working here."*

"I think that the company treat people fairly. I sometimes wonder whether there are hidden agendas in the way that they treat people fairly. I don't think every thing is as transparent."

"A lot of the corporate things that you see on the Internet are just Nottingham based. Which is great, thumbs up, it's a crappy city that needs a lot of help along the way in certain situations in my opinion."

"With regards to personnel matters I think [Experian] says one thing and does another. And I think also that you can get stabbed in the back."

"I would agree with that on a kind of flipside of that is we do have a Community Involvement Programme. We do…we certify to the Environmental Policy all of…which I believe is part of

this corporate responsibility piece. So I think some elements we're good, other elements we're not so good."

"But it always seems to be Nottingham based and a lot of us are from… I'm part of another group that's on another training programme at the minute and there's only about three or four of us from actually based out in Nottingham and we're doing a project for Nottingham. And one of the questions that did come up was that "Why is it always Nottingham?""

"Keeping your nose clean so that the City doesn't get wind of anything and it affects your share price."

"[A] perception of how the business is seen and how its employees see you. How you act…you know do you act in a ethically responsible manner but…"

"I think we have all the policies there. We've got the ticks in the boxes but I'm not sure in the execution that we're following those things as we should be."

"Before the de-merger that we went through things were a lot more personal, people taken into consideration. There were positives and there were negatives but it was a lot easier. And it comes down to trust and integrity again."

"So if you're doing something you shouldn't be doing not so good. But you know it's how you're seen at the end of the day isn't it by knowing its customers and you know Joe Bloggs in the street and other businesses and the stock market and all that."

"I think if Experian wants to be seen to be ethical I'm pretty sure that if they thought they could make money by not being they would, they'd just not advertise it."

"My opinion is, oh number seven, that it should be how you treat your employees in a fair way and I go back to if I think Experian could get away with it, they would."

"They do a lot of work for charities and local like schools. We had a recent family day where the local school was invited to come along and children who'd never been outside of the Meadows before. So we do support a lot of…"

"We've had massive business restructures and it's all happened at a very high level and nobody's really looking at the people that are underpinning it and supporting the changes and what people are actually going through personally to do their jobs."

"Is that we do get given hours and days to be able to go out and help in the community. But I suppose a cynical question might be is that because Experian really cares or is it because Experian feel that if we look like we care it makes us a better company to invest in?"

"Yes to the outside community, we've got the Marathon, we promote ourselves, we support local schools. Supporting people inside on the plus side I think if you've got [good sport xx 0:28:14] that's very good. We've got a Sports and Social Club, that's good. But when it comes down to individual employees' problems, we're supposed to have a whistle blowing option scheme I don't have any belief in that at all."

"We always want to give the image that we're 100% security conscious and that if you do deal with Experian then we'll respect your…any company's interests with a total integrity to use one of your words. And to make sure that any company that deals with us feels like they're dealing with a company that's going to put them first."

"We're talking the talk but we're not walking the walk. We've got a lot of these ethical issues when it comes to employees internally."

"The experiences I've had really is if they're implementing say a new system or a new policy there doesn't seem to be much consideration of the person. It's pretty much focussed around the task. It doesn't… There's no consideration for the impact on the individuals involved."

"I think that's quite a key point really. And that comes down to a granular level as well. When they're dealing with people it's always around the task rather than the person. That's what it feels like a lot of the time. Until you, until you reach a point where you can't take enough and then you say something and you have to take somebody aside and say something. But to that point it always feels task driven this business rather than a people kind of business."

"I'd say it's because our share price is going up,"

53

"Is that we do get given hours and days to be able to go out and help in the community. But I suppose a cynical question might be is that because Experian really cares or is it because Experian feel that if we look like we care it makes us a better company to invest in?"

As was earlier discussed there are a number of issues affecting CSR effectiveness as a lever for internal marketing. Through measurement, monitoring and reporting the key performance indicators attached to the Experian CSR program the employees might gain a greater level of understanding and salience of the business drivers.

It might benefit the company to monitor the outputs of CSR using internal surveys to specifically identify which programs deliver the most value to employees and the company by proxy. Measures of internal outcome and external outcomes can be gathered and reported both to senior management and to the employee cohort to ensure the CSR activities are providing value to the organisation (Bhattacharya et al, 2008).

Also, by transferring ownership of enacting the CSR strategy and assuming the role of enabler it would seem likely that employee attitudes might change from a perception of cynicism to one of ownership and engagement.

Do you feel there are differences between Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Social Responsibility?

In the employee survey (2009) 72% of participants rated Experian as a good corporate citizen. Following the discussion and the general lack of awareness of the Corporate Responsibility strategy the following question was asked in order to understand how the focus group participants felt the question had been interpreted.

Do you think that having a good CSR strategy will help the business achieve its business goals, if so how?

The range of opinions on the business value of CSR to the organisation spanned the entire spectrum of academic opinion from the point view of 'enlightened value maximisation' (Crane et al, 2008) to sustainable advantage through strategic CSR (Burke and Logsdon, 1996).

"I feel that, because a company where it is shouting that they want to develop within the community, that they want to help and it gives a persona that it's a company that cares, it's a company that wants to help. It's a company that has got values and something, a company that you'd like to deal with because you feel that not only are you dealing with a good trustworthy customer you're dealing with a company that's also a company that cares about the area where it resides."

"I don't agree. I think corporate responsibility is way down the bottom of the line. Like it's never advertised you know so [name removed] *may be speaking about "In our strategy there's x, y or z" but there's very or no mention of corporate responsibility. You know we just want to grow the business and that's the bottom line. And you know on the side because we have to, we'll do something you know to keep that going."*

"Yeah and that's what I was coming back to is that your question was that you know yeah a sort of an ideal world almost do you think? And I think in an ideal world yes it does, in the actual world where Experian places its values is…as [number 3] said, is very money orientated and as number eight says very share price orientated."

"I'd say that the brand image is really improved by corporate responsibility. If you take the run in Nottingham with Experian plastered all over Nottingham that really raises the profile of the brand. So in answer to your question if they'd invest in corporate responsibility for whatever game it will benefit others and it will improve the brand image."

"I don't really much read magazines or radio but I've never seen or heard of Experian doing stuff for the corporate responsibility on the national news. I mean we've seen in local papers and stuff, you only see Experian on the news when something's gone wrong."

"The thing that bothers me the most you're saying like should Experian adopt this corporate responsibility thing, how long's that document been going for? And we've never, and I knew it was there but nobody else here has really seen it. So they've obviously been doing something but how many people in the business actually know about it and actually drive towards it."

"I suppose in effect it doesn't really affect anything. Whereas in the City it's something that we can use as a…[business lever]*"*

"I always think there's a difference for me between making a nice glossy brochure and actually doing it for real and implementing it. So it's got to be something that we do as part of an organisation and live and breath if you like, rather than just say we do because it goes into an RFP and we win a bit of business because we've got one and it looks good. There are a lot of benefits, you know some have touched on recruitment, retention of people, positioning in local communities, whether that's Nottingham or wherever we're locally based. But you've got to actually complete the actions that are in there to get the full benefit from it."

"It would make you feel like your actually shaping the policy almost and shaping the company in how it should view you as an individual or groups of you. Well all of us basically. I think that's really important to get employee commitment to the company."

"I think, I think there needs to be a little bit more listening from the actual employers on what we want. I know they're doing the survey but I don't know about anybody else but I haven't got a great deal of faith in that either. I know they're trying to do something about it but again it's whether actually something comes out of it at the end or not."

"Not only is it important to get buy in from people who already work for Experian or want to come and work for Experian, but it's vital to peoples confidence in Experian as a company. Whether that's from a consumer's viewpoint or from businesses that want to work with us; banks, and financial companies. They've got to believe that we're going to handle all of their information an ethical way, and so if there isn't a corporate responsibility statement there and it isn't followed through properly then that confidence can disappear. And in the time we've just been through with the recession et cetera when it was seen to be very important that Experian stood their ground and did well. There is a big risk to the organisation if they don't very clearly state what the responsibilities are and live up to them."

"Yeah absolutely I mean you can't…you can't achieve it if you don't set it out and have a goal. So it's great that it's there it's just… ."

Again the synergised perception amongst employees agreed with previous academic study that there were tangible business benefits to be gained from engagement in CSR activities, suggesting that if these activities are communicated appropriately the employees would find them easy to buy into and relevant activities to undertake in the achievement of the business goals.

Engagement.

Does the company position on CSR make a difference to how you feel towards Experian?

In the majority of cases the focus group respondents were quite emphatic that it did not affect how they feel, this is not a surprising outcome considering the perception of the CSR strategy that it is an externally facing strategy.

The leaning toward internal CSR as opposed to external, correlates strongly with the survey data which signalled that of the premier drivers of engagement '*Corporate Citizenship*' the two internal drivers of CSR 'respect for employees' and 'treating employees with integrity' were the key drivers of engagement. Furthermore this finding correlates with the theory that high levels of commitment to the respect and goodwill of its employees is more often reciprocated, and is likely to result in greater levels of employee engagement and support for the company objectives (Thorn McAlister, 2005).

It might suggest that a greater emphasis on an internal CSR strategy might reap greater levels of employee engagement (Morsing et al, 2008).

However, it must also be noted that consistent with earlier findings having an explicit CSR strategy did not drive engagement per se. but the lack of a CSR strategy or the company entering into unethical behaviour would negatively impact employee engagement (Peterson, 2004; Thorn McAlister, 2005).

"I think you obviously get the engagement of the employees obviously they need to know that they're going to get some kind of job security and even now that's still not guaranteed, and we've actually been told that. So you're not going to get engagement until that sort of thing comes along. The company is trying very hard right, there's no doubt at all about it. But they've also always made it quite clear that the shareholders come first in any kind of decisions that they make."

"I don't really agree that they put the shareholders first; I think the shareholders are high up there on their priorities but I do think that they also think about the people."

Do you feel that the Experian values align with your own?

In all cases the respondents felt yes they did. This demonstrates just how complex the area of engagement and values is to employee perceptions of well being. However not entirely surprising either. The top ten survey responses from the 2009 people survey would seem to indicate an organisation that is extremely task driven with very clear objectives which are clearly aligned to the objectives and behaviours of the organisation (see appendix ii, p. 6).

"I think this goes to your first question about how the corporate responsibility fits in. I think as a person working in an organisation if the attitude of the organisation doesn't fit with your own personal attitudes then you're probably in the wrong company. Because you tend to want to work for an organisation that you believe in and you want to strive forward in."

"[T]he previous CO was in charge he talked about Experian's greatest asset was the people and then a year later he announced 240 redundancies. So you know it sort of, I would say Experian's values again are very much aligned to its business needs. And if your area or section or you personally is found not to be needed within Experian I think you'll see Experian's business values come into the fore."

"Well if you've got any pride in your job you do all of those anyway, so yes."

"I would say in that case then yeah they do align with most of ours probably because we all want to do well in our job and keep our job. And try and get a bonus at the end of the year if we do alright."

"I think if you speak to some of the area people who are in the areas where they've been made redundant but have been retained I think you saw people's values there change from "I want to do a good job" to being "I want to be in a job". And they've realised very quickly that Experian doesn't particularly care about you at all."

"I feel valued I've been well looked after. I've put a lot of hard work on and I've got the benefits from it."

"I've worked hard and I've had management, they have recognised and supported and given me opportunities. But I don't, so I don't get bored and they have developed me. That's making me continue get out what you put in."

"I think they're strong, yeah I like them…and I like the impact that they have when you walk around and you see them, then you read them back to yourself. I know it sounds a little bit cheesy but I think it does have an effect on you."

"I think they are really good as well because I can actually relate it to my job and what I'm doing every day."

"I struggle with the decision-making one because I feel that there is very limited ability to make a decision that you know that you can actually follow through I think. It's largely driven from the top down and your ability to actually be autonomous is limited."

How and to what extent do you feel the company is 'doing things right'?

"I actually don't know if they're doing anything right. I mean it's great to get a bonus, it's good to see the shares going back up so I suppose that is, that is right but I don't know. I don't understand the strategy anymore and…I don't know, I don't see… I see a lot of people around me that don't really understand the business."

"I think they've actually dealt with the economic crisis so to speak in the last 18 months/2 years quite well, we've adapted. We've got stronger but I think we've lost sight in the fire fighting of making sure we survive through that two years. I think we've lost the strategy a little bit."

"Now I think about it on the face of it, it is all the external stuff that makes the profile of the company improves. Whether we're doing it effectively internally I think is questionable."

The comments seem to echo the earlier finding that an internal CSR focus might help engage employees in CSR.

Are you encouraged to adopt/model the company values? If so how does this encouragement manifest itself?

"In our area we have an Excel scheme where I believe it's SharePoint. Where the values/behaviours are listed and then you go in and say you know "Joe Bloggs from this team did this therefore I think that it represented this behaviour" and then an email automatically goes to them and their line manager. And then every quarter the nominations are reviewed

and then you get prizes from, it can range from a thank you email to a £25 voucher to a trip to wherever the nomin-, the awards are going to be held."

"We have an award scheme as well called "The Brits" which is demonstrating high levels of the right behaviours for the company. And that usually involves, I think it's £250 gift vouchers where it was teams nominations and individual nominations."

"Yeah see the problem with the reward schemes they have they're all well and good in their own business units but there's no consistency across the business. Then you get the resentment of you know "Oh they get this" "Oh they get that". And it can actually make things worse rather than better because people do start to get resentful when you see you know Consumer get this and you know [department name removed] get that and we get…well I'm not going to say what we get but there we go, yeah."

"People have valued me and pushed me forward I then push that down to my people reporting to me. Hopefully then they'll push it further."

"I don't think there's any incentive to. I think you go along and you do your job and you do it to the best of your ability."

"I think they're great as a guide, number seven, but whether you've got autonomy to you know drive those behaviours yourself is a different story I think. And I think it varies at different levels of the hierarchy within the organisation."

"And I must admit great decision-making I have really laughed sometimes when I shouldn't be laughing because I think why was that decision made? And you know there's a lot of decisions made round the business. And you just wonder the logic of it and what on earth is happening because there doesn't seem to be any sense about certain decisions that are made."

The encouragement to model the values would appear to be driven mainly by a culture of reward and recognition that is very closely aligned to the performance appraisal system rather than any CSR values.

In what manner does Experian engage you to go the extra mile?

"Appraisal and objective process, so whilst I never think appraisal and objective process is always right, it's certainly got one in place that clearly defines what's adequately expected of people and what's over achieving."

"I agree, I think the appraisal process is what makes people go the extra mile."

"There are a lot of people that are very, very engage and want to do their best and do so for their own sense of pride and achievement. But I agree that the way that we appraise and review and reward people is driven -- drives performance."

"[C]ertainly these days you're working 40/50 hours a week at least. Unfortunately that's also taking a toll on some people's health and people's families. So the company has got to do something about that in order to be responsible, you know."

"[J]ust a slight slant just to add in there, when they were filling in the surveys, being encouraged to go the extra mile, there is the fear factor at the moment. And I think you know there is a difference between encouragement and you're in a position where you're faced to have to be doing the extra mile because you want to keep your job."

"That's one of the obligations in your own appraisal. That's why it's got such a high result in the survey I would've thought, that's why I answered it like that."

"Yeah, because you're encouraged by the fact that you've got to be seen to do that to score high enough in your appraisal. So that's what everybody means by that. May be they don't mean what the people who set the question meant to glean from that question but that's certainly what everybody filled in."

"You are encouraged but you're encouraged because you're obligated to do that."

"I go the extra mile because I do enjoy my job and I like to do a good job because that makes me feel better. So yes I will stay late to do something that might affect a client."

"I think it's human nature to want to do your best and some of these behaviours when we… You know they keep being pushed and pushed and pushed it gets to the point where it's quite patronising. Do we really need that?"

"If I was being controversial I might say that people could feel encouraged to go the extra mile because of fear. Because we have gone through such a massive redundancy programme over a number of months that people are feeling that they have to do that to make themselves stand out from the crowd."

"I think there's an incredible pressure to work longer hours. I know it's contractually kind of obligated within a lot of the contracts I've seen anyway within Experian that you've got set hours but you're expected to work more. But I think it's more of a rule than an exception really. That's what it feels like an almost unspoken pressure to stay later and I know a lot of people do just to get the job done. Because we are working in quite a high pressured environment but I think there is a pressure as well from people above you and your line managers."

"And not just that just generally across Experian I think there's a pressure to work further than you need to almost to stand out and to get on. Which I don't think is particularly a positive thing really."

Do you feel valued as an employee of Experian?

"I did till about two years ago"

"[M]ostly."

"Yeah"

"Sometimes."

"When things don't go right it's just like there's no… I just find sometimes the support isn't there."

"I just feel like a number."

"I don't believe that employees as such are perceived in a…you know or treated on an individual basis. I believe that you're just treated as an employee. You're expected to do a job end of."

"Yeah I feel valued in my own business area, for sure, but I don't really think most people in the company are that concerned about... You know I think most people won't think Charlotte Hogg would think anything of us other than the department we work in."

"I think from my perspective it depends on the day that you ask me. Some days you do feel valued other days you don't. If I had to say what the split was I'd say more don't feel valued than do."

"Probably down to something that's been said by my manager, positive feedback that you've received from an area of the business. That's what would make it a good day."

"You have actually got to fight for the right to feel valued almost. Not just have it there to be taken."

Retention.

Other than salary, location etc. what would take you to another employer?

None of the focus group participants considered themselves to be actively looking at other employers, which did not correlate with the company's own findings in which 30% of respondents claimed to be actively job seeking, however when probed as to the types of issues that might make them consider leaving, the responses correlated with the 2009 survey data. These responses centred on valuing employees; respect; and personal development.

"Probably an employer who recognised its people more and valued its people more."

"I'd probably want to go to a company where you don't have to do 60 hours a week."

"I would leave for another role altogether, not anything to do with the company, just move on and do something different. But I think the company is learning from its mistakes and I think it can only get better really. Well hopefully."

"Something that actually interests me more so."

"If I didn't feel like I was being you know treated with respect and I was being crapped on all the time"

"If a different company, all things being equal, came in and offered me better training opportunities so I could develop personally, preferably whilst working on a project, then that would be something that may need considering."

"I think if somebody came to me or if I looked at a kind of a more structured career path and kind of progression, you know investment and education etc. I think that definitely would be something I'd consider."

"I sometimes feel that, you know if an employer could offer me better opportunity with a voice and…learning and giving you a bit of freedom mainly."

"I'm a company believer that the grass is not always greener it's just the weeds are in different places. So it's whether you're prepared to tolerate the weeds that you're dealing with."

If you could not work for Experian who would you most like to work for? Why?

Most employees responded that they would stay with Experian but of those who did name another employer their responses indicated a strong link to social identity and signalling theory, whereby only those companies which were perceived to offer either good social status or had a perceived excellent internal CSR focus were highlighted (Meyer, 2002; Greening and Turban, 2000).

"IBM, they know how to look after their people"

"In the current economic climate , I'd prefer to stick with the devil I know"

"Virgin look pretty cool."

"I don't believe the grass is always greener….."

"Boots"

What is it that makes you want to remain as an employee of Experian rather than another organisation? Does Corporate Responsibility influence this in any way?

As previously identified the CSR activities were not seen as a key driver of engagement or employee retention. However, if the company were to enter into irresponsible behaviours it is

likely that the company would be negatively impacted. There was also an indication that the current financial climate and subsequent levels of unemployment were impacting this perception which would be consistent with earlier research (Bhattacharya et al, 2008).

"I think it's nice to have but it wouldn't make me -- if I felt that Experian wasn't corporate responsible. I mean it depends if it breaks the law and kills children, you know depends to what level, then you would leave. But I don't think it influences me to make me want to stay within a company because it's not -- we don't really know how they do it and what they're doing. It's not branded well enough; it's not driven through the business. And I think if they did that and made people understand it more, people might buy in and therefore it might be something that makes you stay."

"And I think with the current climate with the credit crunch etc I think at the moment it's may be just a little bit "better the old devil you know" sort of regime. May be if the market outside looked like it was holding its arms up and it seemed more viable to be moving around then may be it would be…may be it's a time to move on. But certainly Experian at the moment does seem a good stable company and you know it does offer you the chances to progress if you were hard and you're possibly in the right place at the right time."

"The job role that I've got is quite unique and because of the business that we're in I like having my career here, you know.

But I think if there was a big emphasis on [CSR] we would all know what it was straight away because it would be implemented into, you know, everyday working life rather than…"

"[A]t a very simple level we'd probably say if they did start to get involved in something which we'd find morally questionable it may lead us to think well should I actually be here? So in that way corporate responsibility I think for me it's as important. So if it did lead to dealing more in the arms trade I might question whether I'm in the right place to be…"

"If it stopped running the marathon or sponsoring the marathon it probably wouldn't have that much of an impact. But yeah if it was doing anything untoward then yes it would."

"When I came for an assessment day for Experian corporate responsibility was never mentioned so it was never something that made me decide whether to come here or not. If let's say I hadn't joined at that point and Experian got involved in something a bit dodgy and

I was to come back, that would have an influence on whether I joined the organisation or not. And so I think it emphasises the fact that it is important to have a very clear corporate responsibility policy and to make sure that everybody's confident that the company wouldn't do something questionable or be involved in something that was dodgy for example."

"[T]he money and…to be fair and the people that I work with at the moment. I work within a good team."

"I'd say because if you look at it you know in a big picture it's not so bad working here. And it certainly isn't any greener on the other side. So just make the best of it because it's not all bad."

"For me my role is fairly niche so it would be difficult to get a job that easily somewhere else doing the same sort of thing without moving may be to London or Manchester or somewhere."

"Personally I think it's the people I work with, I think that for me is always a key part."

Advocacy.

What is it about Experian that makes you proud to be associated with the company?

There are high levels of pride attached with working for Experian, which correlates very strongly with social identity and signalling theories. Not as a result of CSR however, but more as a result of personal achievement. In the CEO's own words Experian operates in an extremely tough environment and the demands made upon employees are significant.

"....Our people had to dig deep this year, in the face of a challenging environment and some tough decisions, and I thank them for all their support." (Don Roberts CEO Experian plc., 2009)

"You know there's a sense of pride in the teams that work with me and [xxx] *about the work that they do and that the service that they give. And it's an inner value that the people have and maybe it's a recruitment decision. When we recruit our people we look for those traits and values and behaviours in the people that we recruit. Or maybe we've just been lucky in the people that we got. I think that Experian has got a great set of middle managers and they*

are probably the unsung heroes of the business because they're the people that are driving the business and making sure that everything happens."

"For me I think most people like to be on the winning side of something and not necessarily the losing side, so you can take that at the highest level and say, "If your company is doing well you're getting paid a rise different to the market." You feel as if you're in the right kind of organisation."

"So I take pride that I actually made it to come and work for Experian because it says something hopefully about me as an individual. So I take pride in sort of my personal achievement. So Experian sort of positions itself as you've got to be somebody who is better than average and you're above a certain level to come and work here."

"And when you say you work for Experian, when there's a break a lot of people they were "You work for Experian, wow". And that is the perception of people outside of the business. Now whether people agree with that inside the business whatever but outside… And people think we're a good place to work for."

"I've never been treated, you know or been done too badly by the business. So I…that helps… But the products and services we offer ain't that bad to be honest, you know they're quite good. So that makes you feel a bit more proud about where you work."

"No, I think like the products and services we have are leading edge. We don't necessarily always brand them that way or you know make sure that you know the market place knows them. And some people are better than we are. But I definitely, you know, think we underestimate all, a lot of the stuff that we do have and across the business and it's not fully joined up. If it was fully joined up and we had a cohesive "This is Experian" I think it would be much better."

"I think it's the wealth of products and services that we have that are linked into people's daily lives that they don't even know about. Certainly I think the one thing we're known about is the Credit Reference Agency and whenever you mention that you work for Experian that's the first thing that they say. But then when you actually start telling them about other things that they do and the diversity of the business I think that's something to be quite proud of."

67

Are there any aspects of working for Experian that you are less proud of? (If so what are these, is it sufficient to stop you recommending Experian to others?)

There is a hint that the espoused values do not match the Senior Leaders' observable behaviours regarding some aspects of CSR, which is also reported in the survey results. There is also an indication that people feel strongly that they would like an organisation they can feel proud of and that the current branding does not achieve the desired level of external social identity (Brammer et al, 2007; Gond et al, 2006).

"Yeah in the current climate Experian are now expected, as I previously said, we're expected to work far above and beyond what we would normally work for […] I mean there have been people at this place that have been working 80 or 100 hours a week right and they fell that they can't actually turn around to the mangers and say, "No I'm just not going to work it.""

"I think the thing that not necessarily has made me less proud but the individual recognition, I'm not sure the company is good at that and that's an annoyance."

" I certainly feel part of the team that I'm in. I think you maybe measure how much you are a part of Experian by how much you fit in with the people that you work with. And I feel quite comfortable with that."

"All the paper that we waste."

"These environmental issues is oh they talk about how good we are, yeah. If you come in late at night there'll be the telly still going round the other side, the lights are all on down our row, offices you know and these are like Exec Managers who're supposed to be showing by example, their offices the lights are on in their offices and stuff. I know it's only a little thing but these add up don't they to make you know…"

"I'd say the TV adverts' not very good. It's really not. For a company of our abilities."

"It's a bit cheesy. And there's companies of our standing that have put a lot more thought into it, may be we should go to Saatchi and Saatchi."

"To be fair though we are on all the naff channels though aren't we?"

"I sometimes feel that they feel that they have the overwhelming control but yet they're on the London Stock Exchange. Where does the balance go, there doesn't seem to be any direction from above in that respect."

If you were at an off-site non-company event and you heard someone being critical of Experian how would you feel? What might you say?

"I think you would still jump for their defence because everybody works really hard, puts the hours in. Like you say some people work 50/60 hours a week and you do your best to try and keep the company, you know, stable."

"It depends how big the guy is."

As an employer, how would you describe Experian to friends or family?

"I would say number one would be someone that the company if you put the effort in they'll give, they will recognise that. So you have to give it to recognise and it's a good company to work for thereafter. You can't just go into a job."

"I do think if I described Experian to somebody I would definitely say it supports your development but also is learning from past mistakes and things that they've done wrong."

"The word I would use is challenging."

"Very good on the whole but I think that maybe there could be a little more flexibility or discretion used by some of the Management about HR related issues."

Would you recommend Experian to friends and family? If so for what reasons?

"[T]*here are gaps in communications, there are gaps. And I'm sure that it's the same in every company that you work in but I still believe it's a very good company to work for. It's got great development, lots of opportunities, it's growing. It's growing in a crap market."*

"Yes I'd recommend it but for the right kind of person and the right kind of role. I think you need to be a certain kind of person to work here."

"I would recommend my particular job role to people that I know and have done. But it's also very clear that it's quite a rollercoaster ride when you come in. you've got to be prepared that

you're going to have to come in and you're going to have work at it, and you're going to have accept some difficult times as well as good times."

"I've worked for two companies that are far better on the corporate responsibility side than Experian and those other two companies know how to do it rather better. They looked after the staff a lot better. They were more open…"

"As long as you're prepared to work damn hard, yes. I think it gets busier and busier with the business, which is fine but unless you're prepared to work your arse off then I'd say, I would say "Don't even bother". But if you're prepared to work arse off then yes."

"I wouldn't recommend working for Experian to anybody. From my…from the changes that I've seen going on in the last few years and the organisation as it is now to the organisation that it was before we de-merged from Goss. It's not a friendly organisation to work within."

"I guess may be from a salary sort of position, may be you know within the general market place or from a position of "Yeah it's quite a nice, you know set of buildings to go and sit in" fine. But from a…you know are you more than a number and is it a friendly environment to work in? No."

"I think it must be very tough for newcomers."

How does the way Experian performs on Corporate Responsibility influence your opinion about the company as an Employer?

"I think a lot, you work for your own self pride at the end of the day. Well I do and you know if it helps the business, fine. But I do it to do you know a hard day's work, get a decent pay out of it and then you know…"

"No, because I didn't really know about it. So it can't really affect my decision"

"It would do but I think when, what we've talked about is everyone's got a little bit of a feeling that that's you know something they say and the reality when you work here is a little bit different."

"I think so, I think the fact that you are not just employed and shoved in a corner but they do actually, you are appraised, you have monthly meetings or something and you are brought in

and involved, you can get involved in any of the things if you want to and everything is there, I think that is quite important."

To what extent do you feel part of Experian?

"[I]f you just went on to the floor and just asked Joe Bloggs randomly "Do you feel part of Experian?" I think they'd say "No". Whereas I would think we would say "Yes"."

"I think if you were in a different role like on the Exec I think you're going to perceive yourself in a completely different way and there are going to be different areas and different requirements that are going to be put upon you."

"Sometimes that's a positive experience and sometimes that's a negative experience."

Opinion was largely split regarding advocacy, with some respondents feeling strongly that they would not recommend Experian whilst others felt that on the whole Experian was a good employer. The perceived lack of attention to work life balance issues may well affect a number of responses.

It is important to remember that each employee has a network of relatives and friends who can see the effect excessive hours have on their families and friends thus negatively signalling Experian as an employee of choice. Experian may well be missing opportunities to attract superior employees who would rather work for an organisation which has values more closely aligned with their own.

Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the adoption of 'family friendly' practices by corporations could be perceived as a signal of good management by investors and have a positive influence on market appreciation of corporate stocks.

Additional Comments

"More listening to the people. More kind of forums where you can speak your mind, may be something like this where you've got yourself, where you can actually say what you want to say instead of waiting for the…the knife or the backlash."

"I think may be just a bit of budget for people to be able to take their teams out, a bit of team building, an activity day or something that makes people feel like Experian is you know quite

71

a nice company to work for. Just a touchy feely side, improve on that. And I think you know the rest of it is fine. It's just the soft skills that are missing."

"[A]lso the clear and consistent communication even when it's a negative message that has to be given. That's what would improve it for me."

"I found that since Charlotte's come on board that the redundancies have been and had to be slightly better managed, although they're not perfect on those yet. I think from what I've seen may be previous to that was quite awful but that's improved that side of thing. So I think there is an incentive to move forward."

"I'm always quite surprised to see in The Times Top 100 Companies to work for and there's not many FTSE 100 companies in there, not many at all. It's always your small/medium sized company's that are in there. Why there are not big company's in there? I get the impression that companies like Experian don't want to drive forward and be the leaders in that market."

"We used to have great team building sessions where we would do something fairly constructive in the day and then have dinner paid for at night and I found those were really good. But that seems to have stopped. And also now we've got personal development plans where we are apparently expected to be doing something to better ourselves."

"I agree with number four with regards to just putting a little bit of money pot into different areas and you know everybody… So everybody gets, you know it's a chance to grow within your team and get to know other people."

"Yeah definitely I think number five. I think that would be, that would make people who work here feel more valued by the company than knowing the next big decision they'll be making at the Executive level."

"They could've shield[ed] *us a little bit but we've just had to harbour the whole hit of everything that's going on in the market on top of your extended pressure to do your job harder because conditions are harder so it's just, it's almost compounding the issues that are out there really. There's no respite."*

"Something I heard from senior management was "You should be lucky to have a job in the current climate". Cheers!"

"I think generally it would be to get people to realise what the corporate responsibility is, everyone knows the parts but not that it's the central strategy to do stuff. I think that would be useful. It's hard to make everyone care about it really until it's not there."

Discussion of Focus Group Findings.

There are a plethora of issues affecting an employees perception of 'belonging', it is almost too simplistic to suggest that having good CSR practices in place (corporate gifting and philanthropy) will produce the desirous response of employee engagement and commitment.

For companies who have recently (within the preceding five years) undergone merger, de-merger, take-over or some other significant organisational upheaval or change, employees within those companies may well feel little affinity for the new status quo in which they find themselves unless there is a perceived improvement in the employee well being. Whether the focus of that well being be perceived improvement in terms and conditions, greater work, life balance, increased levels of empowerment or decision making capability, greater perception of status expressed via social identity theory etc. (Brammer et al, 2007; Gond et al, 2006).

The empirical evidence showed that the employees were unaware of the Experian CSR strategy. However there is also evidence to show that they were aware of parts, but the visibility of CSR as an entirety, its aims, and the benefits to them as employees was largely invisible to the focus group attendees. This correlates with the earlier findings of Bhattacharya et al (op cit).

As the focus groups' understanding of CSR grew throughout the discussions, a level of cynicism as to the organisational motives of the CSR strategy began to exhibit itself this correlates strongly with Morsing et al's (2008) "*catch 22 of communicating CSR*" that the more people understand relative to CSR activities of the organisation the more the company can be judged on the relative merits of its CSR strategy.

The focus groups' perception hinted at a level of incongruity between the messages attached to the CSR strategy and the actions demonstrated by their senior leaders, this correlates with the earlier chapters on communication (Francis, 1996) by which actions speak louder than words and if those actions are incongruent with the stated objectives of the CSR strategy it is the actions of the few senior managers that will be believed over the stated ideals.

Recent research has shown that employees can form justice judgements and will react to the treatment of others. In redundancy situations the survivors' response to the lay-off of their colleagues can be stronger than the reaction of the victim (Gond et al, 2006). This was very

much in evidence during all of the focus groups, there was significant comment regarding the company's level of respect for employees as a result of the two redundancy programs. There was also a deep level of concern that the redundancy situation was still unresolved and without reassurance or communication from senior management on the subject this persists as an issue which might negate other good practices followed by the organisation (Bhattacharya et al 2008).

Although there was broad agreement that the communication of the most recent round of redundancies was far better than had occurred previously. They had deeply shaken some participants' faith in Experian as a secure, stable and viable employer with the welfare of its employees as a key priority.

Almost as if having the opportunity to air their views realised, the focus group enabled a number of the participants to 'off load' how they felt. Experian might consider running more focus groups as a method of engaging employees in policy determination but also as a means of letting off steam and having a sounding board.

As well as the diversity of services on offer a core competency of Experian is contained 'in between the ears' of its employees. The employee product knowledge is a key competence not easily replicable by a competitor or replaceable by Experian, it would therefore seem reasonable that a core focus of the CSR strategy ought to be actively targeted at employee well being to generate the expected reciprocal behaviours with a particular focus on employee retention.

For an internal CSR strategy to succeed at Experian it would appear it has all of the expected employee well being policies in place. On the corporate intranet site under the HR section there are a large number of people policies in evidence covering the expected areas, Induction; Career Management; Pay and Benefits; Well being; Solving Work Problems; Protecting People and the Business; Communication and Community; and Leaving. This would indicate that the broad spectrum of issues surrounding employee well being has been considered and a policy written.

However, at present whether due to organisational or political difficulties the activities of CSR, Communications and HR do not appear to be aligned which limits the potential

synergies needed to maximise the value these three key strategic areas can add to the organisation.

In the 'age of spin' it has become the business imperative to only communicate the positive messages and to endeavour to bury the less positive messages or wait until ambiguous situations are resolved until offering some sort of reassurance through official channels of communication. It is more important in times of uncertainty to keep employee communications as a key priority, to have high profile and very visible support and two way interaction with the senior leaders in order to demonstrate visible organisational support.

During uncertain times it can be safely assumed that the informal communication channels are in overdrive (Clegg, 1990; Tietze et al 2003; Weick, 1995, in Hartman, 1996) and may be contributing to excessive levels of anxiety and stress for many employees. This is a key opportunity for a tripartite relationship between CR, HR and Communication departments to add tangible value to the business.

The focus group comments would indicate a perception that Experian (UK) plc. is indeed a learning organisation. This is a great building block on which to launch a drive focused on an internal CSR strategy with which to engage employees.

For some employees there is still clearly a need to close out the past, and remove the insecurities created by the unfortunate redundancy situation. There is also a lost opportunity on the part of Experian Leadership to communicate a positive message that the storm has been weathered with less damage than expected. Were this opportunity taken, there is reason to believe that it might contribute to increasing the employees' confidence in their senior leaders' decision making.

The Experian CSR Responsibility *"Be a good employer to all, establishing a set of expected behaviours and values, ensuring that everyone working for us is treated fairly, given the maximum opportunity to fulfil their potential and that all our workplaces are safe and healthy"* although credible and probably thoroughly endorsed at a strategic level does not translate into a closely aligned tactical objective. The workplace objective of two years standing has been to "*gain explicit endorsement of HR leaders to the UN global compact*", which although laudable might not be particularly relevant to the employees of Experian or impact the desired levels of engagement sought.

The action plans resulting from the employee survey (see appendices iii and iv) continue to focus their attention upon communicating the external CSR activities. Previous studies (Morsing et al; Peterson, op cit;) indicate that internal CSR might have a greater impact on employee engagement and the subsequent positive behaviours associated with a strong sense of social identity with the company. Both the findings of the employee survey (2009) and the focus groups from this study would seem to indicate a strong positive correlation that the focus for CSR activity ought to be more strongly focused on internal CSR activity.

Conclusions.

This report started with the aim of answering the following question:

Does CSR drive continued employee engagement, if so how?

This research would seem to indicate that an external focus on CSR does not drive employee engagement. However, a clear focus on internal CSR would seem to have a greater likelihood of engaging employees and drive greater levels of organisational commitment. This finding correlates with the findings of earlier studies (Peterson, 2004) and also the findings of Experian plc's employee survey (2009). The indication is that a focus on the employee well-being aspects of CSR has a greater effect on employee engagement than a focus on the external 'reputational' aspects of CSR, driving greater levels of commitment which are likely to foster greater levels of advocacy behaviours. The findings also indicate that the relevance of the internal or external CSR strategy might be different for professional employees "*cosmopolitans*" than non professional employees "*locals*" indicating a need to identify clearly which group of employees the CSR strategy is targeted towards engaging (op cit).

Individually each discipline, Organisational Communications, Human Resources, and Corporate Social Responsibility, is credited with having a significant positive effect on organisational effectiveness through increased levels of employee commitment and engagement. It would seem logical that a tripartite approach, linking together the strategies and operational objectives of these three key strategic contributors to organisational success would help to simplify the communication and lead toward the development of a tripartite 'sustainability' strategy.

This might offer the internal CSR strategy element, of the tripartite strategy, a tangible focus and improve the perception of Experian as a good corporate citizen with its key internal stakeholders. It is likely that a renewed focus on the internal stakeholders of the corporation aligned to a clear and consistent communication strategy which encompasses both direct and indirect communication mediums would lead to stronger advocacy behaviours and a greater sense of conviction of the CSR activities externally due to the positive message conveyed about the company's CSR from its 'expert CSR advocates' (Morsing et al, 2008).

A 'sustainability' strategy of this type might reduce the number of conflicting messages and draw together the communication of the company's goals for commercial success and the company's goals for people success.

The second question posed asks:

Does the effective communication of CSR impact the signalling, engagement and advocacy behaviours of employees, if so how is this manifested?

The findings indicate that clear concise and relevant communication ought to lead to an increase in positive behaviours such as greater production, commitment to company goals etc. and may also reduce some of the negative behaviours stemming from low morale e.g. sabotage and pilfering. Furthermore, indirect communication has the potential to have the greatest impact on employee engagement and advocacy behaviours.

Excellent communication might positively affect the health and well being of the organisation, through a reduction in incidents of work related stress and poor health etc. Excellent communication should aim to reduce the number of messages communicated in order to reduce the complexity of the messages given. The key messages require key performance indicators which are constantly and consistently measured, reviewed and reported upon.

This research indicates that the more relevant the CSR strategy is to the needs of employees the greater sense of belonging. Even though none of the focus group participants were actively seeking employment elsewhere and most where proud to be associated with the company; with all of the participants feeling the company values aligned with their own, the majority of participants would not recommend Experian to others indicating a marked lack of advocacy behaviours.

It was interesting to note the employees' reactions to the TV advertising campaign currently running to advertise the credit checking operations. The employees were clear that the advertising campaign did not sufficiently represent Experian plc. as a 'premier company', feeling that the campaign was somewhat 'down market' and as a result reflected poorly on themselves. This correlates very strongly with social identity theory that people want to be associated with companies which bolster their self image (op cit).

However, the communication processes required by the organisation needs to focus on more than the formal explicit communication channels. These are important and clearly the failure to reach the employees with the Experian *CR Report* role-out identifies the need to select the most appropriate medium(s) for the message including implicit communication mediums.

It also became evident during the focus groups that although the *CR Report* roll-out had passed them by, there were elements of the CSR strategy that were familiar to them from other communications rolled out by the senior leaders of the company. However the elements were communicated without being clearly linked back to the CSR strategy causing the employees to miss the relevance of the communication to CSR. This would indicate that there needs to be a more obvious link made to assist the employees in understanding the links between the commercial strategy and the 'sustainability' strategy.

Recommendations.

Communication strategy.

- Continue the use of the 'Podcast' messages as a communication medium. This had a great appeal for the majority of the focus group participants, suggesting it is a medium that reaches the employees.

- Continue the face to face, town hall and brown-bag meetings. However, also consider the relevance of the communication and duration of the event to retain the engagement of participants.

- Engage in simple uncomplicated communication practices targeting the six or so key messages the organisation wants to focus upon. Constantly link those key messages to the strategy at every official communication so the message remains consistent over time and across the organisation.

- Focus on the development of the explicit and implicit communication of the companies leaders. It is vital that the leaders walk the talk as their actions have greater impact upon the employees' engagement and advocacy behaviours than the words they use.

- Encourage the use of informal communication mechanisms which can then be monitored for recurring themes. These can be validated in focus groups to ensure their currency and relevance and ensure the upward flow of employee concerns are actively addressed, and signal to employees their concerns are valued and will be actively listened to.

- Identify, measure and monitor the key performance indicators for both external and internal CSR and constantly report on these to the entire organisation, consistently and frequently in order to drive the desired behaviours through the entire business. Create awareness that these are important issues that the company cares enough to measure and report progress upon.

- Consider an annual employee event or at least an annual leaders' event to drive the desired behaviours, develop the company leaders and create cross-functional synergies. This would signal to employees that their leaders (at all levels) are valued and an

important medium for upward corporate communication, as well as driving the vision throughout the operations.

Employee engagement strategy.

- Define one global 'sustainability' strategy clearly linking the companies goals of: Human Resources; CSR; and Communication functions. This should include long term, mid term and near term goals and be clearly linked to the achievement of the company business strategy.

- At a global level consider using focus group research methodology to validate the people survey findings across Experian plc. in order to identify the cultural or regional variations in strategy required to meet the needs of the disparate company locations.

- Include employees in the development of the tactics required to implement the elements of the 'sustainability' strategy.

- Consider a study of the '*Times top 100 best employers'* to learn more about how they address employee engagement with a view to bringing the learning in house.

- Define a Target – Listing in the Times top 100 Best Employers by 2012 for example. Choose a memorable theme that is easy to identify with to evoke the imagination of employees and likely to engage the social identity aspirations of both "*locals*'" and "*cosmopolitans*'". It is likely that this might foster '*expert endorsement*' of CSR and link the internal CSR strategy to the commercial benefits arising from the perceptions of the external stakeholders. For example: Increased investment activity from investors due to the perception of a well run company, which would clearly benefit corporate performance in the long term (op cit).

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

The author would have preferred separate focus groups for new employees; long service employees, junior employees and middle managers for the focus groups to isolate any variances of perception coming from employees at different levels within the company. However it was not possible to attain this level of disaggregation in the time-frame.

Clearly being based only upon one small part of a larger organisation the research would benefit from widening its perspective. It might not yield comparable results in other parts of the organisation where the dispersed geographical locations and associated cultural differences may impact the perceptions of the CSR activities and their impact on employee engagement. Also, this report is based upon the study of one organisation during a time of financial and, to some degree, organisational uncertainty. It might be greatly enhanced by researching a broader collection of employees from a greater range of companies in a greater range of locations and different market conditions to enable observation of cultural similarities or dissimilarities.

References.

Albinger, H. S., and Freeman, S.J.(2000), Corporate Social Performance and attractiveness as an employer to different job seeking populations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 28, 243-253

Allen and Meyer (1990), The measurement and antecedents of affective continuance and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Organizational Psychology* 61,1,18

Ashforth and Mael, (1989), Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 14, p20-39

Baron, D. P. (1995), Integrated Strategy: Market and non market components. *California Management Review*, Vol. 37, No. 2

Beckett, F. (2003), Conflict of Interests: A corporate social responsibility MBA funded by British American Tobacco – Can they be serious! *The Gaurdian.co.uk*

Bhatacharya, C.B., Sen, S., Korschun, D. (2008), Using Corporate Social Responsibility to win the war for Talent. *MIT Sloan Management Review*. Vol49, No. 2. Pp37-44

Brammer, S. Millington, M. Rayton, B. (2007), The contribution of corporate social responsibility to organizational commitment. *International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 18:10, 1701-1719

Burke, L. Logson, J. (1996), How corporate responsibility pays off. *Long Range Planning* 29 (4) 495-502

Carroll, A. (1979), A three dimensional conceptual model of corporate performance. *Academy of Management Review* 4: 497-505

Carroll, A. (1999), Corporate Social Responsibility: Evolution of a definitional Construct. *Business and Society*, 34 (4) 268-295.

Chatman, J.A., (1991), Matching people and organizations: Selection and socialization in public accounting company's. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 39,239-263

Coff, R. W. (1999), How control in human-asset-intensive company's differs from physical-asset-intensive company's: A multi level approach. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 11, 4, 389-405

Crane, A., Matten, D., Moon, J. (2008), *Corporations and Citizenship*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p201 - 214

Crane, A., Matten, D. and Spence, L. (2008), *Corporate Social Responsibility: Readings and Cases in a Global Context*. Routeledge. pp 420-432

Department of Trade and Industry, (2004), The CSR competency framework, DTI, London, Downloaded from, *http//www.bitc.org.uk/document.rm?id=5102* on 28July, 2009

Dolphin, R. R., (2000), *The fundamentals of corporate communication*, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford

Dutton et al (1994), Organisational Images and member identification. *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 39: 239-263

Eisenberger, R., Stinglhamber, F., Vandenberghe, C., Sucharski, I., Rhoades, L., (2002), Percieved Supervisor Support: Contributions to perceived organisational support and employee retention. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87, p365-373

Elsbach, K.D.(1999), An expanded model of organisational identification, *Research in Organisational Behaviour*. Eds. R.I. Sutton and B. M. Staw, Greenwich, CT: JAI Press. Pp163-200

Experian Data Monitor Report, (2009), accessed from *http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=6&hid=4&sid=cdd4ace1-df84-42fb-a371-d330859d097a%40sessionmgr10* on 20 Jul, 2009

Experian Policies, (2009), accessed from *http://intranet/company/policies/aspx/* on 15 Aug, 2009

Experian Annual Report 2009, (2009) Accessed from *http://www.experianannualreport.ie/* on 27Jul, 09

Experian Corporate Social Responsibility Report (2009) accessed from *http://www.experianannualreport.ie/business_reportCR.asp* on 31 Jul 2009

Fontan, A., and Frey, J.H., (1994), Interviewing the art of science. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S.Lincoln (Eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Newbury Park, CA, Sage, p361-376

Francis, D., (1989), *Organizational Communication*, Gower Business Skills, Hampshire, UK

Freeman, R.E. (1984) *Strategic Management*: A Stakeholder Approach, Boston: Pitman

Freeman, R.E. Reed, D.L. (1983) Stockholders and Stakeholders: A new perspective on corporate governance. *California Management Review*, 25(3): 93-94

Friedman, M. (1970), *The New York Times Magazine*, September 13

Fuller et al (2006), A social identity perspective on the relationship between perceived organisational support and organisational commitment. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 143, p. 789-791

Fuller, J. B., Hester, K., Barnett, T., Beu, D., Frey, L., Relyea, C. (2009) Extending the group engagement model: An examination of the interactive effects of prestige, respect, and employee role identity. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, Vol. Xxi, No. 1, p119-139

Gouldner, A.W., (1957), Cosmopolitans and Locals: Towards an analysis of latent social roles. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 2, p. 281-306

Gond, J-P, ElAkremi, A., Igalens, J. & Swaen, V. (2006) A Corporate Social Responsibility – Corporate Financial Performance Behavioural Model for Employees. *Paper presented at the London Business School Conference on Corporate Responsibility and Global Busines*, London 14-16 July.

Greening and Turban (2000), Corporate Social Performance as a competitive advantage in attracting a quality workforce. *Business and Society*, 39: 254-80

Guerrero, S., Herrbach, O. (2009), Organizational Trust and Social Exchange: What if Taking Good Care of Employees Were Profitable? *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 64, 1, p. 6-26

Hartman, J. (1996), Using focus groups to conduct business communication research. *Journal of Business Communications*, Vol 41, October 402-410

Hillman, A. Keim, G. (2001) "Shareholder Value, stakeholder management, and social issues, what is the bottom line? *Strategic Management Journal*, 22: 125-139

Jones, D. (1997), Good works, good business, *USA Today*, 25th April, p.1B

Kapstein, E.B. (2001 The corporate ethics crusade. *Journal of Foreign Affairs*, 80(5), 105-119

Kress, V.E. and Shoffner, M.F. (2007), Focus groups a practical and applied research approach for counsellors. *Journal of Counselling and Development*, Vol 85, p189-196

Lederman, L.C. (1990), Assessing educational effectiveness: the focus group as a technique for data collection. *Journal of Communication Education*, 39(2), 117-127

Lewis, S. (2003),Corporate Brand and Corporate Responsibility, *MORI*, January 20

Maignan, I., and Ferrel, O.C. (2000), Measuring corporate citizenship in two countries: The case of the United States and France. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 23, 283-297

Margolis, J. and Walsh, J.P. (2003), Misery loves company: Rethinking social initiatives by business. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 48: 268-305

Marsden, C. (2000), The new corporate citizenship of big business: Part of the solution to sustainability? *Business and Society Review*, 101:1, p9-25

Melé, D. (2007), Corporate Social Responsibility Theories, Chapter 3 cited in *Corporate Social Responsibility* (Eds), A. Crane, D. Matten , L.J. Spence.

Meyer, J. P. Stanley, D.J., Herscovitch, L., Topolnytsky, L. (2002), Affective continuance and normative commitment to the organisation: A meta analysis of antecedents, correlates and consequences. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, Vol. 61, issue 1, p. 20-52

Meyer, J. P., Paunonen, S.V., Gellatly, I. R., Goffin, R. D. and Jackson, D. N. (1989), Organisational Commitment and job performance: It's the nature of commitment that counts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 74, 152-156

Mitchell, R.K. Agle, B.R. Wood, D.J. (1997), Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: defining the principle of who and what really counts, *Academy of Management Review,* 22(4): 853:886

Morgan,D.L. (1988), Focus groups as qualitative research, *Qualitative Research Methods Series 16*, Newbry Park, CA:Sage

Morsing, M., Schultz, M., Nielson, K. U. (2008), The catch 22 of communication CSR: Findings fro a Danish study, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 97-111

Peterson, D. K. (2004), The relationship between perceptions of corporate citizenship and organizational commitment, *Business and Society*, 43, 3; ABI/Inform Global, p296-317

Porter. M. Kramer. M. (2006), Strategy and Society: The link between Competitive advantage and corporate social responsibility. *Harvard Business Review*, Dec

Prahalad, C. K., and Hammel, G. (1990), The core competencies of the corporation, *Harvard Business Review*, May-June, p. 79-91

Pyke, D. (2003), Getting the most out of you qualitative research, *Marketing Magazine*, 108 (32), 26

Redington, I. (2005) Making CSR happen: the contribution of people management. Research report. CIPD London, available from *www.cipd.co.uk*

Rousseau, D. M. (1989), Psychological and implied contracts in companies. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 2, 121-139

Smith, C. (1996), Corporate citizens and their critics. *New York Times*, 8th September, p.11

Smith, S.M.,Wokutch, R.E., Harrington, K.V., and Dennis, B.S. (2001), An examination of the influence of diversity and stakeholder role on corporate social orientation. *Business and Society*, 40, 266-294

Tajfel, H., Turner, J.C. (1985), The social identity theory of group behaviour. In H. Tajfel (Ed.), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, p15-40

Thorne McAlister, D., Ferrell, O. and Ferrell, L. (2005), *Business and Society*: Astrategic approach to Social Responsibility, Second edition, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, New York

Trebbi, G.(2003), *More, better marketing research*. Chain Store Age, 79(&), p110

Turban, D. and Greening, D. (1996), Corporate Social Performance and Organizational attractiveness to potential employees, *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol 40, No8, pp 658-678

United Nations Global Compact, (2008), United Nations Global Compact: Corporate citizenship in the world economy, United Nations, New York, Downloaded from www.unglobalcompact.org on 01 Aug, 2009

World Economic Forum (2005), Trust in Governments, Corporations and Global InstitutionsContinues to Decline', Press Release accessed from *http://www.weforum.org/en/media/Latest%20Press%20Releases/PRESSRELEASES87* on 02 July, 2009

Zeller, R.A., (1993) Focus group research on sensitive topics: Setting the agenda without setting the agenda. In D. Morgan (Ed.) *Successful focus groups: Advancing the state of the art.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage, p167-183

Appendices.