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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT, CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN SERBIA

Relacije između posvećenosti zaposlenih, korporativne društvene odgovornosti i organizacionog građanskog ponašanja u Srbiji

Abstract

Companies are increasingly facing various challenges and opportunities in global business, and one significant aspect affecting their reputation, success, and sustainability is corporate social responsibility (CSR). Corporate social responsibility in the processing industry in Serbia is becoming an increasingly important topic both for companies themselves and for the broader community. CSR refers to the awareness and obligation of companies to take steps toward sustainable business practices that consider economic, social, and environmental aspects. The aim of this research is to examine the relationship between dimensions of corporate social responsibility and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), as well as the mediating effect of employee commitment in the relationship between dimensions of corporate social responsibility and organizational citizenship behavior. This is important because CSR has a positively predictive impact on OCB, especially when employees are committed. The sample includes a total of 72 large companies in the processing sector operating within the territory of the Republic of Serbia. The dataset was compiled between November 2019 and August 2021, and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis was employed to examine the relationships between variables. The authors determined a positive direct impact of CSR on organizational citizenship behavior as well as a positive direct impact on employee commitment. Furthermore, a positive indirect effect of employee commitment on the relationship between CSR and organizational citizenship behavior was revealed. The concluding section of the study encompasses theoretical and practical implications, recommendations for future research and acknowledges research limitations.

Keywords: *corporate social responsibility, organizational citizenship behavior, employees commitment, PLS-SEM*

Sažetak

Kompanije se sve više suočavaju s različitim izazovima i prilikama u globalnom poslovanju, a jedan od značajnih aspekata koji utiče na njihovu reputaciju, uspeh i održivost jeste korporativna društvena odgovornost kompanija. Korporativna društvena odgovornost (KDO) u prerađivačkoj industriji u Srbiji postaje sve važnija tema, kako za same kompanije, tako i za širu zajednicu. KDO se odnosi na svest i obavezu kompanija da preduzmu korake ka održivom poslovanju koje uzima u obzir ekonomske, socijalne i ekološke aspekte. Cilj istraživanja ovog rada je odnos između dimenzija korporativne društvene odgovornosti i organizacionog građanskog ponašanja (OCB), kao i medijacijski efekat posvećenosti zaposlenih u odnosu između dimenzija korporativne društvene odgovornosti i organizacionog građanskog ponašanja. Ovo je važno jer CSR ima pozitivno prediktivno dejstvo na OCB, naročito ukoliko su zaposleni posvećeni. Ukupno je uključeno 72 velikih kompanija u sektoru prerade koje posluju na teritoriji Republike Srbije. Skup podataka je formiran između novembra 2019. i avgusta 2021. godine, a za analizu veza između varijabli primenjena je PLS-SEM analiza. Autori su utvrdili da postoji pozitivan direktni uticaj KDO na organizaciono građansko ponašanje, kao i pozitivan direktni uticaj na posvećenost zaposlenih. Takođe, otkriven je pozitivan posredni efekat posvećenosti zaposlenih na vezu između KDO i organizacionog građanskog ponašanja. Zaključni deo rada obuhvata teorijske i praktične implikacije, preporuke za buduća istraživanja i ograničenja istraživanja.

Ključne reči: *korporativna društvena odgovornost, organizaciono građansko ponašanje, posvećenost zaposlenih, PLS-SEM*

Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has a long history but began to develop in a modern sense over the last few decades. At the beginning of the 20th century, CSR focused on philanthropic activities and donations [13]. In the 1960s and 70s, public awareness of the adverse effects that companies could have on the environment and society increased. This led to the concept of "social responsibility," a precursor to modern CSR [27]. In the contemporary business world of today, corporate social responsibility is being researched, refined and applied with more and more frequency. Conceptually, CSR refers to the obligation of organizations to engage in responsible business practices that contribute to society, protect the environment, and positively impact stakeholders. Through CSR, companies recognize that their success depends not only on financial performance but also on the social and environmental effects they have on the community and the environment in which they operate [36], [38]. Implementing the CSR concept brings numerous benefits for companies. The benefits that companies achieve include the fact that implementing CSR often positively influences reputation-building and trust among their stakeholders. Furthermore, implementing the idea of social responsibility has a favorable impact on retaining employees within the organization [5], [22]. Organizations that adhere to CSR can reduce the risk of crises and improve relationships with regulatory bodies [37].

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is a concept that is increasingly being researched and recognized as an important aspect of successful organizational functioning. OCB refers to the additional behavior of employees that is not formally part of their job duties but contributes to efficiency, productivity, and a positive organizational climate [23]. OCB plays a crucial role in achieving organizational success. When employees exhibit OCB, it means they go beyond the boundaries of their formal job duties and actively contribute to the organization and its goals. OCB can include situations where employees assist colleagues in problem-solving, propose innovative ideas, volunteer to perform additional tasks, provide constructive suggestions for improvement, and support organizational values [7]. This behavior leads to increased team spirit, improved work relations, and enhanced employee satisfaction.

Employee commitment has a significant impact on an organization. Committed employees are more inclined to innovate, take initiative, and contribute to organizational goals outside of their formal job duties. They actively participate in improving processes and organizational efficiency. Also, committed employees are less prone to negative behaviors such as tardiness or inadequate task performance [28], [1].

The main objective of this research is to examine the relationship between the concept of CSR and OCB, as well as the mediating effect of employee commitment. The authors conducted an analysis using the PLS-SEM method to determine the relationships between the observed variables. The dimensions of CSR represent an independent variable, while employee commitment and organizational citizenship behavior represent dependent variables. The study was carried out within the business landscape of the Republic of Serbia, utilizing a sample of 72 large organizations in the manufacturing sector. It relies on the perspectives of management teams within these organizations concerning corporate social responsibility, employee commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior.

The study is structured into three main segments. The initial part provides an overview of prevailing attitudes related to corporate social responsibility, employee commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. The second segment concentrates on the employed statistical analysis method, and the third part delves into the analysis of the research results, offers recommendations for future studies, and draws conclusions.

Theoretical background

Contemporary organizations wield substantial influence on the global stage, shaping economic, societal, and ecological dynamics. Against this backdrop, an escalating number of companies are embracing corporate social responsibility as an approach to acknowledge their societal and environmental roles and responsibilities. CSR embodies a business strategy transcending the conventional emphasis

on profit, encompassing endeavors that foster beneficial outcomes for both society and the environment [8]. Business entities that practice CSR recognize the importance of sustainable business, employee well-being, adherence to ethical standards, promoting diversity and inclusiveness, supporting local communities, reducing ecological risks, and responsible resource utilization [2], [17].

Recognizing the manufacturing industry's influence on society and the environment, the importance of incorporating corporate social responsibility is especially noteworthy. The manufacturing industry encompasses the production, processing, and distribution of various products, including food, textiles, electronics, the automotive industry, etc. [25]. The manufacturing industry worldwide is increasingly acknowledging the importance and impact of CSR on business. CSR doesn't solely pertain to philanthropy but extends to broader engagement of organizations in adopting sustainable business practices that contribute to a better future for all. Through continuous advancement and transparency in relation to CSR, organizations can gain competitive advantages and become industry leaders [32], [33].

CSR pertains to the activities and practices that companies undertake to recognize their responsibility towards society and the environment, while OCB involves voluntary positive actions and contributions by employees to the organization that goes beyond their formal job duties [24]. The ways in which these two concepts are connected relate to social awareness and organizational identification. In this regard, companies that practice CSR and show concern for social issues often attract employees who share similar values and goals. Individuals who perceive their organization as having a commitment to social responsibility are more inclined to cultivate a heightened organizational identification and a sense of belonging to something beyond the scope of their specific job.

Furthermore, organizational fairness and support also play a role. Companies that implement CSR usually focus on fairness toward employees, supporting their development and well-being [35], [12], [11]. Such organizational fairness and support are associated with a greater inclination of employees towards OCB, as they feel valued and motivated to contribute to the organization beyond their formal obligations. Organizations that embrace the CSR concept often strive for long-term success and sustainability. In this context, employees who perceive that their company cares about the environment and society are more likely to invest more effort and time into OCB because they believe in the goals and values of the organization [6], [10]. The mentioned relationship can contribute to the creation of a positive working climate and long-term success of the organization.

Employee commitment plays a pivotal role in linking the concepts of CSR and OCB. When employees harbor a strong commitment to the organization, they are more prone to demonstrating elevated levels of OCB, with CSR serving as a significant contributing factor to that commitment [19], [30]. Employee commitment can serve as a mediator in the relationship between CSR and OCB. This means that CSR activities that enhance employees' commitment to the organization can result in greater OCB among those employees. Through greater commitment, employees may better understand the importance of OCB to the organization and be more motivated to engage in such behaviors.

The study conducted by Choi & Yu [9] with Chinese companies affirms that empirical findings reveal a noteworthy impact of dimensions within employees' corporate social responsibility on both their organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Regarding the mediation model, the research identifies that organizational citizenship behavior partially mediates the connection between socially responsible business practices and organizational performance. Studies have shown a positive correlation between CSR, employee commitment, and OCB. Companies that focus on socially responsible business practices often have more satisfied and engaged employees who are willing to provide additional contributions to the organization [36]. This integrated approach can bring numerous benefits to the organization, including improved reputation, productivity, and long-term success. Therefore, the key focus of managers should be directed towards fulfilling employees' personal needs in order to encourage their greater dedication to performing diverse business tasks [29, pp. 315].

Methodology

This research was conducted in large manufacturing companies operating in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. The study involved 72 companies, with one top-level manager from each company providing responses to the questions. Specifically, the "large organizations" sector in Serbia is defined as those with more than 250 employees, in line with previous research [31], [3, p. 98].

The questionnaire is structured into four segments. The first segment focuses on the participants' social-demographic characteristics as well as the type of economic activity and markets where the company operates. The second segment encompasses the concept of CSR, which comprises 6 dimensions. The first dimension relates to community responsibility and consists of four questions labeled as Soc1, Soc2, Soc3, Soc4. The second dimension pertains to environmental responsibility and includes four questions labeled as Envir1, Envir2, Envir3, Envir4. The third dimension centers around employee responsibility, with questions labeled as HR1, HR2, HR3, HR4. The fourth dimension concerns investor responsibility and contains questions marked as Invest1, Invest2, Invest3, Invest4. The fifth dimension addresses customer responsibility and consists of four questions labeled as Consumer1, Consumer2, Consumer3, Consumer4. The final dimension relates to supplier responsibility and contains five questions labeled as Suppl1, Suppl2, Suppl3, Suppl4, Suppl5 [3, p. 98].

The third segment pertains to the questionnaire evaluating employees' attitudes and behaviors and consists of two main parts. The first part focuses on employee commitment and comprises a total of 3 questions, which is a concept developed by the author team Rettab et al. [34]. The questions and labels in this section are as follows: "Employees often go beyond their responsibilities for the benefit of the organization," labeled as Commitment1. The second question is: "The bonds between employees and the organization are very strong," with the label Commitment2. The third question relates to "Employees are very devoted to the organization," labeled as Commitment3. The second part addresses organizational citizenship behavior, developed by the research team [18]. The questionnaire used in the study consists of 7 questions and focuses on the interaction between the company and its employees. The first question is "Employees contribute to the development of the organization with their work," labeled as OCB1. The second question is "Employees defend the organization when other employees criticize it," labeled as OCB2. The third question is "Employees show pride when representing the organization in public," labeled as OCB3. The fourth question is "Employees propose ideas to improve the functioning of the organization," labeled as OCB4. The fifth question is "Employees express loyalty to the organization," labeled as OCB5. The sixth question is "Employees take actions to protect the organization from potential issues," labeled as OCB6. And the seventh and final question is "Employees show concern for the organization's image," labeled as OCB7.

The questions in the questionnaire are structured as closed-ended questions with a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, where the options are labeled as follows: 1 - strongly disagree; 2 - disagree; 3 - neither agree nor disagree; 4 - agree; 5 - strongly agree [34]. This questionnaire structure allows the quantitative measurement of participants' attitudes and perceptions related to the concept of CSR.

Drawing from the theoretical perspectives and research methodology discussed earlier, the authors of this paper propose the following research hypotheses:

H_1: The positive influence of incorporating dimensions of the corporate social responsibility concept on the manifestation of organizational citizenship behavior is observed within large organizations in the manufacturing sector in Serbia's business landscape.

H_2: There is a positive influence of applying the dimensions of corporate social responsibility on the level of employee commitment in the manufacturing sector within large organizations in Republic of Serbia.

H_3: Corporate social responsibility, through the mediation of employee commitment, has a positive impact on the manifestation of organizational citizenship behavior in the Republic of Serbia.

Research results and discussion

The authors of the paper employed the aforementioned research methodology to validate and test the questionnaire as well as to analyze internal consistency. Internal consistency

was assessed by calculating Cronbach's Alpha values, Composite Reliability (CR), and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct in the model [14], [15], [16]. Variables whose indicators had values below 0.728 were excluded from further analysis. Based on this criterion, the authors excluded the indicator HR1 from the study. Considering all the mentioned aspects, Figure 1 illustrates the research model.

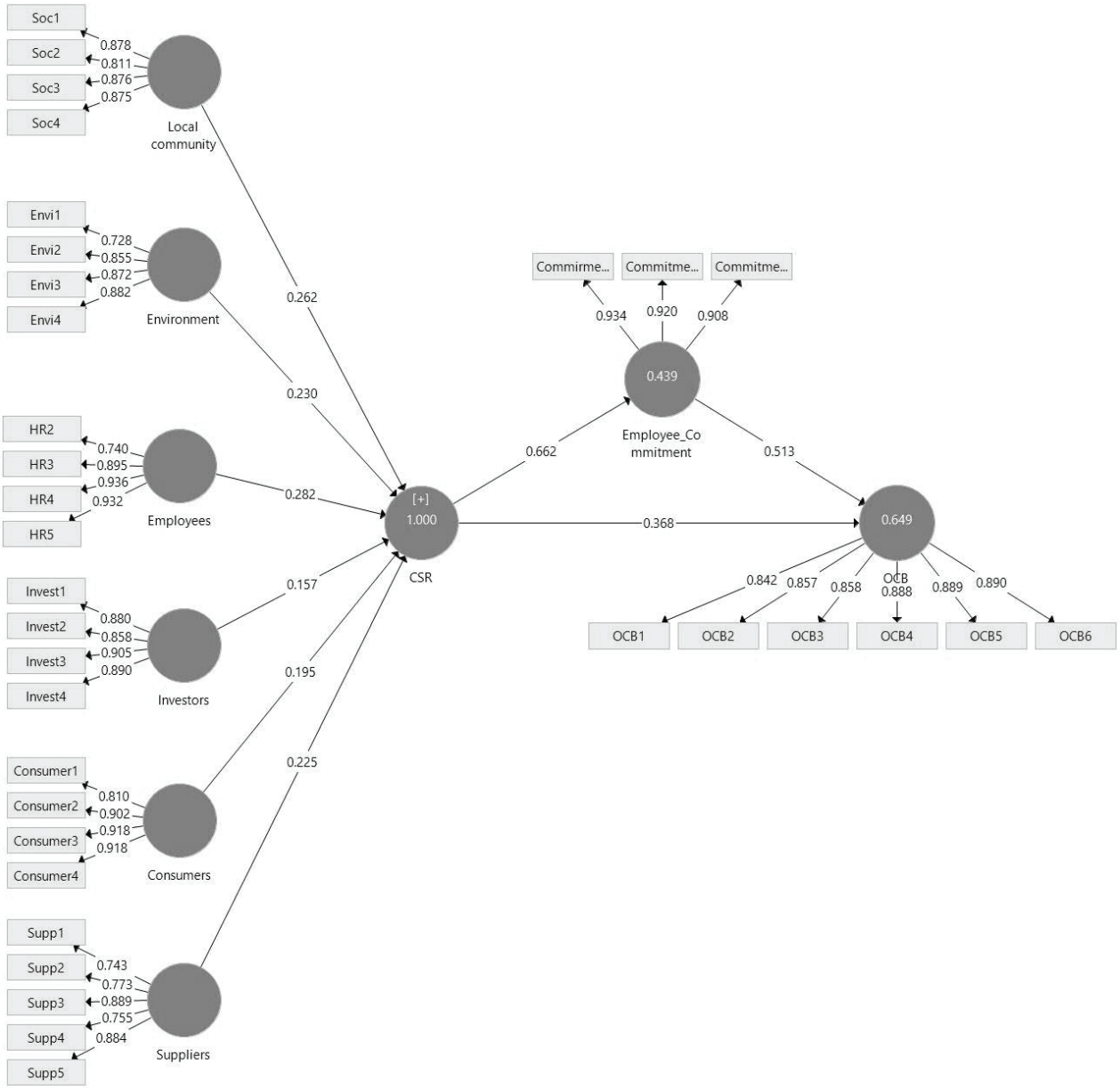
Measurement characteristics for various constructs in the research use the Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS) method for structural modeling analysis. Table 1 presents Cronbach's Alpha analysis with values ranging from 0.855 to 0.936. As Cronbach's alpha represents a measure of internal consistency (reliability) of the total questions measuring the same construct, values above 0.7 are generally considered

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha, CR, AVE

Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Consumers	0.910	0.937	0.789
Employees	0.900	0.931	0.773
Environment	0.855	0.903	0.700
Investors	0.906	0.934	0.780
Local community	0.883	0.919	0.741
Suppliers	0.869	0.905	0.658
Employee commitment	0.910	0.944	0.848
OCB	0.936	0.950	0.758

Source: Authors' calculation

Figure 1: Calculations of path coefficients



Source: Authors' calculation

acceptable for research; all values are above 0.85, indicating high measurement consistency for all constructs [26]. Composite reliability assesses the overall consistency of constructs in terms of explaining variability among the variants that are part of that construct. Values above 0.7 are deemed acceptable, and the values shown in Table 1 are all above 0.9, demonstrating very high reliability of the constructs in the research. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measures the percentage of variance explained by the construct relative to the variability of measurement error. All values above 0.5 are acceptable; AVE values range from 0.658 to 0.848 for all specified constructs.

The discriminant validity criterion, which is alternatively called the heteroperson-monocrit criterion, will be presented in Table 2.

This criterion suggests that all values are below 0.9, indicating that the defined components, or constructs, are adequately distinct from one another and represent different phenomena [15], [16]. From the findings in Table 2, it is evident that all values are below 0.9, thereby fully satisfying the discriminant validity criterion as per the HTMT indicator.

Within the analytical framework, the Variance Inflation Factors for distinct formative constructs are presented in Table 3. To effectively evaluate multicollinearity, it is crucial to take into account the predefined threshold for VIF values, as established by previous research, with a specified limit set at less than 3. [21], [39]. When VIF values are below this defined threshold, it is generally considered that there is no serious issue of multicollinearity among the variables.

Based on the indicators presented in Table 3, it can be concluded that multicollinearity is not present between the formative constructs. In this regard, the low VIF values indicate that the variables do not exhibit a high level of mutual correlation.

Table 4 presents the results concerning the relationship between dimensions of corporate social responsibility and organizational citizenship behavior, the relationship between CSR and employee commitment, as well as the relationship between CSR and OCB through employee commitment. Based on the obtained results, it can be concluded that the first research hypothesis H_1 is accepted, indicating a statistically significant positive relationship between CSR and OCB ($T = 3.194$; $p = 0.001$) in the processing companies in the Republic of Serbia. The second research hypothesis H_2 is accepted, showing a statistically significant positive relationship between CSR and employee commitment ($T = 8.748$; $p = 0.000$) in the processing companies. Lastly, the third research hypothesis H_3 is accepted, indicating a statistically significant relationship between CSR and OCB through employee commitment ($T = 3.194$; $p = 0.001$).

Table 2: Discriminant validity: Heterotrait-monotrait

	CSR	Consumers	Empl_Comm	Employees	Environment	Investors	Local comm.	OCB
Consumers	0.772							
Empl_Comm	0.689	0.394						
Employees	0.786	0.418	0.707					
Environment	0.840	0.484	0.568	0.741				
Investors	0.697	0.437	0.262	0.234	0.345			
Local comm.	0.858	0.487	0.604	0.611	0.671	0.410		
OCB	0.715	0.384	0.816	0.751	0.644	0.321	0.755	
Suppliers	0.830	0.513	0.549	0.434	0.416	0.557	0.552	0.377

Source: Authors' calculation

Table 3: Variance inflation factor

Formative construct	CSR
Consumers	1.481
Employees	1.975
Environment	2.115
Investors	1.443
Local community	1.907
Suppliers	1.696

Source: Authors' calculation

Table 4: Results of bootstrapping analysis

	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	p Values
CSR -> OCB	0.340	0.346	0.106	3.194	0.001
CSR -> Employee Commitment	0.662	0.667	0.076	8.748	0.000
CSR -> Employee Commitment -> OCB	0.340	0.346	0.106	3.194	0.001

Source: Authors' calculation

Conclusion

The concept of socially responsible business is becoming more and more pronounced in companies. This implies that economic entities deliberately and voluntarily direct their activities towards creating positive effects towards the entire society. This type of behavior stems from an increasing awareness of the role organizations play in modern society. In the field of research from the manufacturing industry, the authors of this study conclude that there is a clear and positive influence of companies that, through the application of CSR dimensions, influence employee commitment and OCB. These results emphasize the key role of CSR in shaping employee engagement and encouraging their positive contributions within the organization. It is important to point out that employee commitment has been identified as a significant mediator through which the positive influence of CSR encourages organizational citizenship behavior, further supporting the importance of commitment in this dynamic.

The positive correlation between organizational citizenship behavior and corporate social responsibility underscores the influence of the latter on the former. Through the analysis of various research works, it is underscored that the implementation of CSR practices can positively affect OCB, and at the same time it can provide the opportunity to create sustainable and ethically empowered work environments [4], [20].

The analysis of the relationship between corporate social responsibility and employee commitment has shown that organizations are undertaking socially responsible actions and are integrating these values into their operations in order to positively influence employees' perception of their role within the organization. Employees can feel more connected to their company, motivated, and satisfied when they realize that the organization is contributing to the community and society. Ultimately, further research will enrich the understanding of how CSR can positively shape employee commitment, providing valuable guidance for organizations to create a better work environment and increase employee engagement.

In conclusion, this study provides a significant contribution to the understanding the relationship between CSR, employee commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior, yet further research should focus on clarifying specific mechanisms and contextual variations to better manage critical aspects of organizational dynamics. Different industries, cultures, and geographic regions may have varying perceptions and effects of CSR on OCB. Future research should aim to understand contextual differences in order to develop targeted strategies.

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