

DISSERTATION INTRODUCTION

by Student's Name

Course Name

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PART 1

According to the proposed research, the question to answer is, “Does global economic recession limit Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) capabilities of the oil industries in India?” There are a number of reasons that India is picked as the country of investigation with regards to this research. Among the reasons is its financial and economic status as compared to other major economies around the globe. With regards to the definition of recession, which according to Lankoski (2009, p. 207), can be described as a period in which the world as a whole experiences economic downturn because of low economic productivity; India qualifies as one of the most economically dynamic nations in the world. With regards to a population exceeding one billion people and an unbalanced distribution of wealth, Corporate Social Responsibility is one of the areas that are likely to be affected by industrial investment. However, in terms of the global recession that has been witnessed in various other nations, very little research has been done with regards to CSR, as various studies that have been conducted with regards to this topic have not focused on global recession in India.

According to Baxi (2006, p. 89), CSR mainly means carrying out activities or projects in compliance with the law. The concept of CSR means that companies and organizations ensure that all the stakeholders, the employees, and the wider community benefit from their business activities or projects. However, the global recession that threatens to break financial trends leading to closures of various business units and industrial sectors, the CSR is capable of being affected with concerns drawn to various survival tactics that corporations take. For example, Higgins (2005) explains that when global recession occurs, various industries, especially those that are integrated with other economic sectors, cut down on workforce while others downscale their operations in order to limit their resources to manageable scopes. For this reason, stakeholders, employees, and the wider community does not benefit from their business activities or projects carried out by this industrial sector. It is therefore the duty of this research to investigate and come up with a conclusion as to whether there is a connection between India’s oil-industries’ CSR and the global recession.

The context of the research question ‘*does the global economic recession limit CSR capabilities of the oil industries in India?*’, is underpinned by the fact that very little, if at all any, research has been conducted to explain the effects of the global recession on the CSR responsibilities of the oil industry. However, the focus on India is about handling the question of imbalanced wealth distribution and the diverse nature of the Indian industries. With regards to the number of people living below the poverty line and others who have invested in major industries, it is obvious that CSR can be ignored in some of these settings. However, in order to test if this is the case, this research focuses on Karaimoglu’s (2010, p. 385) argument that the global economic recession impacts on the CSR capabilities of both private and public organizations, as these responsibilities create more costs making it very difficult for organizations to generate any profit. On the other hand, assessing what various researchers have gathered in terms of CSR on the case of private and public organization, it is evident that the global recession has affected various CSR initiatives around the globe leading to their standstill or cancellations.

The specificity of the research question is derived from the various socioeconomic issues that face India today. For example, India is densely populated and the distribution of wealth has a considerable magnitude as to the social responsibilities to its citizens by the oil industries. The question, however, is not focused on the socioeconomic issues of the Indian citizens but rather the perspective at which industry players view these issues. For example, the fact that poor

people are exposed to the hard labor in the industrial level, while elites flock the management sector, it is in order to investigate how the management of these industries views the poor and the nature of duties they are exposed to. With regards to employees and the general population, the projects undertaken by the oil industries have negative results on the environment and, in turn, this affects the livelihoods of the citizens. In this case, the oil industry CSRs may be defined or non-defined by the law of the nation; but with the issue of global recession leading to the downscaling of various industries that are connected to the oil industry, it has the potential of deflecting attention from CSR to recovery concerns. Stakeholders are hard hit by global recessions and cut down on operational expenses considerably to prevent their investments from collapsing. For this reason, the research question is worth asking, because various variables run over each other – an aspect that has the potential to shift the industries’ focus from CSR responsibilities to other economy-related factors, like suspension of expansion needs or cutting down on labor.

According to the present research question, a hypothesis is developed as the foundation of research. The foundation of research is aimed at taking an initial judgment of the research question – this sets room for the proving or nullifying of the hypothesis. In this case, the hypothesis of the research is ‘*the global economic recession limits CSR capabilities of the oil industries in India*’. The purpose of the hypothesis is to help in answering a series of questions that are related to the research questions that support or go against the hypothesis. Therefore, the ways in which the global recession limits the CSR capabilities of oil industries in India are investigated in this study. The investigation will capitalize on the use of various selected secondary sources that are not only related to the research topic, but also specific to the industry and the country of interest. A thorough analysis of previous research, will allow for the conduction of primary research to reveal real information for use in answering the research question. Finally, the conduction of the primary research will provide data that will be analyzed and discussed in order to provide a conclusion that will help in answering the research question.

PART 2

For the conduction of the proposed research, a number of references were selected concerning their specificity to the topic of the research. Most of the references are peer-reviewed books and journals that provide the in-depth explanation of concepts and various views on the topic. Concerning previous researches that have been conducted and recommendations for future research, journals provided herein offer concise and relevant information that paints a clear image of the researchers’ motives and limitations of their works. On the other hand, textbooks are extensively used to verify the concepts provided by various researchers, as well as get an insight for connecting the global recession and India’s oil industry CSR responsibilities. It is using the selected references, that the compilation of data and analysis of results is associated with actual business law, country law, and industry relevant factors. The selected references include:

- Arendt, S., and Brettel, M. (2010) ‘Understanding the influence of corporate social responsibility on corporate identity, image, and firm performance’, *Journal of Managerial Decisions*, vol. 48, no. 10, pp. 1469-1492.
- Arevalo, J.A., and Aravind, D. (2010) ‘The impact of the crisis on corporate responsibility: the case of UN global compact participants in the USA’, *Corporate Governance*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 406-420.

- Aupperle, K.E., Carroll, A.B., and Hatfield, J.D. (1985) 'An Empirical Examination of the Relationship Between Corporate Social Responsibility and Profitability', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 46-463.
- Baxi, C.V. (2006) *Corporate Social Responsibility concepts and cases: the Indian experience*, Excel Books, New Delhi.
- Carroll, A.B. (2000) 'Commentary and an overview of key questions on Corporate Social performance measurement', *Business Society*, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 466-478.
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- Fernandez, B., and Souto, F. (2009) 'Crisis and Corporate Social Responsibility: threat or opportunity?' *International Journal of Economic Sciences and Applied Research*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 36-50.
- Government of India, Planning Commission (2007) *Petroleum and natural gas chapter*, Eleventh Five-Year Plan.
- Higgins, O.E. (2005) 'Ireland: Bridging the Atlantic', in Habisch A, Jonker J (eds.) *Corporate Social Responsibility, Springer Verlag, Germany Indian Oil & Gas 2009, Further tax cuts on petrol products?* vol. 13, no.12.
- Karabrahimoglu, Y.Z. (2010) 'Corporate social responsibility in times of financial Crisis', *African Journal of Business Management*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 382-389.
- Kotler, P., and Lee, N. (2005) *Corporate Social Responsibility: doing the most good for your company and your cause*, John Wiley & Sons: New Jersey.
- Lankoski, L. (2009) 'Differential economic impacts of corporate responsibility issues', *Bus. Soc.*, vol. 48, no. 2, pp. 206-224.

The use of the journals and books as the secondary sources of this research had varied significance with regards to the research question and its hypothesis. However, with regards to the above reference materials, three of these were more important to the research than others.

These include:

- Arendt, S., and Brettel, M. (2010) 'Understanding the influence of corporate social responsibility on corporate identity, image, and firm performance', *Journal of Managerial Decisions*, vol. 48, no. 10, pp. 1469-1492;
- Government of India, Planning Commission (2007) *Petroleum and natural gas chapter*, Eleventh Five-Year Plan; and
- Higgins, O.E. (2005) 'Ireland: Bridging the Atlantic', in Habisch A, Jonker J (eds.) *Corporate Social Responsibility, Springer Verlag, Germany Indian Oil & Gas 2009, Further tax cuts on petrol products?* vol. 13, no.12.

The selection of the above references as the most important for this research is associated with the content's relevance to the research question and the general topic. Arendt & Brettel (2010) provides an analytical approach as to how Corporate Social Responsibility affects the corporate image, identity, and performance of a firm. The relevance this reference has to the research is to outline the responsibilities of a firm to its stakeholders, employees, and the society in general. Neglect of this responsibility has consequences to both the firm and the people associated with it. In answering the research question, the firm's financial strength is reviewed through the global recession and how it affects its willingness to carry out its CSR responsibilities.

The research topic and question are specific in terms of the country to investigate. In this case, Government of India's Planning Commission (2007) provides an insight into India's

petroleum and natural gas industries. This, with regards to the research question, provides the specific information needed to understand the petroleum industry, as well as the hardships brought on it by financial and economic issues. Those issues stretch from regular governmental regulations to long-term economic recessions.

Finally, Higgins (2005) provides an in-depth example of nations whose oil industries' CSR responsibilities have been affected by the global recession. This shows that there are other nations whose industries' CSR capabilities have been limited by the global recession. However, in spite of the fact that there are relations between the global recession and the industries' take on CSR, it is permissible for this research to assume the results of the global recession on other nations can be compared to India's.

PART 3

Studying the research methods module has changed my understanding of a project and enabled me to differentiate a dissertation from various other forms of research. My understanding of a project prior to this undertaking was biased in terms of goals and assumptions. I assumed that projects were limited to teamwork and supervision over items of use, information sources, and support from various entities. However, after studying Research Methods module, I have come to understand that projects can be carried out individually and can range from simple to complex ones. However, the simplicity of a project is not determined by the availability of information regarding the topic but rather by the task of finding relevance in limited informational databases and in relating various concepts. In terms of writing a dissertation, there are various methods of writing concerning different subjects; however, dissertations are written in precise language that is aimed at providing evidence and support of the research topic. As much as essays and analyses are concerned, the use of assumptions and opinions in dissertation writing is a violation of the basics of writing. In this case, I have learned that the writing of dissertations is different from various other methods. Simplicity and clarity are some of the crucial requirements of writing a dissertation, a case that emphasizes the portrayal of facts and limitation of speculative literature.

Given the various instances when I will be required to write with certain specificity of language and format, one of the most important benefits of studying the Research Methods module was learning to differentiate course work from research work. As long as writing is concerned, course work provides students with an opportunity to write and tackle problems with accordance to their understanding. However, one benefit of studying the Research Methods module is the opportunity to differentiate coursework writing and dissertation writing. The extended requirement of facts in dissertations is a revelation of the importance of comparison and finding relevance in various data and information sources. However, the comparison of data and information does not mean that the information and data are applicable in the current research requirement. For this purpose, the primary research verifying real results is a groundbreaker to issues and concepts that exist in the theoretical form. With this regard, the most important benefit of studying the Research Methods module is understanding the necessity of conducting investigative research and referring to outstanding peer-reviewed concepts. The viability of research is dependent of relativity. This means that, with the availability of various information sources, findings should be explained with the use of applicable concepts. Whether in the scientific or business fields, the benefit of studying the Research Methods module is the applicability of investigation and concept relations.

The advantage of conducting a research is to provide information for future reference. In this case, the present research will be a secondary source for another study that will be conducted in the future. For this reason, the present research that is concerned with CSR capability limitations concerning the oil industry and the effect of global recession, the future research will aim at decreasing the limitations in the present research and provide opportunities for further understanding of the concepts. In this case, my approach to future research will be different from the current in that I will maximize on the use of real time information in order to provide an up-to-date account of the subject matter and answer the research question satisfactorily. Some of the limits of this research include time, which restricts the number of sources reviewed and the primary research on the ground. Ground in this case refers to the Indian oil industries and their take on CRS responsibilities during the global recession and otherwise. It is important to provide facts that detail the situation during a non-recession and recession period. Otherwise, information related to recession periods may not account for negligence and ignorance by such industries in non-recession periods. In this case, I would maximize on conducting a time-intensive research that would cover limitations and provide detailed information on industries' behavior during recession and non-recession periods.

Reference List

- Arendt, S., and Brettel, M. (2010) 'Understanding the influence of corporate social responsibility on corporate identity, image, and firm performance', *Journal of Managerial Decisions*, vol. 48, no. 10, pp. 1469-1492.
- Baxi, C.V. (2006) *Corporate Social Responsibility concepts and cases: the Indian experience*, Excel Books: New Delhi.
- Government of India, Planning Commission (2007) Petroleum and natural gas chapter, Eleventh Five-Year Plan.
- Higgins, O.E. (2005) 'Ireland: bridging the Atlantic', in *Habisch A, Jonker J (eds.) Corporate Social Responsibility, Springer Verlag, Germany Indian Oil & Gas 2009, Further tax cuts on petrol products?* vol. 13, no. 12.
- Karaibrahimoglu, Y.Z. (2010) 'Corporate Social Responsibility in Times of Financial Crisis', *African Journal of Business Management*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 382-389.
- Lankoski, L. (2009) 'Differential economic impacts of corporate responsibility issues', *Bus. Soc.*, vol. 48, no. 2, pp. 206-224.