

THE IMPACT OF COUNTRY-LEVEL INSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENCES ON CSR DISCLOSURE ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract

The main purpose of the current paper is to examine the impact of country-level corporate governance (CG) and legal system, on corporate social responsibility disclosure (CSR) engagement. Our analysis tends to evaluate to which extent they have endured the global financial crisis (GFC), as reflected in the CSR disclosure of listed firms. The present study explores whether CSR practices are similar or different in organizations from six countries and two different continents corresponding to two different legal systems, corporate governance systems, and accounting models. These factors, amongst others, may influence the disclosure policy of CSR information. Our results uncovered that a CSR transparency-increasing effect of country-level corporate governance is more pronounced for firms in the Anglo-American legal and regulatory environment, and less pronounced for firms in Euro-Continental institutional environment.

Keywords: Country-Level, Corporate Governance, Legal System, CSR Disclosure, Euro-Continental Context, Anglo-American Context, Global Financial Crisis.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the success of a company is determined not only with its ability to find the best ways to transform inputs into products and services but also with its participation in solving social and environmental issues. It has become necessary for businesses to take responsibility for their actions. Global attention to community concerns and stakeholders' demands has been witnessed since four decades ago. Firms' stakeholders started showing more interest in the way firms react towards the natural environment, employees, and customers.

One way to inform the stakeholders about CSR activities is to disclose CSR information. CSR disclosure (CSRSD) provides information to the public regarding corporate activities that relate to the society, such as about reducing environmental impact, improving waste management, compliance with environmental regulations, and efforts to protect employees. CSR information is nowadays associated mainly with voluntary disclosures pertaining to several social and environmental aspects upon which companies' activities may have an impact (Branco & de Almeida, 2007). This information may be qualitative or quantitative, made in financial or non-financial terms, and seek to inform or influence the users of the social information.

However, lately, there has been a debate on whether the latest global financial crisis (GFC) has any impact on the level of CSRSD made by companies in their annual reports (Dias, Rodrigues, & Craig, 2016; Karaibrahimoğlu, 2010).

In fact, the GFC has led to an economic recession in different countries around the world. A great number of economic and financial experts agree in considering the GFC to be the worst since the Second World War. The crisis began in the US with the burst of the subprime mortgage housing bubble, after governmental, supervisory and regulatory authorities undervalued the real risk of the situation. The effects of this GFC are wide-sweeping and all the world economies suffer the consequences (Fernández-Feijóo Souto, 2009). Most companies had difficulties in borrowing financial capital from financial institutions (Njoroge, 2009) which restricted investment procedures. There are numerous consequences, both for society and companies, associated with GFC. These include the increased unemployment rate, output collapse, lowered incomes leading to extreme poverty (Charitoudi, Giannarakis, & Lazarides, 2011; Dias et al., 2016; Laidroo & Sokolova, 2015). An important area for increased attention is the trust between companies and their stakeholders as the trust "indicator index" has decreased since before the financial crisis up until 2010 in most developed countries (Charitoudi, Giannarakis, and Lazarides 2011). Companies operating under this

financial environment hesitate to invest and be involved in CSR initiatives because of the increased cost (Fernández-Feijóo Souto, 2009). According to (Njoroge, 2009), multinational companies have been compelled by circumstances to search for ways of curbing spending including negating on their corporate social responsibilities. Nevertheless, little research has been done that directly examines the relationship between CSED and country-level CG, and still very few studies addressed such relationship in times of crisis (Ducassy, 2013). This is especially true in terms of CSED quality as opposed to the quantity of such disclosure.

The contribution of this research to the existing literature is twofold. Most studies compare different countries separately, however, our study compares two contexts known by their institutional differences. We can observe that the quality of the institutional environment in Euro-Continental and Anglo-American countries is generally well-developed; but nevertheless, there is significant variation in contextual institutional systems that need to be tested. Secondly, this study contributes to the growing body of literature that points to the contingent quality of good CG prescriptions and their inherent trade-offs with respect to desirable corporate outcomes (Aguilera et al., 2008). Our study points specifically to the need for CG mechanisms to be evaluated with regard both to their ability to function efficiently in steady-state conditions as well to their robustness to financial shocks (Van der Laan Smith, Adhikari, & Tondkar, 2005; Van Essen, Engelen, & Carney, 2013).

The remainder of this paper is as follows: the second section is devoted to present the institutional differences that exist between the contexts subject of our study. Then, a review of the literature and the hypotheses development are presented in a third section, followed by the methodology and empirical results in the fourth section. Our paper is finished by the discussion of our study's findings as well as a conclusion containing the major findings, limits and recommendations for potential studies in the field of CSR.

2. THE INSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ANGLO-AMERICAN AND EURO-CONTINENTAL CONTEXTS

Inspired by the literature, we believe that there are some key theoretical reasons used to explain why CSR vary between countries. Three major institutional differences are believed to have an impact on CSR: legal systems differences, corporate governance differences, and accounting systems differences. For the purpose of the current study, we are interested in the first two differences: legal systems and corporate governance.

2.1 Legal Systems: Common Law Vs Code Law

The legal systems' differences that exist between countries are considered as the origin of the differences in accounting systems and CG systems. Based on the literature, legal systems can be divided into two broad categories: Code law and Common law systems (Ben Othman & Zeghal, 2006)

Civil law or Code law has its origin in Roman law of Justinian's Corpus Juris Civilis. Under this influence, in the ensuing period, the civil law has been developed mostly in Continental Europe countries like France, Germany, and Spain. The main feature of civil law is that it is contained in civil codes, described as a "systematic, authoritative, and guiding statute of broad coverage (Mattei, Ruskola, & Gidi, 2009). It uses statutes and comprehensive codes as a primary means of ordering legal material, and relies heavily on legal scholars to ascertain and formulate its rules (Porta et al., 1998). Most civil codes were adopted in the 19th and 20th centuries. Civil or Code law has three major principals (Schwartz, 1998):

- The solution of each case is to be found in the provision of each law;
- Precedents, however authoritative, are not binding; and
- The deciding court must demonstrate that its decision is based on provisions of the written law, and not merely on precedents.

On the other hand, Common law evolved in England since around the eleventh century and was later adopted in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other countries of the British Commonwealth. The most obvious distinction between civil law and common law systems is that civil law system is a codified system, whereas the common law is not created by means of legislation but is based mainly on case law. "English common law developed because landed aristocrats and merchants wanted a system of law that would provide strong protections for property and contract rights, and limit the crown's ability to interfere in markets" (Mahoney, 2001). The common law historically stood on the side of private property owners against the state. Rather than becoming a tool of the state, the common law has acted as a powerful counterbalance that has promoted private property rights. Thus, the common law's comparative emphasis on private property rights relative to the state tends to support financial development to a greater degree than the civil law (Beck, Levine, & Demirgüç-Kunt, 2002). Unlike civil law, the common law may be unwritten in statutes. According to De Cruz (1999), the common law is a "large body of rules founded on unwritten customary law evolved and developed throughout the centuries".

In the matter of accounting and CSRD, in civil law contexts, it is expected to find a body of codified disclosure laws prescribing in detail how each activity or event should be treated and disclosed. In this type of system, there is therefore much less need or scope for the use of professional judgment in preparing accounts, developing accounting practices including disclosure (Deegan & Islam, 2009). Rather, governmental requirements are imposed on the profession and strongly influence disclosure practices in Euro-Continental countries. Contrarily, in common law countries we would expect to find relatively few detailed accounting laws guiding accounting practices, and therefore historically the development of accounting practices would have been left much more to the professional judgments of accountants (and auditors). According to (Ben Othman & Zeghal, 2006), since the development of common law is attributed to individual action in the private sector, rather than to collective or government planning in the public sector, it would naturally influence company law. Thus, it traditionally does not prescribe rules to cover the behavior of companies and how they should prepare their financial and non-financial disclosure.

2.2 Corporate Governance: Stakeholder Vs Shareholder Models

Corporate governance systems around the world differ according to the most important stakeholders who influence the decision making process in corporations, as well as the instruments and mechanisms used by those stakeholders to affect the corporate governance process (Becic, 2011; Ortas, Gallego, Alvarez, & Etxeberria, 2015; VORONTSOV, 2016). The choice of systems also depends on the type of capital market which is specifically determined by the level of investors' ownership concentration and power over the management. Specifically, CG systems have been characterized by the nature of share ownership within various national economies and the way in which shareholders' influence is brought to bear in the control of the companies concerned.

The Anglo-Saxon model of corporate governance is most popular in the Anglo-American countries embracing the common law. The major focus of this model is upon shareholders. It is market-oriented, characterized by a large and liquid stock markets, low and dispersed concentration of ownership, relatively high level of protection for minority shareholders, and dominant role of the institutional investors (Thomsen, 2003). The outsider-system is characterized by a large number of listed companies, the shares of which are held by a large number of (institutional) shareholders without close ties (Franks & Mayer, 1994). The dispersed ownership is associated with shareholder disinterest; as small stakes provide neither incentive nor power to influence the management of the

firm. This dispersed ownership structure is, in part, due to the strong presence of institutional investors, who work under strict diversification obligations (Dehaene & Ooghe, 1998; Van Hulle, 1996). This shareholder passivity has the effect of handing control of the company to its management, thus bringing into focus the consequences of separating ownership and control predicted by (Berle-Means, 1932) and later explored by (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Thus, the minority shareholders enjoy extreme protection thanks to the developed capital market supported by the legal infrastructure (Cernat, 2004).

Conversely, the European Continental corporate governance system is typical in the European countries and is also known as the stakeholder system. Cernat (2004) argues that this model considers not only the interests of shareholders but also all stakeholders of the firm. In this CG system, corporate ownership is concentrated in hands of a small number of investors. Shareholder groups hold a large percentage of the total number of shares that are publicly traded, which allows them to decide on many of the problems concerning the corporation. Specifically, corporate ownership is typically concentrated among a stable network of strategically oriented banks and other industrial companies. Consequently, the market for corporate control has a lower impact on management than in the Anglo-Saxon system (Becic, 2011). In contrast to the Anglo-Saxon model, at a corporate level, the employees take participation in the strategic decision-making process, through trade union representations or works council. European Continental model relies on internal control mechanisms such as directors' remuneration, board composition and management performance based-reward (Lopatta, Jaeschke, & Chen, 2017; Setia-Atmaja, 2008). Banks has a significant impact on governing processes (Tipurić, Tušek, & Filipović, 2009). In fact, in this CG system, banks play the central external governance role through relational financing, providing financial services and monitoring in times of financial distress. Banks and industrial companies hold large blocks of shares in European corporations and actively participate in supervision and governing processes of the corporations. Block holders use their voting power to directly influence the way corporations are being governed and they rarely trade their shares (Jackson & Moerke, 2008). This concentrated ownership structure enables owners to maintain the control over the corporation and to make decisions that enhance the profitability of the corporation instead of enlarging the corporation's size through large investments (Becic, 2011).

2.3 Institutional differences and CSRD

We believe that the institutional differences explained above have impacts on disclosure practices. While firms in Anglo-American countries with common law origins have a wider stakeholders' responsibility and therefore report accordingly, firms in countries embracing the Euro-continental CG model, with concentrated ownership structure, have limited stakeholder demands, thus limited required information (Adelopo, Obalola, & Moure, 2018). Furthermore, while Anglo-Saxon-CG-model countries have stronger more developed property rights and shareholders' protection laws; Euro-Continental countries with civil law origins seem to have more developed employees' rights and protections laws (Idowu & Towler, 2004). Due to these distinctive features and their potential to impact on firms' social disclosure behavior, firms in the Anglo-American context have a greater need to make more social disclosures than firms in the Euro-Continental context. Similarly, ownership structure and diverse stakeholders' disclosure demand arguments also motivate the conjecture that firms in the common law countries would make more shareholder related CSED than those in the civil law countries.

On the other hand, it is likely that companies belonging to the Euro-Continental context have incentives to make more employee-related social disclosures than those in the Anglo-American countries. According to Whitley (1998), the employer-employee relationship in the Anglo-American-American context could be characterized with flexible external labor markets with a high rate of employment change, compared to a more intermediate relationship in the Euro-Continental countries. Employers in Continental Europe tend to see employees as part of the strategic strength and resources of the firms and are more prepared to spend on their training and development (Adelopo, Moure, and Obalola 2013; Esteban, Villardón, and Sánchez 2017; Amor-Esteban, García-Sánchez, and Galindo-Villardón 2017). In fact, employees in some of these countries play more active roles in CG through works councils and co-determination (Idowu & Towler, 2004). Therefore, the level of social disclosure is expected to change across these contexts.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

In this study, we focus on an organizational or "open system" approach to CG as proposed by (Aguilera et al., 2008). This approach extends the agency-based view of CG by considering the contingencies and interactions of CG arrangements. Although the traditional agency-theory-based view of CG seeks to establish a universal link between CG practices and outcome variables

regardless of the organizational context, the organizational view suggests that CG practices produce different impacts in different contexts (Blau & Scott, 2003; Ernstberger & Grüning, 2013)).

Several studies in the literature demonstrate mixed results or indicate a negative impact of corporate governance on CSR disclosure (Ben Rhouma and Cormier, 2007). Different studies of the same governance mechanism, such as board independence, capitulate varying findings. These dissimilar results might be due to the contextual differences that exist between the two contexts. All things being equal, one reason for the mixed results of previous literature might be that these studies focus on specific but different institutional settings within a single country. Thus, we follow Ernstberger & Grüning, (2013) regarding complementarities and contingencies in CG research to examine the interactions between CG arrangements and regulations at the country level and assess the ways in which the links between CG and CSED are contingent on the legal environment of a firm.

Previous studies have examined the determinants that explain the differences between countries in the extent of CSED. For example, (Williams, 1999) suggest that culture dimensions (uncertainty avoidance and masculinity), political and civil system, legal system, level of economic development, and equity market are the variables which represent the determinants of CSR disclosure on the country level. The results show that two cultural dimensions and political and civil system are significant determinants of the quantity of CSR disclosure provided by listed companies in these countries, While, the legal system and equity market do not appear to be important factors in explaining CSR disclosure. (Buhr & Freedman, 2001) explain that the factors such as history, geography, the political system, the legal system, and the business climate affect the different disclosure responses in Canada and USA. (Chambers et al., 2003) investigated CSR disclosure in seven Asian countries by analyzing the impact of economic level, social development, corporate governance system, and globalization on the level of internet CSR disclosure. They expected that high standards of governance would be positively correlated with disclosure. They find no clear relationship with web-based CSR disclosure. (Van der Laan Smith et al., 2005) argued that stakeholder orientation in a country will influence the extent and quality of CSD in annual reports. They argued that corporate governance systems, ownership structure, and cultural factors in a country influence the manner in which the role of the company and its stakeholders is defined in society. Their findings based on a sample of 32 Norwegian/Danish companies and 26 US companies support their argument. More recently, (Ernstberger & Grüning, 2013) examine how a country's regulatory environment interacts with firms' institutional CG arrangements to affect the disclosure that these firms provide in their

annual reports. They investigate whether this effect varies with the legal environment. (Ernstberger & Grüning, 2013) believe that the transparency-increasing effect of strong CG might be reinforced by a strong legal environment, suggesting a complementary relationship between these two factors with respect to transparency. However, strong CG arrangements may serve as bonding mechanisms in weak legal environments, suggesting a substitutive relationship between CG and the regulatory environment. Using a sample of listed firms from 16 European countries, Ernstberger and Grüning (2013) find evidence suggesting that CG arrangements and the legal environment substitute with respect to their effects on corporate disclosure. In our study, we are interested in analyzing the impact of context-level CG arrangements and legal environment on CSED in the three crisis phases. It is argued that the interaction between legal environment, economic level, culture, and the level of corporate governance determine the extent of social pressure in a given country (Gutiérrez, García, & Cañizares, 2013; HASSAN, 2010). Thus, it might have an impact on the extent of CSED. Thus, companies might respond differently to this social question. In this regard, CG practices appear to play an important role in determining companies' responses. In fact, CG incorporates controlling mechanisms and procedures to ensure that management acts in the interest of shareholders, and this theoretical view can be extended to include all stakeholders, not only shareholders. Thus, good CG practices can ensure that companies act in the interest of all stakeholders, at all times. It can be argued, therefore, that CG practices in a given context, determine how companies respond to social pressure, and consequently the extent of CSED in the context. While the impact of CG on CSED can matter less in normal economic situations, when a financial crisis reigns, better CG mechanisms become crucial to preserve a good extent (quantity and quality) of CSED. We can, therefore, formulate the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive association between the context-level corporate governance, and the extent of CSED, in both contexts, during the GFC.

In addition to corporate governance, country characteristics such as legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks, influence firms' CSR disclosure levels. Countries with stronger legal environments generally demand greater transparency because a stronger legal environment restricts insiders' ability to acquire private control benefits, thereby mitigating the incentives of those insiders to withhold information from the firm's stakeholders (Leuz, Nanda, & Wysocki, 2003). However, it remains unclear whether the regulatory or institutional environment influences the impact of firms' CG arrangements on corporate disclosure (Ernstberger and Grüning, 2013).

According to Van Essan (2013), the emergence of the law and finance literature emphasizes the importance of country-level governance institutions. The principle idea of this literature suggests that countries with good governance institutions, such as the rule of law and specific legal regulations, will have an impact on the extent of firms' disclosures in annual reports (Hassan, 2010; Van Essan et al., 2013). According to Ernstberger and Grüning (2013), given that agency costs are likely to be high in weaker legal countries, there will be a demand in these countries for stronger CG to avoid information withholding and protect against expropriation. This agency cost-related demand for stronger corporate governance is expected to be lower in countries with stronger legal environments because there are already country-level investor protection mechanisms in place (Choi & Wong, 2007). Consequently, we believe that stronger context-level legal institutions should influence positively the extent of CSED during GFC. (Baldini et al., 2018) found that country-level characteristics such as the legal framework, significantly affect the firms' social and environmental disclosure practices. Similar results were found by (Amor-Esteban, García-Sánchez, & Galindo-Villardón, 2017). (Coluccia, Fontana, & Solimene, 2018) also found that social, political and legal dimensions put forth important pressure on firms improving the transparency of corporate behavior especially on CSR disclosure. We also extend the traditional agency theory-based view to an organizational view by examining whether the impact of CG on CSED differs across legal regimes or remains stable. Simultaneously, we verify, if during the crisis times, these CG mechanisms function in the same way they do during normal times. (El-Bassiouny & El-Bassiouny, 2018) found that the influence of organizational-level factors including corporate governance mechanisms on CSR is highly dependent on the institutional context where companies operate. Since the countries of both contexts that belong to our sample are known by their high level legal environment, we predict the following hypotheses:

H2: There is a positive association between the context-level legal framework, and the extent of CSR in both contexts, during the GFC.

H3: The relationship between a firm's CSR and country-level corporate governance vary positively with the strength of the legal environment, during the GFC.

4. METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL RESULTS

4.1 Sample selection and Research Method

Our study is based on content analysis of the annual reports of 211 corporations belonging to the Euro-Continental and Anglo-American contexts. The Anglo-American sample for which complete data were readily available across all years of the sampling period is composed of 108 companies. Therefore, the Anglo-American sample, covering a period of 7 years, is based on corporations drawn from 3 countries and covering a wide range of industries resulting in a total of 756 firm-year observations. The Euro-continental sample for which complete data were readily available across all years of the sampling period is composed of 103 companies. Therefore, the Euro-continental sample, covering a period of 7 years, is based on companies drawn from 3 countries and covering a wide range of industries resulting in a total of 721 firm-year observations. Therefore, the whole study is based on 211 corporations where their annual reports were observed and treated along a period of 7 years which makes a total of 1477 year-observations. All the companies belonging to our sample have accessible websites with an investor relations sections that include electronic versions of the seven years' annual reports (2005-2011) in one or more formats (including Excel, HTML, interactive HTML, PDF and Webcast (Video, Audio)).

In order to capture CSED extent in the annual reports (dependent variable), we established a disclosure checklist (as detailed in Annex A) based on the updated version of Wiseman (1982)'s checklist retrieved from Cormier and Magnan (1999). This checklist assesses both the quality and quantity of societal disclosure in companies' annual reports. The method consists in detecting the presence of the information, then on rating this information. The chosen rating scale is as follows:

- "0" if no information;
- "1" if general information;
- "2" if encrypted OR detailed information; and
- "3" if detailed and encrypted information.

This qualitative approach is inspired from the coding instrument used by (Wiseman, 1982)) and adapted by Cormier and Magnan (1999 and 2003) then used in other studies such as (Ben Rhouma, 2006; Yusoff & Lehman, 2005). Thus the advantage of capturing not only the quantity of disclosure but also its quality. Our goal, through the creation of the checklist and its coding scale, is to understand the disclosure of the social and environmental information in firms' annual reports.

4.2 Regression Model

Following Ernstberger and Grüning (2013), we estimate the following multiple regression model for each sample, in order to evaluate the interaction of corporate governance and the legal environment in affecting corporate social and environmental disclosure:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{CSED}(ij,t) = & \alpha + \beta_1 \text{CORPGOV}(i,t) + \beta_2 \text{REG}(i,t) + \beta_3 \text{REG}(i,t).\text{CORPGOV}(i,t) \\ & + \beta_4 \text{SIZE}(ij,t) + \beta_5 \text{AGE}(ij,t) + \beta_6 \text{INDUST}(ij,t) + \varepsilon(ij,t) \end{aligned}$$

where:

CSED(ij,t)= total social and environmental score of the firm j in country i in year t;

CORPGOV(i,t)= the corporate governance index for the country i in year t, as provided in the global competitiveness report;

REG(i,t) = one of the indexes for the legal environment(Rule of Law or Law and Order) in country i during the year t, as described above;

SIZE(ij,t) = the natural log of the total assets of firm j of country i during year t; AGE(ij,t) = the number of years since the foundation of firm j in country i during year t

INDUST(ij,t) = dummy variable: 1 if pollutant industry; 0 if otherwise

The model contains two types of variables: quantitative and binary variables. According to (Duguet, 2008), an econometric model can have both quantitative variables with well-defined measures as exogenous; it can also have dummy variables or binary variables as control variables, and models with endogenous dichotomies or well observable in a part of intervals and not observable in another part of the interval.

The level of CG in each context (CORPGOV) will be measured by the corporate governance index, provided in the global competitiveness report by the World Economic Forum.

In order to measure the impact of the overall quality of legal background institutions (REG) in various Euro-Continental and Anglo-American countries jurisdictions, we use two proxies:

- *Rule of Law*: the law enforcement conditions in a country as a proxy for each country's legal system. Following Van Essen et al. (2013) and Ernstberger and Grüning (2013), we measure law enforcement in terms of the *Rule of Law* component of the World Governance Index (WGI) that is provided by Kaufmann et al. (2008).

- *Law and Order*: We also use the law and order as a measure of the general law system quality that is obtained from the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG).

Following Ernstberger and Grüning (2013), in our model, we include an interaction term between the proxies for corporate governance and the quality of the legal environment. The regression coefficient β_3 measures the interaction of corporate governance and the legal environment with respect to affecting CSED:

- ✓ A non-significant regression coefficient indicates that the impact of corporate governance on CSED is not related to the legal environment,
- ✓ A significant positive regression coefficient indicates a complementary effect between these two factors, and
- ✓ A significant negative coefficient indicates a substitutive effect between these two.

4.3 Analysis Results

4.3.1 Descriptive results

The results of the descriptive analysis are presented in Table 1 below. The findings indicate that there is an increase in the average CSR information disclosed by firms of both contexts, over the three crisis phases. This upsurge reflects an increase in the level of CSRD over time, where the maximum score of CSRD of the Anglo-American (Euro-Continental) firms increased from 101 (111) between 2005 and 2007, to 107 (110) in between 2008-2009 and to 125 (118) between 2010 and 2011.

Table 1 Descriptive Results of the Anglo-American (Euro-Continental)context

CSRD			
	PRE-CRISIS (2005-2007)	CRISIS (2008-2009)	WHILE-CRISIS (2010-2011)
MEAN	42.42 (46.75)	43.72 (45.45)	51.08 (50.22)
STANDARD DEVIATION	3.61 (4.36)	8.49 (7.07)	9.90 (2.83)
MAX	101 (111)	107 (110)	125 (118)
MIN	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
CORPGOV			
	PRE-CRISIS	CRISIS	WHILE-CRISIS
MEAN	5.43 (5.06)	5.47 (5.13)	5.35 (5.02)
STANDARD DEVIATION	0.28 (0.13)	0.19 (0.04)	0.14 (0.39)
MAX	5.82 (5.58)	5.74 (5.51)	5.59 (5.39)
MIN	5.10 (4.77)	5.30 (4.66)	5.19 (4.49)

RULE_LAW			
	PRE-CRISIS	CRISIS	WHILE-CRISIS
MEAN	1.66 (1.42)	1.70 (1.43)	1.70 (1.42)
STANDARD DEVIATION	0.10 (0.27)	0.10 (0.24)	0.08 (0.20)
MAX	1.79 (1.76)	1.81 (1.72)	1.81 (1.62)
MIN	1.53 (1.1)	1.58 (1.13)	1.61 (1.16)
LAW_ORDER			
	PRE-CRISIS	CRISIS	WHILE-CRISIS
MEAN	0.92 (0.83)	0.90 (0.83)	0.88 (0.83)
STANDARD DEVIATION	0.072 (0)	0.063 (0)	0.046 (0)
MAX	1.00 (0.83)	1.00 (0.83)	0.92 (0.83)
MIN	0.83 (0.83)	0.83 (0.83)	0.83 (0.83)

The minimum CSR disclosure score equals zero (0) in both contexts and during the three crisis phases. This result reflects the fact that there are some companies of both contexts that reveal no interest in CSR disclosure. The small values of standard deviation for CSED during the three crisis phases mean that the data is not widely spread within contexts. In fact, our sample firms of both contexts belong to countries that are well known of their high level of CSR awareness, reflected on the extent of CSR information disclosed in their annual reports. Previous CSR disclosure studies on these countries (USA, UK, CANADA, FRANCE, SPAIN, and GERMANY) show a high level of CSR information disclosed by companies not only in their annual reports but also in stand-alone reports as well. Other studies on the country-level determinants of CSED including countries with different development level, found large values of standard deviation, reflecting the noticeable differences in the level of CSR disclosure among these different countries.

With regard to the corporate governance variable (CORPGOV), it is stable over the three crisis phases. The minimum score of CORPGOV in the Anglo-American (Euro-Continental) context over three phases (5.10 (4.77), 5.30 (4.66), 5.19 (4.49)) is considered a mean score for governance level. The average corporate governance score also indicates, in general, a high level of corporate governance in both contexts. The low values of standard deviation reflect that the corporate governance score is normally distributed (Hassan, 2010). With regard to the legal system dimensions (*LAW_ORDER*, *RULE_LAW*), the results show strong legal environment in both contexts. According to (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2009) the values of RULE of LAW range from approximately -2.5 (weak) to 2.5 (strong) governance performance. A higher score for the

Rule of law implies more confidence in the legal system. Thus, the mean values of *RULE_LAW* of both contexts show strong and solid legal and governance systems. Similarly, the standard deviation is very low, reflecting a similarity in the legal environment within contexts. The values of *LAW_ORDER* also reveal a consistency of the regulatory environment in both contexts.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics Of Corporate Characteristics of the Anglo-American (Euro-Continental) context

Continuous Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	MIN	MAX	Skewness
SIZE	6.41 (5.86)	6.24 (3.01)	4.5 (4.33)	8.85 (7.96)	0.44 (0.72)
AGE	29.56 (31.05)	13.97 (10.22)	7 (10)	94 (77)	-2.05 (1.06)
Binary Variables	YES	NO	YES (%)		Skewness
INDUST	75 (58)	33 (45)	69.44 (56.31)		0.59 (3.16)

The results of table 2 show that the presented data are not normally distributed. It is observed that the standard skewness of *AGE* in the Anglo-American sample exceeds the range of ± 1.96 evidencing that the normality of the data (Haniffa & Hudaib, 2006). Similarly, Concerning the Euro-Continental data, the results show that they are not normally distributed as well. In fact, the skewness of *INDUST* is 3.16 which exceed the normality range of ± 1.96 . Thus, a robust analysis is necessary.

4.3.2 Correlation Results

As multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and auto-correlation may also be threats to the validity and reliability of regression results, these are examined as part of the estimating procedures. The results presented in table 3 below show no significant multicollinearity between the variables of both models.

Table 3 Pearson Correlation Matrix of the Independent variables of the Anglo-American (Euro-Continental) context

	CORPGOV	LAW_ORDER	RULE_LAW	SIZE	AGE	INDUST
CORPGOV	1					
LAW_ORDER	0.5574 (0.4255)	1				
RULE_LAW	0.3454 (0.4475)	0.3248* (0.5256)	1			
SIZE	0.1665 (0.1874)	0.2384 (-0.1439)	0.2619 (0.2342)	1		
AGE	0.5397 (0.1154)	0.4321 (0.1399)	0.3994 (0.1285)	0.3691 (0.1216)	1	
INDUST	0.0074 (0.1058)	0.0355 (0.4121)	0.0147 (0.5402)	0.0381 (0.1584)	0.0162 (0.1384)	1

Table 4 presents the results of Breusch-Pagan and Durbin-Watson tests. The Breusch Pagan test of heteroscedasticity indicates that Euro-Continental model rejects the heteroscedasticity assumption (p-value = 0.0251<0.05); however, the Anglo-American model confirmed the presence of heteroscedasticity in the residuals (p-value = 0.1536>0.05). Lastly, the Durbin-Watson test of auto-correlation indicates that both Euro-Continental and Anglo-American models present a problem of auto-correlation (respectively, p-value = 0.0211<0.05; p-value = 0.0384<0.05). Accordingly, robust standard errors are used during the analysis of both models.

Table 4. Breusch-Pagan and Durbin-Watson tests results of the Anglo-American and Euro-Continental models

MODELS	TESTS	RESULTS	
Anglo-American	Durbin Watson	U	3.2235
		p-value	0.0384
	Breusch Pagan	Chi2	22.63
		Prob> Chi2	0.1536
Euro-Continental	Durbin Watson	U	3.0498
		p-value	0.0211
	Breusch Pagan	Chi2	18.44
		Prob> Chi2	0.0251

4.3.3 Specification and Hausman tests

Our study is based on structured panel data. This structure combines temporal and individual dimensions. In the following, the first thing to be verified is the uniform specification of the data generating process, which is distinguishing between the specific effects and common effects. Thus, consideration needs to be given as to which panel data method is more appropriate: heterogeneous panel data pooled panel data. The theoretical model (for each context) is formulated as follows for both samples:

$$CSED_{ij,t} = \alpha_i + \phi_i CORPGOV_{it} + \eta_i REG_{it} + \theta_i CORPGOV_{it} . REG_{it} + \gamma_i SIZE_{ij,t} + \lambda_i AGE_{ij,t} + \varphi_i INDUST_{ij,t} + \varepsilon_{ij,t}$$

Under the assumption that the $\varepsilon(ij,t)$ are independently normally distributed over i, j and t with mean zero and variance $\sigma_\varepsilon^2, j \in [1,108]$ for the Anglo-American model, and $\sigma_\varepsilon^2, j \in [1,103]$ for the Euro-Continental model, we use the F statistic.

If the probability of accepting the null hypothesis of equality of the constants is less than 0.05 in this case, we have a specific effects model. If the probability of accepting the null hypothesis of equality of the constants, is greater than 0.05, then, we have a common effect model (absence of individual effects). The results are presented in table 5 below.

Table 5 Results of the Specification Test

Models	Slope coefficients Homogeneity		Intercepts Homogeneity	
	F Statistic	p-value	F Statistic	p-value
Anglo-American	1.056***	0.0024	2.0251	0.6214
Euro-Continental	2.982**	0.0041	2.3698	0.4785
***= p < 0.01; **= p < 0.05; *= p<0.1				

By performing the specification tests on each model, the results show that the p-values are lower than the significance level of 0.05, thus we reject the null hypothesis of equality of constants. This indicates that there exist individual specific effects. It is now necessary to find out the type of these individual effects. To answer this question, we use the statistical test most used in the case of panel data that is of (Hausman, 1978). It allows us to discriminate between the fixed effects (Within estimate) and random (GLS estimate). It allows us to test the presence or absence of correlations between the independent variables and the individual effects. Results of the Housman test are presented in table 6 below.

Table 6. Results of Hausman test

Hausman Test			
Models	Chi-square statistic	Prob>Chi2	Result
Anglo-American	11.0563	0.6056	Random Effects
Euro-Continental	9.5628	0.5299	Random Effects

The results of Hausman test for both models, show that the p-values is greater than 0.05. Thus, we use the random effects for both models. Since our data is not normally distributed, and have issues of heteroskedasticity and auto-correlation, we apply Generalized Least Squares (GLS) with robust standard error method.

4.4 Panel Regression Analysis Results

Table 7 reports the results of GLS regression with robust standard errors to estimate our theoretical model on both samples. In our analysis, we follow Ernstberger and Grüning (2013). The two columns in each crisis phase indicate the results for different proxies of the regulatory environment (*REG*). In the first column, *REG* equals *RULE_LAW*, which is an indicator of judicial integrity and respect for

property rights and investors protection. In the second column of the results, *REG* is proxied by *LAW_ORDER*, which is a country's general law system quality. In the pre-crisis phase, our results reveal a significant positive association between *CORPGOV* and CSED in the Euro-Continental context (0.35**; 0.26***). Contrarily, *CORPGOV* is negatively associated with CSED in the Anglo-American context (-0.43***; -0.18**). Similar results were found in the crisis-peak and while-crisis phases. Thus, with regard to hypothesis H1 that indicates a positive association between corporate governance and social and environmental disclosure during the GFC, regression results provide evidence to accept this hypothesis for the Euro-Continental context and reject it for the Anglo-American context.

Regarding the legal and regulatory environment, we used two proxies: Rule of Law as for property rights and investors' protection; and Law and Order as a proxy of law system quality. Our results reveal that the Rule of Law (*RULE_LAW*) is significantly (5%) and negatively associated with CSED in the Euro-Continental model (-0.41**), while it is positively and significantly (1%) correlated with CSED in the Anglo-American context (0.49***). Our results also show that, in both samples, *LAW_ORDER* (general quality of law system) is negatively correlated to the extent of CSED, which implies that the quantity and quality of CSR disclosure decrease when the quality of a country's law system is of good quality. This negative association was documented during the pre-crisis phase for both samples.

Table 7 Results of the GLS panel regression with robust standard error

Variables	CONTEXT	Pres-crisis		Crisis-peak		While-crisis	
		RULE_LAW	LAW_ORDER	RULE_LAW	LAW_ORDER	RULE_LAW	LAW_ORDER
CORPGOV	ANG	-0.43*** (0.045)	-0.18** (0.048)	-0.45*** (0.000)	-0.42** (0.014)	-0.32*** (0.061)	-0.34*** (0.053)
	EUR	0.35** (0.088)	0.26*** (0.061)	0.41** (0.064)	0.58*** (0.079)	0.24* (0.048)	0.35*** (0.069)
REG	ANG	0.49*** (0.001)	-0.33* (0.084)	0.78*** (0.000)	0.85* (0.057)	0.78*** (0.000)	0.51* (0.062)
	EUR	-0.88** (0.034)	-1.25** (0.054)	-0.90*** (0.000)	-1.02* (0.067)	-0.89** (0.022)	-1.88* (0.084)
CORPGOV.REG	ANG	0.16*** (0.000)	0.10* (0.077)	0.24*** (0.000)	0.42** (0.046)	0.33*** (0.001)	0.38** (0.044)
	EUR	-0.15** (0.02)	-0.11* (0.012)	-0.21** (0.031)	-0.56*** (0.002)	-0.10** (0.066)	-0.48** (0.063)
SIZE	ANG	4.06*** (0.009)	4.15*** (0.000)	3.22** (0.022)	4.03** (0.029)	3.57** (0.042)	3.25** (0.036)
	EUR	3.44** (0.012)	3.06** (0.012)	3.69* (0.031)	2.55* (0.067)	3.01* (0.066)	2.86* (0.063)

		(0.048)	(0.037)	(0.069)	(0.084)	(0.054)	(0.087)
AGE	ANG	2.56 (0.482)	2.51 (0.412)	1.65 (0.205)	1.305 (0.127)	1.84* (0.122)	1.43* (0.258)
	EUR	1.09 (0.622)	1.26 (0.154)	1.22* (0.07)	2.09* (0.084)	1.28* (0.054)	2.32* (0.068)
INDUST	ANG	0.226** (0.012)	0.245** (0.031)	0.304** (0.046)	0.331** (0.035)	0.409** (0.044)	0.381** (0.046)
	EUR	0.125** (0.022)	0.158** (0.035)	0.181** (0.031)	0.195** (0.045)	0.164** (0.028)	0.157** (0.029)
Anglo- American	Adj. R ²	23.8 %	20.4%	49.5%	35.2%	45.6%	29.01%
	F	12.32***	10.56**	14.55**	12.9**	15.99**	16.3**
Euro- Continental	Adj. R ²	28.2%	32.2%	36.8%	41.02%	38.4%	46.1%
	F	13.5**	9.66**	5.91**	11.08%	10.23***	11.36**

***= $p < 0.01$; **= $p < 0.05$; *= $p < 0.1$. CSED(ij,t)= total social and environmental score of the firm j in country i in year t; CORPGOV(i,t)= the corporate governance index for the country i in year t, as provided in the global competitiveness report; REG(i,t) = one of the indexes for the legal environment(Rule of Law or Law and Order) in country i during the year t, as described above; SIZE(ij,t) = the natural log of the total assets of firm j of country i during year t; AGE(ij,t) = the number of years since creation of firm j in country i during year t; INDUST(ij,t) = dummy variable: 1 if pollutant industry; 0 if otherwise

Contrarily, in the crisis-peak phase, we find that the general quality of the legal system of the Anglo-American context, operationalized by *LAW_ORDER*, is found positively related to CSED. However, it remained significantly and negatively correlated to CSED in the Euro-Continental, although this significance is weaker in this phase than in the pre-crisis phase. This result implies that a high-quality law system is beneficial in crisis conditions in Anglo-American countries. During the while-crisis phase, the association between CSED and *LAW_ORDER* remained positive for the Anglo-American context and negative for the Euro-Continental context.

Thus, H2 is accepted for the Euro-Continental context, and confirmed for the Anglo-American-American context. Moving to the interaction of corporate governance and the legal environment (*CORPGOV.REG*) with respect to affecting CSED.

- *REG = RULE_LAW*:

✓Pre-crisis phase: For the Euro-Continental context, *CORPGOV.REG* is significantly negative (-0.015**), indicating that the impact of country-level corporate governance on CSED is higher when the respect of property rights and investors' protection is weak. According to Ernstberger and Grüning (2013), the sign of this coefficient indicates a substitutive relationship between country-level governance and the regulatory environment with respect to affecting corporate disclosure.

However, *CORPGOV.REG* is significantly positive (0.16***) in the Anglo-American model. This result indicates that, unlike in the Euro-Continental context, the impact of country-level corporate governance of Anglo-American context countries on CSED is higher when the respect of property rights and investors protection is strong. These findings support the previous results we found (H9a). Thus, one can infer that there is a complementary effect between the level of CG in a country and its investors protection measures, with respect to the impact of CSR disclosure, in the Anglo-American context.

✓Crisis-peak and While-crisis phases: The association between *CORPGOV.REG* and *CSED* in the Euro-Continental model remains negative. This result implies that superior measures of investors protection, do not have a positive impact on CSED during the GFC, and the years right after the crisis, however, it provides evidence for a substitutive interaction between the measures of investors protection and corporate governance with respect to the effects of these factors on CSED. Regarding the Anglo-American context, the interaction between the two variables is still significantly positive (0.24***; 0.33***). The coefficient of the interaction term again provides evidence for a complementarity interaction between the investors' protection measures and corporate governance level of a context with respect to the effects of these factors on CSR disclosure. This complementarity interaction remains unchanged across the three crisis phases.

REG = LAW_ORDER:

✓Pre-crisis phase: For the Euro-Continental model, *CORPGOV.REG* is also negative and significant at the level of 10%, although this significance is weaker than in the *RULE_LAW* model. This result implies that the respect of investors' protection measures in a country better describes the CSR disclosures than the quality of the general law system. Regarding the Anglo-American model, *CORPGOV.REG* is also found positively correlated to the extent of CSED at the level of 10%.

✓Crisis-peak and While-crisis phases: the association between the quality of the law system and CSED is found negative in the Euro-Continental model and positive in the Anglo-American model. However, the significance of both coefficients is stronger than it is in the pre-crisis phase (respectively 1% and 5%). Based on the results above, H3 is accepted for the Euro-Continental context, and confirmed for the Anglo-American context.

The results of GLS regression also reveal a significant positive relationship between CSED and corporate characteristics including company size and industry. However, the analysis shows that firm age (*AGE*) in both contexts, is statistically insignificant in correlation with CSR disclosure,

during the pre-crisis phase. This result reveals that the amplified awareness on the importance of CSR to be part of a firm's strategic plan, seem to increase over time, and young entrepreneurs seem to incorporate CSR within the strategy of their new young corporations. However, during the crisis-peak phase AGE is found positive and significant at the level of 10% in the Euro-Continental model, while it remains insignificant in the Anglo- American model. Things change in the while-crisis phase, when AGE is found positive and significant in both contexts. Such result implies that during the GFC, and the years right after the age of a firm (which is a proxy for its experience) is beneficial regarding the transparency of CSR information disclosed by companies in their annual reports.

5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper is to empirically assess the impact of country-level CG, legal environment, and the interaction in-between, on CSR during the GFC. Specifically, we are interested in finding evidence of either convergence or divergence of CSR practices between the Euro-Continental and Anglo-American contexts, during the GFC. In order to achieve this objective, this paper examines the effects of context-level CG on CSED before, during and while the GFC. The contexts of our study represent a diverse sample of cultures, socio-political, legal and accounting systems.

In the pre-crisis phase, our results reveal a significant positive association between CORPGOV and CSED in the Euro-Continental context. Thus, more governance mechanisms provided by Euro-Continental companies will improve internal control and consequently increase the level of CSR disclosure, to reduce information asymmetry (Barako, Hancock, & Iza, 2006; Ho & Wong, 2001; Li, Pike, & Haniffa, 2008). Contrarily, CORPGOV is negatively associated with CSED in the Anglo-American context. According to Hassan (2010), this negative association between corporate governance and CSED could imply that there is no role for companies' responses in determining the level of disclosure in a country. Thus, the level of CSR disclosure is determined according to the degree of social pressure on companies, with regard to their social responsibility (Hassan, 2010), not to the level of CG of the country to which they belong. The degree of social pressure in a country will be determined according to the economic level and cultural values of that country. According to Ho and Wong (2001), additional governance mechanisms will lead to greater monitoring, and the need for disclosure as a form of monitoring, would then diminish. Our results reveal that the Rule of Law (RULE_LAW) is negatively associated with CSED in the Euro-Continental model, while it is positively and significantly correlated with CSED in the Anglo-American context. Such result is not

surprising since Anglo-American countries have stronger developed property rights and shareholders' protection laws, like all common law countries, more than civil law (Euro-Continental) countries. Thus, Anglo-American countries have a greater need to make more CSR disclosures than firms in Euro-Continental countries due to their diverse stakeholders' disclosure demands. The negative association documented in the Euro-Continental context especially in the crisis-peak phase suggests that continuing to increase in investors' protection may be subject to decreasing societal disclosure.

Our results also show that, in both samples, *LAW_ORDER* is negatively correlated to the extent of CSED, which implies that the quantity and quality of CSR disclosure decrease when the quality of a country's law system is better. This negative association was documented in all crisis phases. Consequently, we infer that the quality of legal and regulatory environment is beneficial in both steady-state (normal) and crisis times, and in financial adversity is consistent with research that suggests the primary institutional advantage of advanced economies, such as those comprising the countries of our samples, resides in the quality of a jurisdiction's legal framework (Ernstberger and Grüning, 2013). Regarding the interaction of corporate governance and the legal environment (*CORPGOV.REG*) with respect to affecting CSED, our results reveal a significant negative association in the Euro-Continental model. This result indicates that the impact of country-level corporate governance on CSED is higher when the respect of property rights, investors protection and general law system quality, is weak. Thus there is a substitutive relationship between country-level governance and the regulatory environment with respect to affecting CSED (Ernstberger and Grüning, 2013). Regarding the Anglo-American model, *CORPGOV.REG* is found significant and positively correlated to the extent of CSED. Such a result provides evidence that country-level governance and the regulatory environment complete one another, with respect to affecting CSED in the Anglo-American firms' annual reports. Thus, Anglo-American firms use CSR disclosure as a bonding mechanism in strong legal environments (Ernstberger and Grüning, 2013). Accordingly, we conclude that a CSR transparency-increasing effect of country-level corporate governance is more pronounced for firms in Anglo-American legal and regulatory environment, and less pronounced for firms in Euro-Continental institutional environment. By and large, the link between country-level CG and CSED is not universal; instead, it varies with the legal environment of the firm (Ernstberger and Grüning, 2013). Regarding corporate characteristics, firm size and industry type are found as significant determinants of social and environmental disclosure in steady-state and crisis conditions.

However, the age of a firm is found to be more significant in the years of crisis-peak and while the crisis. In fact, large companies that can afford additional costs of providing societal disclosure, tend to employ highly-skilled calibers and expertise and have sophisticated reporting systems to provide comprehensive disclosures. Thanks to their resources, they can keep a high level of CSR disclosure even in times of financial distress. Similarly, according to the stakeholder theory, companies operating in environmentally-sensitive industries are more likely to disclose information about their environmental performance. In addition, they are under stakeholders' pressure for more social and environmental information as a means of addressing their societal concerns. Even during the GFC, these demands might get louder especially when these firms try to focus more on their financial matters. The age of a company is found not linked to the extent of CSED in both contexts during the pre-crisis phase. However, this association turned out to be more significant during the crisis-peak and while-crisis phases. In fact, during the GFC, older firms try to maintain their good level of reputation and show their care about social and environmental matters via extensive disclosures. Consequently, these older firms prove they reached the point of "CSR maturity", and even in times of crisis, their beliefs on the importance of CSR remain unchanged, and are translated into more disclosures. These results show that the traditional determinants of CSED are not universal; they rather change across time and space.

Like every work, our study has a number of limitations. In our analysis, we did not consider CSR information included in the stand-alone reports and just focused on annual reports. Nowadays, separate CSR reports include more detailed information on social and environmental activities that are certified by independent auditors. Furthermore, there might have been content analysis issues associated with the level of subjectivity involved in the coding process. Not to mention that the data was extracted manually from the firms' annual reports (almost 1400 reports), which increases the probability of error and omission. The presented limitations could be overcome in future research.

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Annex .A1 Environmental Disclosure Checklist (41 items)

<p style="text-align: center;">Economic factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Past and present equipment investments in pollution control• Costs of past and present operating equipment for pollution control• Estimated investment in equipment for pollution control• Estimated future operating costs for pollution control• Funding for equipment for pollution control• Environmental Debts• Provision for pollution risk• Provision for litigation• Provision for expenses (eg rehabilitation facilities.)
<p style="text-align: center;">Laws and Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Litigation (actual and potential)• Fines• Orders to comply• Corrective Actions• incidents• Future legislation or future regulations
<p style="text-align: center;">Pollution standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emission of air pollutants• Spills• Solid Waste Management• Control of installation and process• Compliance• Noise and odors
<p style="text-align: center;">Sustainable Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conservation of natural resources• Recycling• Information on the protection of fauna and flora
<p style="text-align: center;">Site Restoration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sites• Efforts rehabilitation (current and potential)• Potential liability related to the restoration• Spills:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Number

- Nature
- Reduction Efforts
- Debts (current and potential)

Environmental management:

- Environmental policies and awareness of the company for the environment
- Environmental Management System
- Environmental Audits
- Goals and Targets
- Awards
- Department, group, service affected to the environment
- ISO 14000
- Involvement of the firm in the development of environmental standards
- Involvement in environmental organizations (e.g. industry committees)
- Joint projects with other companies on environmental management

Annex A2 Social Disclosure Checklist (36 items)

Community involvement:

- Community programs (health & education)
- Canteen, Transportation, and crèches for the employees' children
- Charitable donations / sponsorships
- Donations to the charity, arts, sports, etc
- Establishment of Educational Institution (s)
- Medical Establishments
- Rehabilitation Programs
- Relations with local population
- Social welfare
- Seminars and conferences
- Parks and Gardens
- Participation in government social campaigns
- Political donations
- Public Hall and/or Auditorium

Human resource:

- Accident information /statistics/Time lost to injuries
- Consultation with employee
- Company's relationship with trade unions
- Discussion of employee welfare
- Employment of disabled and minority groups
- Employee training in organization's ethical issue and anti corruption policies
- Holiday, vacation or recreation activities for employees
- Information for Day Care, maternity leave etc
- Information regarding employee workplace health & safety
- Profit sharing / bonus scheme policy
- Provision of training to employee
- Reduction or elimination of pollutants, irritants, or hazards in the work environment
- Sponsoring educational conferences, seminars or art exhibitions

Customer Disclosure:

- Who are the major customers

- Improvement to customer service
- Customer awards/ratings received
- Customer health, safety or security

Product Or Service Disclosure:

- Discussion of major types of products/activities
- Product Safety
- Quality certification for product (ISO)/product related activities
- Research projects set up by the company to improve its product/ service in any way
- Safety of the company's product