Corporate Social Responsibility Consistency: Moral Sensemaking from Top Management Team to Online Social Media

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Background

- **Corporate social responsibility (CSR)** has been proposed for 70 years and become an essential topic (Dutot et al. 2016; Garriga and Melé 2004; Bowen 1953).

- Debate about **authentic intention** of company engagement in CSR (Basu and Palazzo 2008).

- **Online social media** becomes a vital communication channel for stakeholder management and CSR information dissemination (Gómez-Carrasco et al. 2021).

Research Question

- Any difference between top management team (TMT) and social media personnels in addressing CSR?

- Can we find a reliable inference for authentic CSR engagement?

Literature Review

- Organizational character and CSR sensemaking (Levinson 1997; Basu and Palazzo 2008).

- Consistency: strategic consistency and internal consistency (Basu and Palazzo 2008).

- CSR sensemaking: moral sensemaking and instrumental sensemaking (Humphreys and Brown 2008).

- Firm-generated content (FGC) and CSR-related issues in online social media (Lee et al. 2013; Balasubramanian et al. 2021; Gómez-Carrasco et al. 2021; Saxton et al. 2021; Nasr et al. 2022; Jha and Verma 2023).

Hypotheses

- H1: The moral sensemaking in TMT letters is <u>positively</u> associated with the moral sensemaking in social media posts.

- H2: For companies that issue standalone CSR report, the moral sensemaking in social media posts is <u>more</u> than those who don't.

- H3: Given the same level of moral sensemaking in TMT letters and social media posts, the consistency of moral sensemaking in TMT letters and social media posts is <u>positively</u> associated with CSR activity.

Research Method and Data Collection

- Multi-method strategy
  - Text analysis
  - Fixed-effect regression

- Data
  - Top management team (TMT) letters addressing CSR issues (Elizabeth 2021)
  - Firm-generated content from tweets (Chen et al. 2021)
  - ESG Metric (Bruna et al. 2022)

Moral Sensemaking Measure

- Identified moral sensemaking portions with qualitative coding analysis

- Identified moral topics with Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) topic model

- Developed moral sensemaking dictionary

- Moral sensemaking metric for CSR consistency in TMT and social media

$$Moral_{CSR} = \frac{Moral_{TMT} + Moral_{SM}}{|Moral_{TMT} - Moral_{SM}|}$$

Contributions

- CSR communication: relationship between TMT letter and social media posts

- Unveil the impact of CSR communication consistency on CSR engagement

- Approach authentic intention of CSR through moral sensemaking

- Contribution to literature
  - Management
  - Business ethics
  - Online social media research in IS.