TJSS
İSTANBUL TOPKAPI ÜNİVERSİTESİ
ISTANBUL TOPKAPI UNIVERSITY
Topkapı Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
Topkapi Journal of Social Sciences
Topkapı Journal of Social Science vol.4, no.1, 2025

Theoretical Article/Teorik Makale

Exploring the Interconnection of CSR, Ethics, and Corporate Governance

Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk, Etik ve Kurumsal Yönetim Arasındaki Bağlantının Araştırılması

Irmak YOLCU [1]

https://doi.org/10.15659/tjss.2025.002

ABSTRACT

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) phenomenon has sparked ongoing debates over its interpretation, the predominant types of CSR practiced in the industry, and the outcomes of enterprises' engagement in socially responsible activities.

This paper explores the intricate relationship between CSR, ethics, and Corporate Governance (CG) within the context of modern business practices. CSR encompasses voluntary actions taken by businesses to integrate social, environmental, and ethical considerations into their operations and decision-making processes. Ethics, on the other hand, pertains to the principles or standards of conduct that govern individual and organizational behavior, guiding individuals in distinguishing right from wrong. Corporate governance refers to the system of processes, practices, and structures through which corporations are directed and controlled. While these concepts represent distinct aspects of organizational behavior and management, they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

Strong corporate governance practices can facilitate CSR engagement by providing oversight and accountability mechanisms, while ethical leadership and a culture of integrity are critical components of effective corporate governance. Furthermore, CSR initiatives often involve ethical considerations, as companies navigate complex dilemmas related to sustainability, human rights, and social justice. By integrating CSR into their corporate governance frameworks, organizations can enhance transparency, stakeholder engagement, and long-term value creation. This paper underscores the importance of embracing a holistic approach to corporate sustainability and governance, contributing to a more equitable and sustainable future for all stakeholders. This paper also indicates how companies should learn the intersection of CSR, ethics and corporate governance and create sustainable company practices while creating stakeholder trust businesses can create fairer and sustainable future for all stakeholders.

Keywords: *Corporate social responsibility, ethics, corporate governance*

---

[1]Uzm, Bağımsız Araştırmacı, irmakyolcu@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0001-5742-95354

Received/Başvuru: 24.04.2024; Accepted/Kabul: 08.11.2024

ÖZ

Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk (KSS) olgusu, yorumlanması, sektörde uygulanan yaygın KSS türleri ve işletmelerin sosyal sorumluluk faaliyetlerine katılımının sonuçları konusunda tartışmalara yol açmaya devam ediyor.

Bu makale, modern iş uygulamaları bağlamında KSS, etik ve kurumsal yönetim (CG) arasındaki karmaşık ilişkiyi incelemektedir. KSS, işletmelerin sosyal, çevresel ve etik hususları faaliyetlerine ve karar alma süreçlerine entegre etmek için gerçekleştirdiği gönüllü eylemleri kapsar. Öte yandan etik, bireysel ve kurumsal davranışı yönlendiren ve bireylere doğruyu yanlıştan ayırma konusunda rehberlik eden davranış ilkeleri veya standartları ile ilgilidir. Kurumsal yönetim, şirketlerin yönlendirildiği ve kontrol edildiği süreçler, uygulamalar ve yapılar sistemini ifade eder. Bu kavramlar örgütsel davranış ve yönetimin farklı yönlerini temsil ederken, birbirleriyle bağlantılıdır ve karşılıklı olarak güçlenirler.

Güçlü kurumsal yönetim uygulamaları, gözetim ve hesap verebilirlik mekanizmaları sağlayarak KSS katılımını kolaylaştırabilir; etik liderlik ve dürüstlük kültürü ise etkili kurumsal yönetimin kritik bileşenleridir. Dahası, şirketler sürdürülebilirlik, insan hakları ve sosyal adaletle ilgili karmaşık ikilemlerle uğraşırken, KSS girişimleri sıklıkla etik hususları içerir. Kuruluşlar, KSS'yi kurumsal yönetim çerçevelerine entegre ederek şeffaflığı, paydaş katılımını ve uzun vadeli değer yaratmayı geliştirebilir. Bu belge, kurumsal sürdürülebilirlik ve yönetişime bütünsel bir yaklaşım benimsemenin, tüm paydaşlar için daha adil ve sürdürülebilir bir geleceğe katkıda bulunmanın öneminin altını çizmektedir. Bu belge aynı zamanda şirketlerin KSS, etik ve kurumsal yönetimin kesişimini nasıl öğrenmeleri gerektiğini ve paydaş güveni yaratırken sürdürülebilir şirket uygulamaları yaratmaları gerektiğini de göstermektedir. İşletmeler tüm paydaşlar için daha adil ve sürdürülebilir bir gelecek yaratabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk, etik ve kurumsal yönetim, etik*

1. Introduction

In today's fast-changing business landscape, the intricate relationships between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Ethics, and Corporate Governance (CG) have become increasingly central to discussions about sustainable business practices. These interconnected concepts play a pivotal role in shaping organizational behavior and determining how businesses interact with stakeholders. As companies navigate the complexities of operating in a globalized world, understanding the dynamics among CSR, Ethics, and CG is critical for fostering responsible conduct, maintaining stakeholder trust and creating long-term value.

The significance of CSR, Ethics, and CG has been amplified by a recent surge in corporate scandals, which has led to increased scrutiny from stakeholders and regulatory bodies. This has emphasized the importance of aligning business practices with robust ethical frameworks and governance structures. Stakeholders, including investors, customers, and employees, now demand higher standards of accountability, transparency, and ethical conduct from organizations. Companies that fail to adhere to these principles risk losing credibility and competitive advantage in the market.

It is essential to view CSR, Ethics, and CG not as isolated concepts but as interdependent constructs that together shape the ethical and governance landscape of organizations. By clustering these constructs, we can better understand how they collectively contribute to corporate performance and stakeholder trust. Companies with strong ethical practices tend to have more robust CSR initiatives and sound governance structures, leading to an enhanced organizational reputation and financial outcomes.

Corporate Governance (CG), ethics, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are interdependent constructs that shape organizational behavior. CG involves board structure, transparency, accountability, risk management, and stakeholder engagement, ensuring governance practices align with ethical principles. Ethics encompasses leadership integrity, decision-making processes, organizational culture, and codes of ethics that uphold organizational actions. CSR initiatives focus on environmental sustainability, social contributions, employee welfare, and stakeholder-centric approaches. These constructs overlap through ethical governance, integrating transparency and ethical leadership, sustainable corporate practices that address environmental concerns, and ethical CSR, ensuring that CSR initiatives are driven by genuine ethics rather than reputational motives. Together, these clusters form a comprehensive framework that enables businesses to create long-term value.

Understanding the relationships between CSR, ethics, and CG requires examining their theoretical foundations. Corporate Governance (CG) is primarily concerned with how organizations are directed and controlled, ensuring transparency, accountability, and risk management to protect stakeholders' interests (Cadbury, 1992). Scholars such as Aguilera & Cuervo-Cazurra (2004) emphasize CG's role in mitigating agency problems, improving performance, and maintaining stakeholder trust. Strong corporate governance practices, including independent board structures and robust risk management, are key to maintaining investor confidence and aligning management's actions with shareholder goals (Aguilera & Cuervo-Cazurra, 2004).

Ethics, on the other hand, focuses on the moral principles guiding decision-making processes and leadership practices within organizations. Ethical leadership, organizational culture, and codes of ethics form the core ethical framework that fosters integrity and fairness in business operations (Ferrell & Fraedrich, 2015). CSR initiatives, meanwhile, aim to ensure that companies operate sustainably, contributing positively to society by addressing environmental and social concerns (Carroll, 1979). Together, these constructs shape the ethical landscape of organizations, influencing corporate behavior and stakeholder relationships.

These concepts are deeply intertwined, with corporate governance serving as the framework that structures ethical behavior and CSR initiatives. Companies that integrate CSR into their governance structures tend to have better risk management and reputation. Aguilera et al. (2007) highlight that firms with ethical governance structures are more likely to engage in sustainable and socially responsible activities, creating long-term value for stakeholders.

To fully grasp these concepts, it is essential to explore their key dimensions in detail. A comprehensive understanding requires examining the underlying principles, such as how Corporate Governance (CG) provides a framework for ethical behavior, while Ethics shapes decision-making and organizational culture. Meanwhile, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) connects a company's commitment to societal and environmental issues. By investigating each aspect—governance structures, ethical leadership, and CSR initiatives—one can better appreciate their interdependencies and overall impact on organizational sustainability and stakeholder trust.

2. Corporate Governance, Ethics And Corporate Socıal Responsibility

Corporate governance has these four aspects;

- **Board Structure and Effectiveness:** Focuses on the composition, independence, and responsibilities of the board of directors in monitoring and guiding management practices.

- **Transparency and Accountability:** Mechanisms ensuring that corporate actions and decisions are visible and comprehensible to stakeholders, fostering trust and reducing agency problems.
- **Risk Management:** Systems in place to identify, assess, and mitigate risks within the organization, including financial, operational, and reputational risks.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Strategies for involving and responding to stakeholders, ensuring that their interests are considered in decision-making processes.

Ethics Constructs are ethical leadership, decision-making processes, organizational culture and codes of ethics and compliance programs.

- **Ethical Leadership:** Leadership practices that emphasize integrity, fairness, and responsibility in guiding organizational behavior.
- **Decision-Making Processes:** The ethical principles that underpin corporate decision-making, including fairness, honesty, and respect for stakeholders' rights.
- **Organizational Culture:** The values and norms that promote ethical behavior within the organization, shaping how employees and leaders interact and make decisions.
- **Codes of Ethics and Compliance Programs:** Formalized policies and training programs that set standards for ethical conduct and ensure adherence to laws and regulations.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) constructs are environmental sustainability, social contributions, employee welfare and stakeholder-centric approaches.

- **Environmental Sustainability:** Corporate initiatives aimed at reducing environmental impact, such as energy efficiency, waste management, and sustainable sourcing.
- **Social Contributions:** Activities related to philanthropy, community development, and supporting social causes that benefit society at large.
- **Employee Welfare:** Programs that ensure fair labor practices, employee well-being, and opportunities for professional development.
- **Stakeholder-Centric Approaches:** Practices that focus on creating value for a wide range of stakeholders, including customers, employees, suppliers, and communities.

There are some overlapping areas of these three constructs. These are listed below;

- **Ethical Governance:** Overlap between Corporate Governance and Ethics involves governance practices that emphasize transparency, accountability, and ethical leadership. Boards and management are responsible for setting ethical standards and ensuring they are followed.
- **Sustainable Corporate Practices:** The intersection of CG and CSR involves implementing governance structures that promote sustainable business practices, addressing environmental and social concerns while meeting stakeholder expectations.
- **Ethical CSR:** This overlap between Ethics and CSR focuses on ensuring that corporate social initiatives are driven by genuine ethical considerations, not just for compliance or reputational purposes, but for real societal impact.

In clustering these constructs, Corporate Governance serves as the framework that structures ethical behavior and CSR initiatives, while ethics forms the moral foundation that drives responsible decision-making. CSR, in turn, represents the tangible outcomes of ethical governance in contributing to societal and environmental well-being. These clusters are interdependent, contributing to a holistic view of how organizations can create long-term value for all stakeholders.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest and scrutiny surrounding the relationship between CSR, ethics, and corporate governance. As businesses increasingly recognize the significance of operating in a socially responsible and ethical manner, scholars and practitioners alike have sought to understand the intricate connections between these concepts. It is clear that these elements do not function in isolation but rather intersect and influence one another in complex ways. As such, a comprehensive examination of these relationships is essential for both academic purposes and practical application.

In the next section, the literature review aims to provide an overview of existing research on the relationship between CSR, ethics, and corporate governance, examining how these elements intersect and influence one another within the context of modern business practices. CSR, ethics, and corporate governance are interconnected aspects of modern business management. Understanding the relationships between these concepts is crucial for fostering sustainable business practices and maintaining stakeholder trust. Literature review aims to explore the evolving dynamics and interplay among CSR, ethics, and corporate governance in contemporary business environments.

In order to be competitive, companies should be running in accordance with good corporate governance practices while not breaking the codes of ethics. Adhering to ethical principles is the correct approach for conducting business, and it should permeate all aspects of corporate governance and guide every decision and action to be taken by the board. Ethical considerations should align with stakeholder and employee rights, ensuring fairness and integrity in all dealings. Ethical choices are integral to the core business strategies pursued by boards and guide the direction of the organization as a whole in achieving its objectives. The contribution of organizations to corporate governance and CSR rules cannot be denied. Moreover, organizations play a pivotal role in demonstrating adherence to ethics, corporate governance, and CSR rules and regulations. These rules continue to permeate various levels of organizations, spanning different sizes, capabilities, and motivations worldwide. Also, global companies are practicing the rules of ethics in their best practices in means of respecting the employees, stakeholders and competitors and also becoming more competitive.

Furthermore, the contributions of organizations to good governance rules have had various impacts on economies. Shareholders are a paramount concern for companies, and their confidence has been diminishing in organizations that do not uphold ethical standards and adhere to corporate governance rules. Also, public disclosure has affected the market value of these companies extremely. With the rise of globalization, companies experience increased deterritorialization and reduced governmental oversight, necessitating greater accountability (Crane & Matten, 2007). Consequently, corporate governance has become a crucial element in managing organizations within the current global and intricate environment. CSR is one of the important challenges with regards to the competitive edge for the organizations especially for today's fast changing world. On the other hand, ethics has been mostly neglected in a lot of research in order to classify the companies' prestige in the global competitive world. Over time, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has undergone thorough examination from various perspectives, including normative, institutional, stakeholder, integrative, political, and transactional viewpoints. This multifaceted analysis has greatly enriched our understanding of CSR, offering insights into its complexities. However, despite the breadth of viewpoints, CSR remains a concept subject to ongoing debate and contestation (Gond and Moon, 2011). Furthermore, CSR is commonly defined as “actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interest of the firm and that which is required by the law” (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). This broad definition highlights the diverse motivations driving CSR initiatives within companies. Indeed, the relationship between CSR and firm performance has been a significant focus of research, with numerous studies indicating a strong correlation between CSR activities and financial outcomes (Waddock & Graves, 1997; McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; Orlitzky et al., 2003).

3. Literature Review

The literature highlights their evolving role in contemporary business practices. Scholars have emphasized that robust governance structures are crucial for organizations to maintain transparency and accountability while promoting ethical decision-making (Hillman & Dalziel, 2003). Several studies show a strong correlation between CSR initiatives and improved corporate financial performance (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001), highlighting CSR’s strategic importance for organizations seeking to enhance their reputation and competitiveness. Ethics has also been extensively studied, particularly in the context of leadership and organizational culture. Ethical leadership is essential for fostering a culture of integrity and ensuring that corporate governance is grounded in fairness and responsibility (Treviño & Nelson, 2016).

This literature review aims to provide an overview of existing research on the relationship between CSR, ethics, and corporate governance, examining how these elements intersect and influence one another within the context of modern business practices. The review seeks to fill a gap in the literature by not only exploring the theoretical underpinnings of CSR, ethics, and CG but also providing a conceptual framework that integrates these aspects within a broader understanding of sustainable business management.

At the same time, the integration of CSR, ethics, and CG into a cohesive framework has gained scholarly attention. Recent studies suggest that businesses that adopt ethical governance structures are better positioned to implement sustainable practices and meet the growing demands of stakeholders (Waddock & Graves, 1997). In sum, the literature demonstrates the importance of viewing CSR, ethics, and CG as interconnected constructs that collectively influence corporate behavior and contribute to long-term value creation. This conceptual model will help illuminate the interactions among CSR, ethics, and governance and guide future research in examining these complex relationships.

The escalation of corporate scandals has underscored the significant impact stakeholders wield on corporate growth and financial prosperity. In the contemporary corporate landscape, stakeholders harbor lofty expectations, demanding adherence to corporate governance standards and regulations as a prerequisite for success in the competitive business arena. To remain competitive, companies should align their operations with robust corporate governance practices while adhering to strict ethical standards.

Adhering to ethical principles is not only the correct approach for conducting business but also should permeate all aspects of corporate governance and guide every decision and action to be taken by the board. Ethical considerations should align with stakeholder and employee rights, ensuring fairness and integrity in all dealings. Ethical choices are integral to the core business strategies pursued by boards and guide the direction of the organization as a whole in achieving its objectives. The contribution of organizations to corporate governance and CSR rules cannot be denied. Furthermore, organizations play a pivotal role in demonstrating adherence to ethics, corporate governance, and CSR rules and regulations. Recent scholarly literature has extensively explored the interconnected dynamics of Corporate Governance (CG), Ethics, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), emphasizing their critical roles in shaping modern business practices and organizational behavior. These concepts are pivotal in guiding how companies operate, interact with stakeholders, and contribute to societal well-being.

4. Conceptual Framework Model: Corporate Governance, Ethics, And CSR

This study tries to investigate and explore the relationships between CSR, Ethics and Corporate Governance with a descriptive approach. In depth literature interview is carried out to explore the relationships between these constructs in literature. The main constructs and some of the overlapping sub-constructs are given below.

1. **Corporate Governance**
   - Governance structure
   - Transparency and accountability
   - Protection and engagement of stakeholders
2. **Ethics**
   - Ethical leadership
   - Organizational culture and values
   - Ethical principles in decision-making processes
3. **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**
   - Social responsibilities
   - Environmental sustainability
   - Economic contribution and societal benefits

This conceptual framework model illustrates how Corporate Governance, Ethics, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) interact and create value together. This model demonstrates how companies integrate governance practices, ethical values, and social responsibilities to enhance sustainability and stakeholder relations.

Recent literature on corporate governance, ethics, and corporate responsibility has emphasized the evolving landscape of business practices and the imperative for organizations to prioritize ethical conduct and social responsibility. Scholars and practitioners have explored various dimensions of corporate governance, including board effectiveness, executive compensation, and shareholder activism, highlighting the importance of transparency, accountability, and stakeholder engagement.

Furthermore, there has been an increasing focus on integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors into corporate decision-making processes. This trend reflects a broader acknowledgment of the interdependence between business operations and societal well-being, prompting companies to embrace sustainable practices and make positive contributions to the communities in which they operate.

Additionally, recent literature has examined the role of technology in shaping corporate governance practices, particularly in areas such as data privacy, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence governance. With the increasing digitalization of business operations and artificial intelligence there is a heightened awareness of the ethical implications and risks associated with technological advancements, prompting organizations to develop robust governance frameworks to address these challenges. Overall, contemporary literature on corporate governance, ethics, and corporate responsibility underscores the need for organizations to embrace ethical leadership, foster a culture of integrity, and integrate responsible business practices into their strategies to create long-term value for both shareholders and society.

CSR refers to a company's commitment to operate in an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable manner while balancing the interests of various stakeholders. Recent research emphasizes the strategic importance of CSR in enhancing corporate reputation, attracting investors, and mitigating risks. Scholars have examined the impact of CSR initiatives on financial performance, organizational legitimacy, and stakeholder relationships, highlighting the potential benefits of responsible business practices.

Corporate governance pertains to the systems, processes, and structures through which organizations are directed and controlled. It encompasses mechanisms aimed at ensuring accountability, transparency, and the protection of stakeholders' interests. The seminal work of Cadbury (1992) highlights the significance of effective corporate governance in mitigating agency problems, enhancing organizational performance, and maintaining stakeholder confidence.

Corporate governance refers to the system of processes, practices, and structures through which corporations are directed and controlled (OECD, 2015). Effective corporate governance mechanisms are essential for ensuring accountability, transparency, and integrity within organizations (Mallin, 2013). Scholars have investigated the relationship between corporate governance and various organizational outcomes, including financial performance, risk management, and stakeholder engagement (Aguilera & Cuervo-Cazurra, 2004; Hillman & Dalziel, 2003). The role of corporate governance in promoting ethical behavior and CSR engagement has also been a subject of interest among researchers (Aguilera et al., 2007; Solan & Solomon, 2020). Corporate governance can be defined as a framework encompassing laws, regulations, and established business practices that govern the relationship between corporate managers, entrepreneurs, and those who provide resources to corporations within a market economy (OECD, 2001).

Corporate Governance encompasses the systems and processes through which organizations are directed and controlled. It includes mechanisms aimed at ensuring transparency, accountability, and the protection of stakeholders' interests (Cadbury, 1992). Effective CG structures are fundamental for minimizing agency problems, enhancing organizational performance, and maintaining stakeholder confidence (Aguilera & Cuervo-Cazurra, 2004). Scholars argue that strong CG practices contribute to ethical conduct within organizations by defining clear roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes (Hillman & Dalziel, 2003).

Ethics within the context of business refers to the moral principles and values that guide organizational conduct and decision-making processes. Ethical considerations such as honesty, fairness, and integrity are essential for fostering trust among stakeholders and enhancing organizational reputation (Velasquez et al., 2011). Ethical leadership plays a crucial role in promoting a culture of integrity within organizations, influencing how decisions are made and implemented (Treviño & Nelson, 2016). Ethical behavior is seen as a prerequisite for sustainable business practices, aligning corporate actions with societal expectations and legal requirements (Ferrell & Fraedrich, 2015).

CSR refers to the ethical obligation of companies to contribute positively to society while conducting business. Companies are expected to go beyond legal obligations and proactively address social, environmental, and economic issues. Carroll (1979) proposed a widely accepted framework for CSR, identifying economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) involves a company's commitment to operate in an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable manner while balancing the interests of various stakeholders (Carroll, 1979). CSR initiatives extend beyond legal obligations to address societal and environmental challenges, encompassing activities such as philanthropy, environmental stewardship, and ethical labor practices (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

CSR's impact on firm performance has been widely debated, with research suggesting that CSR practices can enhance corporate reputation and financial performance by fostering stakeholder trust (Waddock & Graves, 1997; McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). Scholars argue that integrating CSR into business strategies not only enhances corporate reputation and attractiveness to investors but also fosters long-term sustainability and gives competitive advantage (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012).

Ethics refers to the principles governing right and wrong behavior. Ethical leadership, decision-making, and organizational culture are essential in shaping the behavior of employees and guiding corporate decisions. Treviño et al. (2003) emphasize that ethical behavior in companies builds trust with stakeholders and contributes to long-term organizational sustainability. Ethical frameworks often involve codes of ethics and compliance programs to ensure that businesses act with integrity and fairness.

The literature review employs a comprehensive methodological approach to synthesize existing research on the relationships among CG, Ethics, and CSR. In studies focusing on the impact of CG mechanisms on ethical behavior, CSR initiatives, and organizational outcomes were prioritized. Meta-analytical studies were also included to provide a quantitative synthesis of empirical findings across multiple studies, offering insights into the overall effect sizes and trends in the literature.

The synthesis of findings from diverse sources provided a nuanced understanding of how CG practices, ethical considerations, and CSR strategies interact within organizational contexts. By critically analyzing empirical studies and theoretical perspectives, the literature review identifies key themes, theoretical gaps, and methodological limitations in current research.

Meta-Analysis has emerged as a valuable methodological approach to synthesize and analyze findings from existing research on the relationships among CG, Ethics, and CSR. Meta-analytical studies have examined the impact of ethical leadership on organizational performance, finding positive associations with employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, and financial outcomes (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Similarly, meta-analyses focusing on CSR have highlighted its positive effects on corporate financial performance and stakeholder relations, underscoring its strategic importance for business success (Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Orlitzky et al., 2003).

The integration of these concepts into organizational frameworks highlights their collective impact on corporate behavior and performance. Companies that prioritize ethical leadership, effective governance structures, and proactive CSR initiatives are better positioned to navigate complex business environments, mitigate risks, and create value for stakeholders and society at large.

Corporate governance serves as the foundation for how corporations are directed and controlled. It encompasses a framework of rules, practices, and processes designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and integrity within organizations. Effective corporate governance mechanisms are essential for maintaining stakeholders' confidence in the company's operations and promoting ethical behavior. Scholars have extensively studied the impact of corporate governance on various organizational outcomes, including financial performance, risk management, and stakeholder engagement.

Rezaee (2009) identified corporate governance as "a process through which shareholders induce management to act in their interest, providing a degree of confidence that is necessary for capital markets to function effectively". La Porta et al., (2000) stated that corporate governance is the set of systems by which outside investors preserve themselves against appropriation by insiders, i.e. the managers and controlling shareholders.

Corporate governance structures typically include a board of directors responsible for overseeing the company's management and strategic direction. The board plays a critical role in setting corporate policies, monitoring performance, and ensuring compliance with legal and ethical standards. Additionally, corporate governance frameworks often include mechanisms for shareholder participation and protection of minority interests.

Corporate governance serves as the cornerstone of organizational oversight and management. It encompasses a framework of principles, processes, and structures designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and integrity in corporate decision-making. Effective corporate governance mechanisms are essential for aligning organizational objectives with stakeholder interests, mitigating risks, and fostering sustainable growth.

Moreover, at the heart of corporate governance lies the board of directors, entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing the company's affairs and safeguarding shareholder interests. The board plays a pivotal role in setting strategic direction, appointing executive leadership, and monitoring performance. Moreover, corporate governance frameworks often include mechanisms for shareholder participation, such as annual general meetings and proxy voting, to ensure accountability and transparency.

"Ethics" commonly refers to rules or principles that define right and wrong aspects. It can be defined as: "Ethics is a fundamental trait which one adopts and follows as a guiding principle or basic dharma in one's life. It implies moral conduct and honorable behavior on the part of an individual. Ethics in most cases run parallel to law and shows due consideration to others' rights and interests in a civilized society. Compassion, on the other hand, may induce a person to give more than what ethics might demand." In the present framework of the topic of organizational ethics is presumed to have a specific significance. Numerous studies have been conducted to underscore the significance of CSR. As companies maintain interdependent relationships with the societies in which they operate, their approach towards stakeholders is regarded as imperative. Ethics form the moral compass that guides individual and organizational behavior within the business realm. In the context of business ethics, scholars explore the principles, values, and norms that govern ethical decision-making and conduct in organizational settings. Ethical considerations are paramount in shaping corporate culture, fostering trust among stakeholders, and enhancing organizational reputation. Ethics within the context of business refers to the moral principles and values that guide organizational conduct and decision-making processes. Ethical considerations encompass a wide range of issues, including honesty, integrity, fairness, and accountability. Business ethics scholars, such as Velasquez et al. (2011), emphasize the importance of ethical behavior in enhancing organizational reputation, fostering trust among stakeholders, and promoting long-term sustainability.

Ethical leadership is instrumental in promoting a culture of integrity and accountability within organizations. Leaders who prioritize ethical principles demonstrate a commitment to doing what is right, even when faced with difficult decisions or conflicting interests. By championing ethical conduct and fostering a culture of transparency and fairness, organizations can cultivate a strong ethical framework that permeates all levels of the organization. Ethics serve as the guiding principles that govern individual and organizational behavior. Within the realm of business ethics, scholars explore the ethical responsibilities of corporations, ethical decision-making processes, and the influence of ethical leadership. Ethical considerations are integral to CSR, as companies are expected to uphold ethical standards in their interactions with stakeholders and society at large.

Ethical behavior within organizations involves adhering to moral principles and standards of conduct, even in the face of conflicting interests or pressures. Ethical leadership is vital for fostering a culture of integrity and ethical decision-making across the organization. Leaders who prioritize ethics demonstrate a commitment to doing what is right, even when it may not be the most financially advantageous option.

Ethics are principles or standards of conduct that govern individual and organizational behavior, guiding individuals in distinguishing right from wrong (Treviño & Nelson, 2016). Within the realm of business ethics, scholars have examined the ethical responsibilities of corporations, ethical decision-making processes, and the impact of ethical leadership on organizational outcomes (Ferrell & Fraedrich, 2015; Treviño et al., 2003). Ethical considerations are integral to CSR, as businesses are expected to uphold ethical standards in their interactions with stakeholders and society at large.

Moreover, interest in this subject is growing, driven by the acknowledgment that the absence of ethics can significantly undermine organizational performance and capabilities (Cleek & Leonard, 1998). Cleek & Leonard (1998) conducted research on this topic, utilizing a survey instrument applied to graduate and undergraduate students. Cleek & Leonard (1998) indicated "codes of ethics are not powerful enough tools to affect ethical decision-making behavior". The authors posited that this may be attributed to the notion that the mere creation of Codes of Ethics (CE) is insufficient. CE merely serves as a means of introducing an ethical culture to corporate employees. Many developments in business ethics have been initiated by pioneer Thomas Donaldson. One development is the implementation of social contract theory to address questions about the responsibilities of business actors (Donaldson 1982; Dunfee & Donaldson, 1995, 1999).

The business actors are companies which are following the codes of ethics in daily business operations. This paradigm has attracted an extensive interest among scholars (Wempe, 2009a). In Corporations and Morality, Donaldson enhanced one of the most maintained and extensive statements about the aim and obligations of for-profit corporations. There are two targets that Donaldson states "even if there were a right to incorporate,", "it would fail to justify corporate existence in the sense of showing why corporations ought to exist" (Donaldson, 1982). Donaldson also states that, "We must consider not just its capacity to produce wealth, but rather the full range of its effects upon society" (Donaldson, 1982). Donaldson focuses on "indirect obligations" (Donaldson, 1982). These are requirements not officially described by current agreements and institutions. The point is that there are obligations that corporations ought to respect even if not institutionally needed. The ethical approach views ethics as a collection of rules and principles aimed at fostering accountable behavior. This perspective perceives ethics as integral to business practices. Arjoon (2005) contends that "effective corporate governance can be achieved by adopting a set of principles and best practices." Additionally, companies must remain profitable to sustain their presence in the industry. However, while companies pursue profits, it is essential that they operate within ethical boundaries (Arjoon, 2005). Implementing mechanisms for ethical compliance can indeed enhance corporate reputation and contribute to the stability and growth of organizations. Such measures foster confidence both internally and externally.

CSR indicates the actions that companies take to integrate social, environmental, and ethical considerations into their operations and decision-making processes (Carroll, 1979). Research indicates that CSR initiatives can significantly impact multiple stakeholders, encompassing employees, customers, communities, and the environment (Margolis & Walsh, 2003). Scholars have explored the motivations behind CSR engagement, the benefits and challenges associated with CSR implementation, and the role of CSR in enhancing corporate reputation and competitive advantage (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Porter & Kramer, 2006).

The role of businesses in society has long been a topic of concern (Warren, 2003). However, to date, a definitive determination of this aspect has not been reached, as business communities and international civil societies have yet to arrive at a consensus regarding the overall duties of companies to society (Hopkins, 2004; Snider et al., 1996). Moreover, defining CSR is complex and dependent upon situational factors, leading to a multitude of diverse definitions for CSR. CSR refers to a company's commitment to operating in a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable manner while balancing the interests of various stakeholders. CSR involves initiatives aimed at addressing societal and environmental challenges beyond legal obligations. It encompasses a wide range of activities, including philanthropy, environmental sustainability, ethical labor practices, and community development. CSR has strategic importance for organizations seeking to enhance their corporate reputation, attract investors, and mitigate risks. Companies undertake CSR activities to showcase their dedication to social responsibility and to cultivate stronger relationships with stakeholders. CSR initiatives frequently entail partnering with stakeholders to tackle pressing social and environmental challenges and to generate shared value for both the company and society. CSR encompasses a company's commitment to operating in a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable manner, all while prioritizing the needs and interests of a diverse array of stakeholders.

CSR initiatives go beyond legal requirements to address societal and environmental challenges, ranging from environmental leadership to community engagement and ethical labor practices.

CSR is increasingly acknowledged as a strategic imperative for organizations aiming to bolster their corporate reputation, attract and retain talent, and foster stronger relationships with stakeholders. By integrating CSR considerations into business operations and decision-making processes, organizations can create shared value for both the company and society at large.

CSR elements encompass the economic, social, and environmental impacts of business operations, as well as how companies respond to the expectations of customers, employees, shareholders, and other stakeholders within these contexts. It is important to note that CSR is no longer limited to corporate philanthropy; instead, fulfilling social responsibilities positively impacts companies' financial performance. In this way, CSR has set up the core principles for improving suitable strategies for containing its variable views in business practice. However, CSR is a fluid concept.

The concept of CSR is characterized by its convertible and overlapping nature, making its definition somewhat ambiguous. Indeed, for some scholars, CSR is viewed as a source of competitive advantage, while others see it as a necessary response to the increasing demands of key stakeholders such as employees, investors, consumers, and environmentalists (Bagi & Lana, 2004). The interpretation of CSR varies across generations, and its practices may evolve in response to societal changes, remaining a subject of ongoing debate. In the USA, companies often prioritize philanthropy as a key aspect of CSR, while in Northern economies, fulfilling social responsibilities may involve paying taxes. Despite these differences, a universally accepted terminology for this concept has yet to be established.

The concept of CSR lacks a definitive attribution to any specific author or historical moment (Gonzalez-Perez, 2013). The European Commission identifies (CSR) as "companies acting voluntarily and beyond the law to achieve social and environmental objectives during the course of their daily business activities". Nevertheless, the understanding of the concept has evolved alongside economic and social advancements, with its modern interpretation tracing back to the 1950s. This pivotal moment in the development of CSR can be attributed to H. R. Bowen's seminal work, "Social Responsibility of the Businessman," published in 1953 (Gonzalez-Perez, 2013). Bowen argued that businessmen have a responsibility to adhere to policies and make decisions that align with the objectives and values of society.

Marsden comprehend CSR as an essence behavioral issue for companies. He indicated "CSR is not an optional add-on nor is it an act of philanthropy. A socially responsible corporation is one that runs a 22 European profitable business that takes account of all the positive and negative environmental, social and economic effects it has on society." There are four key CSR principles to organize the relationship between ethics and CG policies are identified.

These four CSR principles, as outlined by Mermod & Idowu (2014), are believed to foster improved corporate ethical practices:

1. Societal approach: This principle emphasizes the importance of prioritizing employees' interests, upholding human rights, and contributing to overall social development.

2. Economic principle: Firms should strive for efficient performance while providing the community with necessary products and services, ensuring that their operations won't cause problems for their community.

3. Environmental principle: Companies bear responsibility for their impact on natural resources, and they would be responsible for any environmental damage incurred while pursuing profit maximization and resource exploitation.

4. Stakeholder approach: This principle advocates for companies to consider and address the concerns and interests of all stakeholders involved in their operations.

According to the 2023 Global Business Ethics Survey (GBES), a significant number of employees across 42 countries reported experiencing high levels of pressure to compromise ethical standards at work. The survey revealed that workplace misconduct is on the rise globally, with employees often witnessing unethical practices. Despite the rise in observed misconduct, reporting of such incidents has also reached record levels. However, employees who report misconduct continue to face retaliation at concerning rates. Furthermore, the survey highlighted that only a small percentage of employees perceive their organizations as having a strong ethical culture, indicating ongoing challenges in creating and maintaining ethical workplace environments (Silva, 2023).

These findings suggest that while awareness of misconduct and the inclination to report it are improving, the ethical culture in many workplaces remains weak, and there is still significant work to be done to address retaliation and promote integrity in business practices (Chan et al., 2014; Trong-Tuan, 2012). Also, in a real-world study of corporate governance, CSR, and ethical behavior, a survey of 317 middle-level managers in Vietnam, conducted by Luu Trong-Tuan, found a significant relationship between corporate ethics and governance. The study, which targeted firms listed on the Ho Chi Minh City Stock Exchange, revealed that ethical principles such as the ethics of justice and legal CSR strongly influenced corporate governance practices. Moreover, ethical CSR, driven by care ethics, was shown to positively enhance governance structures. This demonstrates that firms with strong CSR initiatives and ethics training programs tend to have more robust governance mechanisms (Chan et al., 2014).

These findings emphasize the critical role of CSR and ethical considerations in shaping corporate governance, particularly in emerging markets like Vietnam, and suggest that companies which prioritize ethical behavior and social responsibility are better positioned for long-term success. This is consistent with broader studies on corporate sustainability and ethical disclosures across various regions, highlighting the global relevance of the topic (Chan et al., 2014).

The comparative study by Langlois & Schlegelmilch (1990) reveals significant differences in the content of ethics codes between the U.S. and Europe, especially concerning employee behavior, relationships with suppliers and contractors, and political interests. Additionally, variations are noted among European countries; for instance, France has a notably high percentage of codes addressing customer relations (93%), while German codes focus more on innovation and technology (60%) than those of other nations. Carasco & Singh (2003) analyzed the content and emphasis of transnational corporate ethics codes and found that these codes reflect both the interests of the firm and the issues against it, with the latter being more prominent in the codes.

There are various perspectives within the research on codes of ethics. Some scholars, such as Schwartz (2002), focus on analyzing the ethical and moral aspects of these codes, while others, like Murphy (2005), investigate the topics promoted in ethics statements for external audiences. Stohl et al. (2009) introduced a third generation of ethics codes, emphasizing corporate social responsibility and governance. Their study of the 2009 Most Admired Companies of the World indicated that many ethics codes resemble “codes of conduct” rather than purely ethical codes or “corporate social responsibility codes” (Calderon et al., 2012). These codes continue to be influenced by traditional norms related to immediate economic success, normative compliance, internal management, and sector-specific pressures. Davidson & Stevens (2013) found that when a code is endorsed by management, it increases the likelihood of fostering ethical behavior as a standard and boosting investor confidence. Garegnani et al. (2015) identified key quality drivers for assessing codes of ethics, including top management commitment, style and accessibility, whistleblowing mechanisms, stakeholder relations, compliance procedures, and legal considerations. Bodolica & Spraggon (2015) investigated disclosure trends and the content of ethics codes among publicly listed Canadian acquirers, revealing that the patterns of these codes are influenced not only by regulatory requirements but also by values promoting sustainable corporations, indicating a growing commitment to social responsibilities.

In recent years, the interrelationship between (CSR), Ethics, and Corporate Governance has garnered significant attention from scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. This literature review aims to provide an overview of existing research on the intricate dynamics and interplay among these concepts within the realm of contemporary business environments. While CSR, ethics, and corporate governance are distinct concepts, they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Strong corporate governance practices provide the foundation for effective CSR engagement by ensuring transparency, accountability, and integrity within organizations. Ethical leadership plays a crucial role in guiding decision-making processes and promoting ethical behavior throughout the organization. CSR initiatives often involve navigating complex ethical dilemmas related to sustainability, human rights, and social justice.

Scholars argue that effective corporate governance practices are essential for promoting ethical conduct and facilitating the integration of CSR into business operations (Hemingway & Maclagan, 2004). Conversely, ethical leadership and a commitment to CSR principles can contribute to the enhancement of corporate governance practices (Kaptein, 2008). Moreover, the alignment of CSR initiatives with ethical values and corporate governance principles can lead to positive outcomes for organizations, including improved reputation, stakeholder trust, and financial performance (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; Barnett, 2007). However, challenges persist in balancing the pursuit of profit with ethical considerations and societal responsibilities (Crane et al., 2008). The integration of CSR considerations into corporate governance frameworks can enhance transparency, stakeholder engagement, and long-term value creation. By aligning CSR strategies with ethical principles and corporate governance practices, organizations can show their dedication to responsible business practices and contribute to sustainable development. Research suggests that strong corporate governance practices can facilitate CSR engagement by providing the necessary oversight and accountability mechanisms (Maali et al., 2013).

Ethical leadership and a culture of integrity are also critical components of effective corporate governance, guiding decision-making processes and promoting ethical behavior throughout the organization (Brown & Caylor, 2006). Furthermore, CSR initiatives often involve ethical considerations, as companies must navigate complex ethical dilemmas related to sustainability, human rights, and social justice (Crane et al., 2008). By integrating CSR into their corporate governance frameworks, organizations can enhance transparency, stakeholder engagement, and long-term value creation (Gond et al., 2017). The ascent of CSR marks a significant paradigm shift in contemporary corporate culture and organizational behavior. This shift is prompted by escalating shareholder and stakeholder activism, fueled by international banking crises and global corporate scandals dominating headlines. As accountability and transparency concerns intensify, capitalism faces challenges in maintaining continuity while aligning with organizational conscience. The emergence of impact investing underscores the growing importance of social responsibility and ethics in corporate governance for achieving long-term success in the new global marketplace. Organizations are increasingly compelled to demonstrate that ethical and environmentally conscious business practices are not mutually exclusive from profitability. CSR has traditionally been situated within the realm of business ethics, serving as an endeavor to delineate the specific moral responsibilities of corporations and prompt them to acknowledge their societal obligations. CSR theory often operates under the premise that organizations should be regarded as moral agents. Organizations are often regarded as moral agents, leading to the view that the shortcomings of (CSR) stem from this perspective. CSR and business ethics constitute a rapidly evolving frontier in the private sector, prompting companies to reevaluate their practices and expand their range of responsibilities. The traditional emphasis solely on shareholder value is deemed inadequate in the face of modern environmental and social challenges. Instead, an inclusive stakeholder model is emerging, promoting innovation, competitiveness, and sustainability for both businesses and society.

While CSR principles are gaining widespread acceptance and are increasingly being integrated into organizations' daily operations. It is crucial for corporations to display their commitment to social and environmental values. Moreover, as investment firms assess projects based on social and environmental criteria and socially responsible investment funds gain traction, companies are under growing pressure to align with these new standards and access the resources available through these funds (Manda, 2017). While the discourse on (CSR) predominantly draws from experiences in developed countries, its application in developing nations presents a distinct set of challenges. Despite being rooted in universal principles, CSR practices are influenced by varying societal expectations shaped by geography, culture, and levels of development (Manda, 2017). Indeed, it is essential for individuals to consider local specifics, such as the absence of a well-established model of corporate governance, the lack of locally available socially responsible investment and investment funds, and the limited implementation capacity of the government. These factors can significantly influence the feasibility and effectiveness of (CSR) initiatives within a given context. Understanding and addressing these local challenges is crucial for promoting sustainable business practices and societal development. A healthy board facilitates forming dynamics in which everyone is linked and listening, creating value, endorsement of explicit and authentic exploration of assumptions and joining in balanced ways. Powerful divergent opinions may be submitted and jumbled into a single, well-supported position that can be processed creatively. The traditional perspective on corporate governance asserts that governance should prioritize the interests of shareholders, echoing Friedman (1970) assertion that 'the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits.' This obligation is primarily rooted in the legal framework governing corporate operations, wherein executives are bound by a contractual fiduciary duty to act in the best interests of shareholders as their 'agents.' However, alternative theories of corporate governance and (CSR) present challenges to this dominant approach, drawing on pragmatic, empirical, and strategic considerations. These alternative perspectives question the singular focus on shareholder value and advocate for a broader consideration of stakeholders and societal impacts in corporate decision-making. The "morality pays" approach presents a contrasting objective for corporate governance, advocating that corporations should be managed according to the interests of all stakeholders. This perspective defends its premise using arguments akin to those posited by Blair and Stout or Rajan & Zingales (1998): namely, that such governance fosters organizational strength and success, or that failure to adopt it may lead to corporate downfall. Additionally, proponents of CSR argue that corporations have inherent social obligations, often framed as moral imperatives, in conducting their transactions. (CSR) refers to corporations considering and processing their influence on different stakeholders. Corporations are not independent entities operating in isolation to increase the shareholder's money and obtain their overall objectives. Organizations are responsible for the environment around them. They should act responsibly in accordance with the environment and society. Organizations started showing their ethical behavior and integrity as an enrichment for consumers since the 1990s. Since then, the aspect (CSR) has attracted a huge amount of contradiction. CSR philosophy reaches out beyond legal compliance and also offers that corporations should pay back to their societies where they manage their operations even if this payback lowers their profits.

This assumption has both is supported and opposed. Opponents argue that it is not the responsibility of organizations to engage in CSR activities, as their primary focus should be on generating profit. They believe that diverting resources away from core business operations reduces their economic contribution and diminishes their overall societal benefit. Proponents of CSR, on the other hand, contend that conducting business with a social conscience aligns corporations with the values of their customers and leads to long-term profitability. However, this perspective may be met with skepticism regarding the altruism of the motivation behind CSR initiatives. Critics question whether CSR is merely a tool for self-promotion and increasing shareholder value, especially if profit remains the primary focus. (CSR) and corporate governance (CG) are intertwined, although they are distinct concepts, they share common objectives. Corporate governance operates within a structured regulatory framework, defined by Blair (1995) as “the whole set of legal, cultural, and institutional arrangements that determine what publicly traded corporations can do, who controls them, how that control is exercised, and how the risks and returns from the activities they undertake are allocated.” While CSR can be practiced in a more flexible manner, it also complements corporate governance through the concept of “self-regulation.” This self-regulation framework aids organizations in making their objectives more explicit and achievable. Central to this concept is the adoption of a code of conduct, which serves as a crucial tool for corporate self-regulation.

Ethical considerations play a fundamental role in corporate decision-making processes. Ethical behavior involves adhering to moral principles and standards of conduct, even in the face of conflicting interests or pressures. Studies have explored the influence of organizational culture, leadership behavior, and ethical frameworks on ethical decision-making within companies. Ethical lapses can lead to reputational damage, legal liabilities, and financial losses, underscoring the importance of integrating ethics into corporate governance structures. Corporate governance frameworks establish the mechanisms and processes by which companies are directed and controlled. Effective governance practices promote transparency, accountability, and integrity throughout the organization. Research has examined the relationship between corporate governance structures, board diversity, and ethical leadership, emphasizing the role of boards of directors in fostering ethical cultures and overseeing CSR initiatives. Ethical lapses at the board level can erode stakeholder trust and undermine the legitimacy of corporate governance systems.

The relationships between CSR, ethics, and corporate governance are characterized by mutual influences and interdependencies. Ethical leadership is essential for driving CSR initiatives and embedding ethical values into corporate cultures. Conversely, CSR practices can enhance organizational ethics by promoting responsible behaviors and stakeholder engagement. Corporate governance mechanisms serve as safeguards to ensure ethical conduct and accountability in CSR implementation. Integrating CSR considerations into governance structures can enhance transparency, stakeholder engagement, and long-term value creation.

Despite significant progress, challenges persist in effectively integrating CSR, ethics, and corporate governance into organizational practices. Balancing competing interests, addressing stakeholder expectations, and measuring the impact of CSR initiatives remain ongoing challenges for organizations. Moreover, the evolving nature of business and societal expectations necessitates continuous innovation and adaptation in corporate governance frameworks and ethical leadership practices. By embracing a holistic approach to corporate sustainability and governance, businesses can navigate the complexities of the modern business landscape and contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future for all stakeholders. This requires organizations to prioritize ethical conduct, embrace CSR principles, and adopt robust governance practices. By integrating CSR considerations into governance frameworks and fostering ethical leadership, organizations can enhance stakeholder trust and resilience in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic business landscape.

5. Conclusion

The interconnection between Corporate Governance, ethics, and CSR underscores the importance of embedding them while highlighting the importance of integrating these constructs into the strategic frameworks of organizations. Businesses that prioritize ethical leadership, robust governance structures, and proactive CSR initiatives are better equipped to navigate the challenges of modern business environments. As globalization and technological advancements continue to reshape the corporate landscape, understanding the dynamic interplay between these constructs will be essential for organizations aiming to foster sustainable practices and build stakeholder trust. In conclusion, the methodological approach adopted in this literature review underscores the significance of integrating diverse perspectives and empirical evidence to advance our understanding of CG, Ethics, and CSR in contemporary business environments. By synthesizing findings from meta-analytical studies and empirical research, this review contributes to a robust theoretical framework that informs organizational practices and policy development.

Future research should focus on exploring innovative governance mechanisms, leveraging technology for CSR reporting and accountability, and advancing ethical leadership practices in diverse organizational contexts. Also, future research should continue to explore emerging trends, such as the impact of digitalization and global supply chains on CG practices and ethical decision-making. Moreover, longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into the evolving nature of CSR strategies and their long-term implications for organizational performance and societal impact. Understanding the interplay among Corporate Governance, Ethics, and CSR is essential for organizations striving to achieve sustainable growth and societal impact. By adopting robust governance practices, adhering to ethical principles, and embracing CSR as a strategic imperative, companies can enhance their resilience, reputation, and overall business success in an increasingly interconnected global economy. Ongoing research and meta-analytical studies will continue to refine our understanding and application of these concepts, shaping the future landscape of responsible corporate behavior and governance. Although the relationship between CSR, ethics, and corporate governance is complex and multifaceted, companies that prioritize ethical conduct, embrace CSR principles, and adopt robust governance practices are better positioned to create long-term value and mitigate risks. By integrating CSR considerations into governance frameworks and fostering ethical leadership, organizations can contribute to sustainable development while enhancing stakeholder trust and resilience in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic business landscape. This literature review provides insight into the evolving nature of CSR, ethics, and corporate governance and underscores the importance of ethical decision-making and responsible business practices in driving organizational success and societal impact. As a whole, these are critical aspects of contemporary business management. Understanding the complex dynamics and interactions among these concepts is essential for organizations aiming to foster responsible conduct, maintain stakeholder trust, and create long-term value in today’s evolving business landscape.

Moreover, in recent years, (CSR) has evolved to encompass the voluntary integration of social and environmental considerations into business operations, often in collaboration with stakeholders. This shift reflects a growing recognition that businesses can contribute to societal well-being, even if it means sacrificing short-term profits for long-term benefits. Debates surrounding social responsibility models have yet to yield a universally accepted framework that fully encapsulates the concept. Further advancements are anticipated in models focusing on social impact, particularly as the connection between CSR and stakeholder theory strengthens. Additionally, disagreements regarding CSR extend beyond traditional debates over its definition and practical implementation. They also encompass debates over the positive and negative implications associated with standardizing CSR practices within organizations. The integration of CSR principles provides a viable mechanism for enhancing ethical practices and addressing social concerns within corporate governance. However, debates surrounding social responsibility within corporate governance persist. For instance, Friedman (1962) argued that a company's primary obligation is to generate profits for its shareholders, positing that maximizing profits is the fundamental duty of management. In contrast, proponents of CSR, such as Carroll & Shabana (2010), refute this perspective, contending that socially responsible companies can achieve substantial benefits and advantages beyond mere profit maximization. As an example, by increasing the employees' morale, socially responsible businesses will come across a lot fewer labor problems and unsuccessful outcomes while raising the employees' productivity and the quality of the products or services. So that by following CSR principles the corporate governance practices on ethical issues will increase so that companies will benefit more from these consequences. Business practices demonstrate that organizations voluntarily integrate social and environmental considerations into their operations and relationships with stakeholders. However, it can be challenging to discern the motivations driving organizations to prioritize these aspects. Following ethical issues and formal regulations with corporate governance rules demonstrate companies as respectful organizations. Companies that prioritize ethical conduct, embrace CSR principles, and adopt robust governance practices are better positioned to create long-term value and mitigate risks. By integrating CSR considerations into governance frameworks and fostering ethical leadership, organizations can contribute to sustainable development while enhancing stakeholder trust and resilience in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic business landscape. Further research is needed to explore emerging trends, best practices, and potential solutions to the challenges associated with navigating the intersection of CSR, ethics, and corporate governance. And more research should continue to explore the synergies between CSR, ethics, and corporate governance, examining how organizations can utilize these connections to create positive social and environmental impacts while maximizing shareholder value. By embracing a holistic approach to corporate sustainability and governance, businesses can contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future for all stakeholders. As a result, by grounding CSR in strong corporate governance and ethical frameworks, companies can ensure that their social and environmental initiatives are authentic and impactful, enhancing both their reputational and financial standing in the long term.

References

Aguilera, R. V., & Cuervo-Cazurra, A. (2004). Codes of good governance worldwide: What is the trigger? *Organization Studies, 25*(3), 415-443. doi:10.1177/0170840604040679

Aguilera, R. V., Rupp, D. E., Williams, C. A., & Ganapathi, J. (2007). Putting the S back in corporate social responsibility: A multilevel theory of social change in organizations. *Academy of Management Review, 32*(3), 836-863. doi:10.5465/amr.2007.25275684

Aguinis, H., & Glavas, A. (2012). What we know and don't know about corporate social responsibility: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Management, 38*(4), 932-968. doi:10.1177/0149206311436079

Arjoon, S. (2005). Corporate Governance: An Ethical Perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics, pp. 343-352*. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-005-7888-5

Bagi, M. K. & Lana, N. (2004) '*An Overview of Corporate Social Responsibility in Croatia' Zagreb: AED*

Barnett, M. L. (2007). Stakeholder influence capacity and the variability of financial returns to corporate social responsibility. *Academy of Management Review, 32*(3), 794-816. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.25275520

Blair, M. (1995), *Ownership and control: rethinking corporate governance for the twenty-first century*, Brookings Institution, Washington DC.

Blair, M. M., & Stout, L. A. (1999). A Team Production Theory of Corporate Law. *Virginia Law Review, 85*(2), 247-328.

Bodolica, V., & Spraggon, M. (2015). An examination into the disclosure, structure, and contents of ethical codes in publicly listed acquiring firms. *Journal of Business Ethics, 126*, 459-472. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-013-1966-x

Brown, M. E., & Caylor, M. L. (2006). Corporate governance and firm performance. Corporate Governance: *An International Review, 14*(3), 242-253. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8683.2006.00506.x

Cadbury, A. (1992). *Report of the Committee on the Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance.* Gee & Co Ltd.

Calderon, M. A., Simons, F. E. R., Malling, H. J., Lockey, R. F., Moingeon, P., & Demoly, P. (2012). Sublingual allergen immunotherapy: mode of action and its relationship with the safety profile. *Allergy, 67*(3), 302-311. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1398-9995.2011.02761.x

Carasco, E. F., & Singh, J. B. (2003). *The content and focus of the codes of ethics of the world's largest transnational corporations.* Available at SSRN 388192. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=388192

Carroll, A. B. (1979). A Three-Dimensional Conceptual Model of Corporate Performance. *The Academy of Management Review, 4*(4), 497-505. doi:10.2307/257850

Carroll, A. B., & Shabana, K. M. (2010). The business case for corporate social responsibility: A review of concepts, research and practice. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 12*(1), 85-105. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2009.00275.x

Calderón, R., I. Ferrero & D. M. Redin. (2012). Ethical Codes and Corporate Responsibility of the Most Admired Companies of the World: Toward A Third Generation Ethics? *Business and Politics, 14*(4). https://doi.org/10.1515/bap-2012-0044

Chan, M. C., Watson, J., & Woodliff, D. (2014). Corporate governance quality and CSR disclosures. *Journal of business ethics, 125*, 59-73.https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1887-8

Cleek M. & Leonard S., (1998) *Can corporately codes of ethics influence behavior?* https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1017969921581

Crane, A., & Matten, D. (2007). *Business Ethics* (2nd Ed). Oxford University Press.

Crane, A., Matten, D., & Spence, L. J. (2008). *Corporate social responsibility: Readings and cases in a global context*. Routledge.

Donaldson, T. (1982). Corporations & Morality. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. 1986. “Fact, Fiction, and the Social Contract: A Reply to Kultgen.” *Business & Professional Ethics Journal 5* (1): 40 – 46.1990. “Social Contracts and Corporations: A Reply to Hodapp.” Journal of Business Ethics 9 (2): 133 –37.

Dunfee, T. W., & Donaldson, T. (1995). Contractarian business ethics: C*urrent status and next steps. Business Ethics Quarterly,* 173-186. https://doi.org/10.2307/3857352

Davidson, B. I., & Stevens, D. E. (2013). Can a code of ethics improve manager behavior and investor confidence? An experimental study. T*he Accounting Review, 88*(1), 51-74. https://doi.org/10.2308/accr-50272

Ferrell, O. C., & Fraedrich, J. (2015). *Business ethics: Ethical decision making & cases* (10th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston: Pitman Publishing.

Friedman, M. (1962). C*apitalism and Freedom. Chicago*: University of Chicago Press. 1970. “The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profi ts.” The New York Times Magazine 13 September.

Friedman, M. (1970). *The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits.* The New York Times Magazine, 13 September.

Garegnani, G. M., Merlotti, E. P., & Russo, A. (2015). Scoring firms’ codes of ethics: *An explorative study of quality drivers. Journal of Business Ethics, 126*, 541-557. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-013-1968-8

Gond, J. P., Kang, N., & Moon, J. (2017). The government of self-regulation: On the comparative dynamics of corporate social responsibility. *Economy and Society, 46*(1), 1-26. doi:10.1080/03085147.2016.1264260

Gond, J. P., & Moon, J. (2011). Corporate social responsibility in retrospect and prospect: Exploring the life-cycle of an essentially contested concept. *ICCSR Research Paper Series, 59*, 1-40. https://l24.im/8HRDqi

Gonzalez-Perez M.A (2013)., *Corporate Social Responsibility and International Business: A Conceptual Overview, in:* International Business, Corporate Social Responsibility, eds. M.A. https://doi.org/10.1108/S2051-5030(2013)0000011006

Gray, R., Owen, D., & Adams, C. (1996). *Accounting and accountability: Changes and challenges in corporate social and environmental reporting.* Prentice Hall.

Hawley, J. P., & Williams, A. T. (1996). *Corporate governance in the United States: The rise of fiduciary capitalism*. Working Paper, Saint Mary’s College of California, School of Economics and Business Administration.

Hopkins, M. (2004). Corporate social responsibility: An issue paper (Working Paper No. 27). Policy Integration Department, W*orld Commission on Social Dimension of Globalization, International Labour Organization.* http://www.ilo.org/integration/resources/papers/lang--en/docName--WCMS_079130/index.htm

Hillman, A. J., & Dalziel, T. (2003). Boards of Directors and Firm Performance: Integrating Agency and Resource Dependency Perspectives. *Academy of Management Review, 28*(3), 383–396 https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2003.10196729

Hemingway, C. A., & Maclagan, P. W. (2004). Managers' personal values as drivers of corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics, 50*(1), 33-44. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/B:BUSI.0000020964.80208.c9

Kaptein, M. (2008). Developing a measure of unethical behavior in the workplace: A stakeholder perspective. *Journal of Management, 34*(5), 978-1008. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308318614

La Porta, R., Lopez-de-Silanes, F., Shleifer, A., & Vishny, R. (2000). Investor protection and corporate governance. J*ournal of Financial Economics, 58*(1-2), 3-27. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0304-405X(00)00065-9

Langlois, C. C., & Schlegelmilch, B. B. (1990). Do corporate codes of ethics reflect national character? Evidence from Europe and the United States. J*ournal of International Business Studies, 21,* 519-539. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490340

Maali, B., Casson, P., & Napier, C. (2013). Social reporting by Islamic banks. *Abacus, 49*(3), 372-396. doi:10.1111/abac.12017

Mallin, C. A. (2013). *Corporate governance* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Manda, A. (2017) Corporate Social Responsibility in Indian Scenario. I*nternational Journal & Magazine of Engineering, Technology, Management and Research, 433*

Margolis, J. D., & Walsh, J. P. (2003). Misery loves companies: Rethinking social initiatives by business. A*dministrative Science Quarterly, 48*(2), 268-305. doi:10.2307/3556659.

McWilliams, A., & Siegel, D. (2001). Corporate social responsibility: A theory of the firm perspective. *Academy of Management Review, 26*(1), 117-127. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2001.4011987

Mermod, A. Y., & Idowu, S. O. (Eds.). (2014). *Corporate social responsibility in the global business world* (Vol. 258). Heidelberg: Springer. https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-642-37620-7

Murphy, P. E. (2005). Developing, communicating and promoting corporate ethics statements: A longitudinal analysis. J*ournal of business ethics, 62,* 183-189. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-005-0189-1

OECD (2001). *Corporate Governance and National Development.* Technical Papers No. 180. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2015). *OECD Principles of Corporate Governance 2015.* OECD Publishing. doi:10.1787/9789264236882-en

Orlitzky, M., Schmidt, F. L., & Rynes, S. L. (2003). Corporate social and financial performance: A meta-analysis. *Organization Studies, 24*(3), 403–441. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840603024003910

Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2006). Strategy & society: The link between competitive advantage and corporate social responsibility. *Harvard Business Review, 84*(12), 78-92. https://l24.im/u6nj

Rajan, R. G., & Zingales, L. (1998). Power in a Theory of the Firm. Q*uarterly Journal of Economics, 113*(2), 387-432. https://doi.org/10.1162/003355398555630

Rezaee, Z. (2009). *Corporate Governance and Ethics.* John Wiley & Sons, Inc, USA.

Schwartz, M. S. (2002). A code of ethics for corporate code of ethics. J*ournal of business ethics, 41*(1), 27-43. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/a:1021393904930

Silva, F. (2023). 2023 *Global Business Ethics Survey: Part 1 Overview. Ethics & Compliance Initiative.* Available at: https://www.ethics.org/2023-global-business-ethics-survey-part-1-overview/

Snider, J., Hill, R. P., & Martin, M. (2003). Corporate social responsibility in the 21st century: A view from the world's most successful firms. J*ournal of Business Ethics, 45*(3), 243–257. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024172918113

Solan, D., & Solomon, J. (2020). *Corporate governance and ethics*. In J. M. Clarke & M. T. Buchanan (Eds.), The SAGE Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society (2nd ed., pp. 471-474). SAGE Publications. doi:10.4135/9781483381428.n199

Stohl, C., Stohl, M., & Popova, L. (2009). A new generation of corporate codes of ethics. *Journal of business ethics, 90*, 607-622. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-009-0064-6

Treviño, L. K., Weaver, G. R., & Brown, M. E. (2003). It's lovely at the top: Hierarchical levels, identities, and perceptions of organizational ethics. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 13*(2), 171-194. doi:10.2307/3857869

Treviño, L. K., & Nelson, K. A. (2016). *Managing business ethics:* Straight talk about how to do it right (7th ed.). Wiley.

Trong Tuan, L. (2012), "Corporate social responsibility, ethics, and corporate governance", *Social Responsibility Journal, Vol. 8* No. 4, pp. 547-560. https://doi.org/10.1108/17471111211272110

Velasquez, M., Andre, C., Shanks, T., & Meyer, M. (2011). *Ethics and the conduct of business (7th ed.).* Pearson.

Waddock, S., & Graves, S. (1997). The corporate social performance-financial performance link. *Strategic Management Journal, 18*(4), 303-319. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-0266(199704)

Warren, R. C. (2003). The evolution of business legitimacy. *European Business Review, 15*(3), 153–154. https://doi.org/10.1108/09555340310484812

Wempe, B. (2009). C*ontractarian business ethics: Critical perspectives on ethics, business and management*. Springer.