

CONCEPTUALISING CSR COMMUNICATION: EXPLORING THE MODERATING ROLE OF OPINION LEADERS ON ORGANISATION- COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

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ABSTRACT

Corporate organisations have been subjected to high criticisms due to the misuse of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) communication in building the trust of the local communities. Constructed on the different approaches of community engagement initiatives, the communities' trust is central in ensuring the organisation's ability to obtain its Social License to Operate (SLO). Despite its importance, there is a lack of empirical attention and effort in developing a communicative framework that analyses organisation's CSR Communication with local communities. In this article, the CSR Communication framework deliberates and expands the mechanistic perspective of communication by exploring the moderating role of opinion leaders in strengthening the relationship between the postulated corresponding variables. The use of this framework is expected to facilitate future analysis that supplies fresh insights on the relationship between the Organisation's CSR Communication initiatives, Opinion Leaders, and Local Communities.

Keyword: CSR Communication; Opinion Leader; Social License to Operate (SLO); Local Community

Introduction

Communicating CSR is a complex and rather difficult process (Dawkins, 2004), particularly in an organisation's effort to convince (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004) stakeholders' commitment towards the organisation's CSR initiative. Corporate organisations in particular often face scepticisms and accusations of camouflaging their wrongdoings through different advertising or public relations (PR) campaigns (Vanhamme & Grobbsen, 2008). Scherer and Palazzo (2011) found that the stakeholders' high expectations on corporation's social commitment have also contributed in intensifying the aforesaid circumstance. The local communities have been proven to