PORTUGUESE PERSPECTIVE ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

Social responsibility has proven to be a competitive way for companies, simultaneously with other strategies. Its prominence lies in its multidisciplinary and transversality to various business, human and sustainable areas. Thus, the aim of this research is to verify whether national companies are performing better by reporting on their social responsibility practice at economic and financial level. For this purpose, 550 questionnaires were applied to national companies, with no values admitted to listing, based in mainland Portugal, and 344 were validated and analysed by applying an exploratory study for discussion and presentation of results. The main considerations indicated that the lack of disclosure of social, human and environmental information is due to difficulties in registering accounts, in ascertaining financial values, in inserting them in traditional reporting charts and in specific rules for working with such particular intangible elements. The lack of social responsibility reporting makes these companies less attractive and consequently less performing. The difficulties of financial reporting are partly overcome by qualitative information, but there is still a long way to go to make social responsibility reporting more important for regulators, companies and other stakeholders to help address the problem of lack of information and to effectively understand the impact of social responsibility on business performance.

However, we can conclude from the information obtained that the preference of stakeholders is for companies that demonstrate, implement and demonstrate social responsibility strategies, and with them leverage their results and together their business performance.

Keywords: social responsibility, reporting, performance.

1. Introduction

Social Responsibility translates a set of actions that add benefits to society (Faria, 2018). Besides a set of attitudes that aim at the good of the social community, they produce a harmonious balance. It is defined at company level as a way of conducting business in such a way as to make companies partners and, at the same time, co-responsible for social development (Ethos, 2016).

According to the Global Compact we are now entering the decade of sustainability 2020-2030 (http://globalcompact.pt/noticias/373-semana-da-responsabilidade-social-2020). But social responsibility, whether corporate or individual, is not a new or little discussed issue. Nevertheless, it is not a closed subject, because new ways of carrying out social responsibility actions in the most varied forms appear daily. Historical accounts of the birth of social responsibility seem to have emerged in 1899 in the United States, with the discussion of the principles of charity and custody (Freeman and Stoner, 1992). Years later, in 1920, with the Great American Depression, a new principle appeared, that of zeal, the purpose of which was to make the best use of companies' money in shares that would benefit society as a whole (Stoner and Freeman, 1999).

Gradually, companies that carried out social practices based on the principles of charity, custody and zeal began to realize that they were becoming more visible and more attractive to society (Faria, 2018). This strategic form of action led to changes in organisational management models in the following decades (Shommer, 2000; Shommer, Rocha & Fischer, 1999), without ever losing sight of the economic interest of the business, without which any social strategy could be suspended (Almeida, 2002).

To achieve the alliance between economic, financial and social aspects in a favourable way for Portuguese companies, Mortal (2005) states that it is necessary to combine the efforts of the whole society. Duarte (2007) stresses that world companies must give priority to planning their business in communion with the market, technology and operations. He concludes that product and market growth must be built for a sustainable future in which technology must not degrade the environment (Duarte, 2007). Therefore the performance of companies must combine environmental, economic, social and human objectives simultaneously and in all sectors of activity so as not to damage competitiveness and the sustainable future of humanity (Martins, 2007; Harayama and Nitta, 2011; Hrebícek, Soukopová and Trenz, 2014).

With the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic around the world, 2020 has been a year of challenges for the management of many companies. Some have died out because they could not cope with the economic crisis, others have reinvented themselves to survive, and to note that others still have growth potential, notably those in the logistics, technology and power sectors (Lima, 2020).

2. Theoretical reference

Globalisation has led companies to a number of advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand the prospect of new markets, new technologies and new processes; on the other the fiercer and tougher competition. While social responsibility increases the competitiveness of companies, it also forces them to take greater care of their environment (Fischer, 2008; Bonsón and Bednárová, 2014). It is in this perspective that reporting on social responsibility information is crucial, as external stakeholders do not have access to certain types of information (Faria, 2012). Accounting may be key in this financial reporting process (Lys, Naughton and Wang, 2015). The "science of numbers", as it is known, provides quantitative and qualitative information (Michelon, Pilonato, and Ricceri, 2014), of socially responsible actions such as: number of hours of volunteering dedicated to social causes, funds available to support projects with social purposes, donations made, etc. If the reporting of social and financial information of national companies were more regulated, information comparability (reading and preparation of it) would be better (Lemos, 2007). Alternatively, companies could be assisted in the search for alternative sources of reporting, given the difficulties of disclosure that accounting tends to pose. For example, Portuguese companies use the internet, social networks, podcasts and many other numerous formats to communicate with their stakeholders.

Table 1 - interferences in CSR reporting

Aspects	**Consequence**
Country of origin	Borders between countries allow for a division of action practices and dissemination of such socially responsible actions.
Culture and religion	It translates differences in reporting practice. It is not an isolated aspect or to be ignored by accounting.
Economic development	The level of economic development in the industry or sector to which the company belongs provides different forms of reporting.
Policies and governments	Given the political interests within and between countries, practices and reporting on social responsibility can vary widely, as there may be cycles in which it will be more intense and others in which it will be poor.
Colonisation of multinationals	The way in which multinationals have invaded countries worldwide has made it possible to change old reporting habits, to provide a level of accounting education for reporting. Global institutions play a very important role as a guide and example to follow in the good practice and forms of reporting used.
Legal systems	All regulatory and standardizing forms are of crucial importance in differentiating countries' accounting practices.

Source: adapted from Haider, 2010, pp. 5-6.

Besides the interferences described in the social responsibility report (table 1), it seems important to emphasize that the influence of the organizational culture and personal values can interfere with the very practice of corporate social responsibility. The following influences are described by (Oliveira, 2010, 52):

- Controlling processes;
- Making decisions;
- Finding out which processes need improvement and which are the strong points that should be emphasized;
- Evaluate performance;
- Reduce costs;
- Define strategies;
- Define projections;
- Demonstrate trends;
- Etc.

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Since the beginning of 2020, participating, cooperating and innovating in the response to social responsibility actions is one of the main ways to forget or help combat the Covid-19 pandemic (https://impactosocial.esolidar.com/pt-pt/2020/01/02/tendencias-responsabilidade-social-2/).

With the Covid-19 pandemic, social responsibility in Portugal has triggered calls for help and support to businesses, citizens, inside and outside the country. New challenges for businesses since the beginning of the pandemic are increasingly complex and bigger (Lima, 2020). On the one hand, technological advances require more investment by companies in technical and also human resources with more and better training in information technologies. Work has given rise to teleworking, at a time when it was thought possible in large or medium-sized companies, and in Portugal it has moved beyond all sectors of activity to more or less all types of companies, businesses and entrepreneurs and workers.

The global competitiveness of companies is no longer made locally, or by rules with face-to-face treatment, and the emergence of the Internet and the development of social media (Hasnaoui, Freeman, 2011), and online meeting platforms have provided new ways to experience experiences, exchange information, do business and even carry out social responsibility actions (Miranda, 2017).

In the last 40 years, social and environmental accounting has made considerable progress in reporting these elements, at the expense of the worldwide development of social responsibility (Freire, Souza e Ferreira, 2008). The approach between social responsibility, sustainability, and social and environmental accounting is beginning to bear fruit (Gray, 2010; Cho, Laine, Roberts and Rodrigue, 2015).

The measurement and interpretation of social, environmental, human and other phenomena is one of the reasons why the discussions around the financial reporting of social responsibility are intensifying with criticism, supporting alternatives, feasible and not feasible solutions in practice, etc., (Gray, 2010; Michelon, Pilonato, and Ricceri, 2014), as we are reporting an intangible element (Capucio, 2018).

Criticized from the perspective of traditional financial reporting (Guthrie, Cuganesan and Ward, 2008), the reporting of social responsibility information beyond the internet has as alternatives the use of the Triple Bottom Line, Global Reporting Initiative, balanced Scorecard, etc. (Farneti and Guthrie, 2007; GRI, 2013).

Regardless of the form that financial reporting on social responsibility takes or the form of reporting companies adopt to inform about the environment, social and human elements, this depends on multiple aspects. Several studies have proven that:

1. Larger and more visible companies are more concerned with disseminating information via the internet, and annual reports and accounts (Barros et al., 2008).
2. SMEs due to their financial constraints and the existing perception that they have little social conduct perform punctually and in a reduced way dissemination in alternative pieces (Parsa and Kouhy, 2008).

3. Sarmento and Duarte (2004) find that reporting in the annual accounts occurs more frequently in potentially polluting companies, which invest more in environmental protection but have already caused serious and very serious pollutant accidents.
4. Managers can refrain from disclosing information if they realise that investors do not need it or can easily find it through alternative sources. On the other hand, they may decide to minimise the disclosure of information if it could lead owners to take action against the company by others, such as regulators or lobbies (Berthelot et al., 2003).
5. In a pandemic period, information is perhaps of all the competitive weapons that is most likely to bring economic and financial benefits to companies.

Associated with each of these studies are the cultural and spatial influences of the spread of social and environmental accounting as well as existing reporting standards (Gray & Bebbington, 2001; Baxi & Ray, 2009; Cohen, Debreceny, Farewell & Roohani, 2014; Gilbert, Rasche & Waddock, 2011; Amazeen, 2011; Dawkins & Fraas, 2011; Holder-Webb, Cohen, Nath & Wood, 2009; Lys, Naughton & Wang, 2015). Without forgetting the current moment of pandemic experienced by the enterprises in Portugal and the world.

The current Portuguese accounting model recognises intangible elements acquired externally, but treats them as expenditures in the period in which a large part of the expenditures made to produce intangibles internally are incurred (Pinto, 2013). In this way two similar companies can present very different financial statements. There is also a perception that the quality of accounting information can be improved if the financial statements are supplemented with disclosures about the intangible assets present in the life of the companies, especially those that may not meet the criteria for qualification as assets and liabilities (Faria, 2018).

However, markets are expanding very rapidly, rather than the ability of societies and their political systems to adjust to organizations, especially to harmonize with the diversity of factors and subject relationships. According to this line of reasoning Gond and Herrbach (2006) advocate the construction of a theoretical framework on social responsibility. Where the information produced should be distinct from non-financial, as it is important for the evaluation of companies' performance in the short term (Chiu, 2010). Whether there is qualitative and quantitative social responsibility information depends on several factors: company size, informational utility for stakeholders (Chiu, 2010). Independently, the report mirrors different motivations (ibid., 379). According to research on the studies by Wood (1991), the authors Gond and Herrbach (2006) converge on the same perspectives advocating that social responsibility promotes a single path for companies and society, as they expect a certain behaviour from companies and the latter believe to obtain from society a return compatible with the efforts made.

3. Research and discussion of results

On the basis of the bibliography cited, it can be seen that most companies have difficulty in reporting financial information on social responsibility. However, this statement does not invalidate the study of companies, national, that make the disclosure of such information, in order to understand how they do it and how they manage to enhance their performance through their communication to stakeholders.

As noted in the theoretical framework, in Portugal the lack of information disclosure is due to the main difficulties: measurement, recognition, identification and disclosure at the accounting level, as there are alternative ways of performing this information although they do not guarantee comparability and homogeneity in the information produced. Based on these difficulties, a questionnaire was carried out to a universe of 550 Portuguese companies, both public and private, with the aim of ascertaining the congruence between the national perceptions ascertained in the literature review and the reality experienced. The methodological instrument and procedure used was a questionnaire that was duly validated and tested before its application. The questionnaire aims at ascertaining whether national companies that report social responsibility information at a financial level are more attractive than companies that do not practice or do not disclose social responsibility practices, and whether this information can influence business performance. The implementation of the questionnaire is divided into the following regions (Table 2).

Table 2 - Regions by questionnaire

Regions	Number of questionnaires of enterprises surveyed	Number of valid questionnaires
Minho	50	35
Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro	50	39
Douro Litoral	50	45
Beira Litoral	50	39
Beira Alta	50	23
Beira Baixa	50	19
Estremadura	50	36
Ribatejo	50	28
Alto Alentejo	50	18
Baixo Alentejo	50	15
Algarve	50	47

Source: the author.

The target region of the questionnaire is located on the mainland, as the Azores and Madeira have a smaller number of companies. The companies that were the target of the questionnaire were random, but an attempt was made to restrict the survey to small and medium sized companies with no figures admitted to listing. For this purpose, a database was consulted with SABI, which allowed to filter companies with public relations, communication, accounting and other departments considered important for the study of social, environmental and human impacts.

From the global set of companies that answered the questionnaire, sent by e-mail, it was necessary in some situations to be carried out through face-to-face visits between the months of January/2020 to March/2020 and the month of September 2020, in order to access the directors, consultants, managers, accountants, senior technicians in the financial area, specialist

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technicians, workers and other elements of the companies surveyed, so that as many answers as possible could be gathered.

The questionnaire was structured in four parts. The first refers to the identification for general framework of the company and the person who answered the questionnaire. The second refers to the organisational structure giving knowledge of the size and departments that make up the company. The third part asks about CSR, investigating the attitude of the company towards communication, strategic use and practice of social responsibility. The fourth part refers to the type of social responsibility financial reporting that is or is not carried out by companies and, to understand by the company itself, whether such communication interferes with its performance.

4. Analysis and discussion of results

Data processing consisted of a first step to check a total of 198 indicators (initial database), the distribution of values for each of the indicators and detect missing data. The objective is to ensure the normality of the sample and homogeneity of variance (Santos and Ramos, 2006). Using Data Mining techniques, pre-processing of data was carried out to eliminate missing data when it exceeded 8%, considering a maximum permissible sampling error of 5% and thus obtaining the final database composed of four dimensions of corporate social responsibility on which the analysis of measuring instruments and their scales will focus:

1. Degree of satisfaction with the financial impact on society
2. Aspects that persuade companies to adopt social responsibility
3. Impact of the information produced on corporate social responsibility
4. Impact of social responsibility on business performance

The data obtained seem to indicate that most companies make an effort to develop long-term strategies (60%). In these strategies 8% of the companies do not take advantage of customer satisfaction as a performance indicator; 74% take a lot and 14% use this item as a true performance indicator. It should be noted that the companies in this sample comply with legal requirements but have difficulty in preventing discrimination (86%), although none admit the existence of discrimination. Only 4% of the companies seek to achieve levels of excellence in labour recruitment according to the law and, the attribution of benefits to workers.

The link between social responsibility and environmental issues implies that respondents make a point of emphasising their level of knowledge of environmental issues and their laws, but the practice of environmental management policies is not taken care of in the exercise of corporate business. Even if this resulted in gains in energy efficiency and economic surplus spending. In fact, reducing spending is not a priority for this sample, even in times of the Covid-19 pandemic.

With regard to access to environmental information, respondents showed little concern in extending it to stakeholders, especially customers. Regardless of the accessibility of the information, one can note a previous problem, its preparation. The respondents revealed that they do not intend to give environmental qualification, which makes it difficult for human resources in the process of preparing and disseminating environmental information. The majority of

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respondents considered that certain information should be confidential to employees, especially the emissions of personal opinions, 73%.

As for community liaison in the field of social practices for those surveyed, support for sports and cultural associations is not implemented by 83% of companies but by 17% of them. It remains to be seen whether there are social institutions that can be helped and, if not, because companies are unaware or are not available for this type of social support, which is a practical form of social responsibility, according to the literature reviewed above. At the social level (i.e. the 17% group that supports associations) companies are more supportive at the sporting and cultural level than other segments of society.

For 67% of the respondents the company of which they are part does not support the surrounding community. Of the percentage they support (33%), 8% have relatively low support and 25% are very low.

At the wage level, the Portuguese firms in this sample are not adept at high wages. For the respondents, only 25% pay above the sector's average wage, the remaining percentage being below the average. In addition, the Portuguese government has provided support to companies that have been Lay Off since March 2020.

As part of the company's attitude towards social responsibility, respondents believe that the results for shareholders are satisfactory, but not for society. In 42% of cases the companies objected that their attitude towards social responsibility is important, whereas for 50% it is indifferent. Respondents consider that the position of companies towards social responsibility can be understood as slight in 42% of the cases, rather important for 50% and extremely important for 8% of the cases.

As for the aspects that influence the adoption of social responsibility and the impact of communicating the practice of social responsibility, the results indicate that private companies have shown a greater aptitude for an attitude of social responsibility and with it better economic results that balance the return to shareholders.

As for the size of the company we can see a greater correlation between micro companies and social responsibility than in small and medium-sized companies in relation to CSR. It seems that the size of the company affects both its positioning and the profit making and the ability of managers to meet the needs of the environment in which the company operates. In this sense, we can see from the data that micro and small enterprises seek to harmonize the results of shareholders with the social responsibility undertaken. In these companies, especially small ones, there is a commitment to achieve a certain volume of profits. In both micro and small enterprises, managers seek to secondarily look after economic and management interests in order to safeguard the needs of society at the socially responsible level. Of the respondents, 33% are obliged to maximise profits, while 67% appear not to favour this management policy. From the latter group, which does not privilege profits, the respondents answered that they consider more often the interests of the company than those of the company (41%), and that they do so only in cases considered to be ad hoc (40%).

For the respondents, social responsibility is observed as an integral part of the company's objectives in 100% of the answers obtained. Cumulatively it is verified that the respondents observe a harmony between profit and the practice of social responsibility. This observation is seen in a slightly associable way in 33% of the cases, quite associable in the same percentage and, very much associable in a constant proportion.

The dissemination of social responsibility according to the respondents is done with greater expression to unidentified means. These other means are followed by social and product/service labelling indicators which the company promotes. The elements that show little use in the dissemination of social responsibility information are the traditional balance sheet, the social report, the annex and changes in equity. On this issue respondents revealed very little knowledge about the situation of socially responsible reporting.

Companies make more use of the following channels for social responsibility reporting: company web pages, internet, followed by other media such as press, TV and radio. The most used communication tools are advertising and events. All other communication tools are more or less used within a pattern that is considered to be balanced against advertising and events.

The Internet, is one of the tools made available by companies with information and training content for most respondents, (92%). Only a small proportion (8%) do not provide their employees with this tool, it remains to be seen whether this is a restriction or just a zealous determination.

In this sample the respondents revealed that environmental reporting through economic and social information focuses on water management programmes, energy efficiency gains and timely environmental information. Since they consider that the percentage of information production over and before 30 days is very close. In terms of financial accounting disclosure, respondents are divided between qualitative and quantitative information. For qualitative information disclosure, respondents believe that it is more visible in the management report. In my opinion, this is not surprising given its legal obligation. According to the respondents, this qualitative information is also found in specific, internal reports and in environmental labelling. I believe that this last element of reporting is proof that companies are seeking in the most widespread media to present their contribution to the environment and society.

Within the quantitative information the respondents reveal that this is done most in internal, specific reports and in the management report. They also consider that the social balance sheet is a piece, in some cases, used for this purpose. For the respondents, qualitative information is not particularly found in marketing campaigns and other accounting tools. They also revealed that the quantitative information is not high.

The sectors of activity studied made it possible, on the basis of the answers obtained, to verify that most of the companies studied belonged to the tertiary or service sector. The next largest group was the secondary with a very considerable distance from the primary. From the sample of firms studied it can be seen that most of them have few workers, whose expenditures occupy the largest share of current costs. Of these firms, a large number have net results below 15,000 Euros per year (data for 2019).

The majority of respondents were male, which highlights the lack of women in leading positions at national level. Of the companies that responded (344), 221 were private and 123 were public. In the group of private companies around 51% are micro companies, 27% are small companies and 22% are medium-sized companies.

In summary, the companies that carry out social responsibility practices do not affect their results, which are one of the organizational objectives. It is explicitly inferred that social responsibility is associated with profits, thus with economic results. The data also indicate that this practice gives reliability and ethics to companies, and some recognize prestige in the practice of social responsibility, in line with the results of the article by Lozano and Padilla (2013). In the opposite direction, some companies show that they should ethically improve their social responsibility performance, although they do not overlap their interests with those of stakeholders, the pursuit of profit being a priority.

Social responsibility is reported essentially on product labels, some financial items that are the subject of disclosure (cash flow, management report), in the press, on TV and on the Internet in the form of advertising, philanthropy, wind sponsorship, etc. The observation of social responsibility is associated with the support of sport and culture.

It is explicitly stated by companies that socially responsible information should circulate freely among stakeholders without access restrictions. Businesses perceive the implications of social responsibility in economic terms, but also recognise its impact on the environment. Nevertheless, they seem to have no control over the environmental implications of their activity, nor at least in energy saving.

Although information on environmental matters is reported, companies are unanimous in identifying quantification problems in disclosure. The main dilemmas lie in indices of environmental standards, environmental sensitivity, environmental awareness, environmental performance and other forms of environmental management. There are difficulties in the current accounting normalization (SNC) at the level of measurement, identification and quantification. For these reasons, the recognition of environmental items is made as assets, expenditure, income, liabilities, equity and others by the companies surveyed. The sample data are not consistent in the answers obtained on this subject. In certain cases, companies reveal environmental items as a positive (asset, income, etc.) or a negative (liability, expense, etc.) element. Regardless of this classification, companies' wastewater, electricity, waste, diesel and other fuels, do not recycle, among other issues whose environmental interest should not be underestimated. All this despite having environmental management programs, environmental recovery, environmental audits, observation of climate conventions, current protocols and other environmental standards. It seems that the observance of these laws is not enough, companies are inattentive in this matter for convenience, or they are not subject to economic and financial penalties that cause them to be forced to wake up to a problem that affects them all.

Conclusions

Regardless of the type of practice carried out in the field of social responsibility, the corporate form, space and nature of the company, the concept of social responsibility is based on the same governing principles: doing good to others does well! The practice has evolved over time just like its concept but without becoming reductive or finalised.

Social responsibility was born in the last century but has gained visibility in today's world. It has had increments of different social, environmental aspects, which have made it possible to differentiate the existence of different forms of social responsibility (Harayama and Nitta, 2011). Its practice is linked to the interests of stakeholder groups with high economic power vis-à-vis others that are simply neglected (Belal and Roberts, 2010).

The concepts and ramifications that gave rise to it still today make it possible to develop the concept under construction. There are several arguments for and against it, but the first are the importance given to information. However, although important, there are several constraints to its realisation: little support from standardisation, academic models that only serve isolated cases, qualitative forms that do not accompany traditional FD's, difficulties in accounting to express the true and faithful image without compromising the other characteristics.

First of all, companies have difficulties in involving social responsibility actions in their agenda: problems in developing key competences, inadequate stakeholder experience, gaps in procedures and integration of financial and social systems, among others (Baxi and Ray, 2009). This makes it possible to maximise the positive development of the impact of organisations on society (Werner, 2009), with the financial sector being one of the most dynamic in terms of the application of social responsibility (Lozano, Berjillos and Valencia, 2009).

Social responsibility is a voluntary initiative (Tashman and Marano, 2010), which allows for the maximisation of well-being but shows no link between financial communication of social responsibility and existing measures (Uccello, 2009).

The need for purely accounting measures and forms of reporting is becoming a problem both for the purposes and means used and for the exercise or not of social responsibility itself. There is no consensus on socio-economic and environmental reporting (Oliveira, Luca, Ponte, Júnior, 2009), but if we consider that reporting affects the organisational position in a way considered strong (Maksimainen and Saariluoma, 2010), in parallel with the disclosure of socially responsible information, a social policy, mission or strategy must be implemented in the company not only for its indispensability but also for its usefulness and visibility of a company's performance.

Nevertheless, due to the perception that corporate social responsibility is an intangible element as or more transparent than others (Arcas-Lario and Briones-Peñalver, 2009), its management is of paramount importance and is not limited to the company's philanthropic actions, encompassing new behaviours and relationships today.

It is constantly listed as a variable, depending on the type of activity and the sector to which the company is linked. Probably the greater the competitiveness of the sector, the more advantageous and inevitable it will be to make commitments from a socially responsible management. Thus, social responsibility implies the involvement of several areas of the company, including the entire production chain, i.e. the company must be analysed from an intra- and inter-organisational perspective.

From the study we can see that companies that claim to practice social responsibility actions seem to forget the environmental and social compliance with the laws imposed in Portugal. Few companies in general take advantage of social responsibility to capitalize on the satisfaction of their stakeholders, to leverage their results and thus their performance. Therefore, the Portuguese case may have suffered some influence on these results as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, but it is precisely in these moments of economic, financial, social and public health crisis that companies seek to improve their performance.

Study limitations and recommendations for future studies

Based on this study it is possible to see that although business performance is a variable that can be obtained by the practice of corporate responsibility, reporting problems can condition their knowledge. The difficulties in reporting social responsibility information stem from the absence of financial or quantitative measures. This limitation to which the study was subject could eventually be analysed using qualitative variables, but required a separate study, using an interview rather than a questionnaire as was applied to this sample of enterprises under study.

It is recommended that in future research it should be possible to analyse both business performance and the practice or communication of social responsibility information from a qualitative perspective in order to assess whether the conclusions obtained converge in the same direction as the present study.

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