

Intangibles of CSR in the Tourist Sector

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Abstract

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can affect positively the final profitability of the company and generally has relation with a vision of the business on a long-term basis and in which they take in account value like the ethical, the transparency and the responsibility to the society. This affects of equal form to the conventional company as to the tourist. Having these appearances like starting point this investigation is divided in two big blocks, the first centres in a compilation of the information in base to personal interviews to depth with representatives of the trade, the hospitality industry, the restoration, in addition to the area of cultural services with the intention to identify actions of CSR generated by the companies. The second part of the investigation centred in the analysis and detection of the different intangibles in the tourist and commercial sector identified by the tourists and visitors, for this used a qualitative method through the utilisation of focal groups.

Key Words: Corporate Social responsibility, intangibles, tourism, consumer, service

1. Introduction

The investigation on the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) began more than fifty years, when started the debate caused by the apparition of a new socioeconomic model (Freeman, 1984; Carroll, 1979) this made companies to worry about an additional responsibility to the one of the pure obtaining profits, the Corporate Social Responsibility nowadays continues expanding his investigation in the academic literature, while it continues debating on the most hit definition and the fields of the CSR, the companies at present centre in another level of discussion: the profits that comport to the organisations the practice of actions socially responsible and as it is possible count their profits. It is in this line that Simpson and Kohers (2002) defend to the CSR like manager of the improvement of the financial performance of the company. Maignan (2001) clears that this financial performance is caused by the significant increase of the sales, reflection of a greater fidelity by part of his customers. We can find, besides, other researchers that relate the increase of the capacity of attraction and retention of workers like part of the profit of the CSR (McGuire et al., 1988), or that link the increase of the eases of access to the capital that can have obtained the socially responsible companies (Hockerts and Moir, 2004).

But it is Hall (1992) the one who affirms that the CSR, together with the reputation of the product and the know-how of the workers, are the intangible resources more important of the company as they contribute to the business success. The same author does a classification of the intangible resources between active and competitions and situates the corporate reputation between the active intangible of the companies (Hall, 1993).

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During the last years some companies begin to include in his annual memories information on appearances no financial of the business related with the social responsibility (Whitehouse, 2006). The most advanced already incorporate to his usual practices the preparation of an annual memory of sustainability, parallel to his annual memory, where includes all the notable information on CSR that they carry inside and out of the company. This new interest coincides with the publication of the Green Book of the Commission of the European Communities (2001) that pretends to boost a frame of application of the social responsibility in the companies.

We know, therefore, that the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can affect positively to the final profitability of the company and generally has relation with a vision of the business on a long-term basis and in which they take in account value like the ethical, the transparency and the responsibility to the society.

Inside the factors that motivate to the companies to adopt, of voluntary form, strategies of CSR are intangible but are closely related with strategic appearances. We could say that his motivations are not purely financial, but they incorporate besides appearances that contribute to the improvement of the reputation of the company or to the achievement of competitive advantages for the same. At the same time, the CSR is a form to give answer to the increasing pressure of the stakeholders that ask new solutions to the companies in the frame of a sustainable development. (de Uribe Salazar et al, 2010).

A lot of companies leaders have explain at present with organisational structures of CSR, (or of Sustainability) and others have begun to adopt measures, further of what the legislation demands them in subjects related with the Good Government, the improvement of the labour field, the social action, the respect to the environment or the commercial practices, including in this last the relations with customers and providers.

The challenge that confront the companies in the actuality goes through the incorporation of the Corporate Social Responsibility in the business strategy and inside this, that establish mechanisms of dialogue with all the parts interested, since this is the best form to know his needs and requirements and can like this answer to them. In sum, that structure is a true strategy of CSR and manage like such.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Definition of Corporate Social Responsibility

The majority of the researchers of this concept consider that it does not exist still a definition that can consider universally accepted (Whitehouse, 2006). Of the same form, the international organisms that work the thematic of the CSR neither have arrived to a common definition. The World Bussines Council for Sustaineble Developement (WBCSD) defines it like “the decision of the company to contribute to the sustainable development, working with his employees, his families and the local community, as well as with the society in his group, to improve his quality of life.” Whereas the Green Book of the Commission of the European Communities (2001:7) says “the voluntary integration of the social and environmental worries in his commercial operations and his relations with his interlocutor. Of wide form is defined like a concept with arrangement to the companies decide voluntarily contribute to the attainment of a better society and a cleaner environment”.

Although a quite near definition to our form to understand the CSR would be one of De la Cuesta and Valor (2003:7) those who describe it like “the group of obligations and commitments, legal and ethical, national and international, with the groups of interest, that derive of the impacts that the activity and the operations of the organisations produce in the social field, labour, environmental and of the human rights”.

Once defined the Corporate Social Responsibility, will try to deepen more in the concept to detail some of his principles, identify the fields where acts and comprise his dimensions.

For De la Cuesta and Valor (2003) the social responsibilities that the company would have to face are:

- Economic responsibility: so that a company was considered economically responsible has to create value for the stakeholders, customers, providers and employees.
- Responsibility Partner-Cultural: hade reference to the respect to the valid legislation, to the cultural inheritance, to the social habits and to the implication in the political and cultural life.
- Environmental responsibility: any action or decision that carry the company and that have an impact on the environment.

The Green Book of the Commission of the European Communities (2001) identify two dimensions of the CSR: the internal, that would correspond to the sphere of the company and the external, that situate in the surroundings of the same company.

Inside the internal dimension, the socially responsible practices affect fundamentally to the workers and all the relative to the management of human resources, health and rights of the company, in this dimension also includes the management of the natural resources used in the production.

In the external dimension the activities are related with a wide fan of partners that can be the commercial partners, providers, consumers, public authorities, local communities, etc.

We can therefore conclude that the CSR are a series of actions that can affect both dimensions being able to be considered even like a competitive advantage of the companies, advantage that can turn into an intangible, differential factor that can help to the company to differentiate of his competition.

2.2. Definition of Intangible

For Baruch Lev (2003) “The wealth and the growth in the economy of nowadays are determined mainly by the active intangible (intellectuals). The active materials and financial are turning into commodities, offering in the best of the cases an average profitability”, this sentence expresses of clear form the importance of the intangible inside the company.

In concordance with the expressed by Lev, increasingly, the active materials turn into commodities, in other words commodities with few differentiable appearances between them, that by himself same do not contribute hardly aggregated value and that they are purchased in his majority by the factor price, in an increasingly saturated market and competitive. It is the correct development and management of the intangible what creates companies leaders that generate more value that his competitors.

However, and in spite of the importance of these intangible, and to the equal that in the case of the CSR, exists some ambiguity in his definition, to be able to define the intangible, obviously before is necessary to define the active, for the International Norms of Accounting (NIC) and the International Norms of Financial Information (NIIF) an active is: “a resource controlled by the company like consequence of past events, of the that expects economic profits in the future”. To this it is necessary to add that, according to the International Accounting Standards (IAS) and the NIC 38 (his equivalent in Spain), an active intangible is: “[...] that active identifiable of character no monetary and without physical substance [...]”.

The international norms establish, equally, that a company controls an active “[...] if it has the power to obtain the economic profits futures that flow of the underlying resource and, also, can restrict the access of others to these profits [...]”.

Therefore, and such as it mentions the professor Eusebi Nomen (2005), “[...] all the active are resources, but not all the resources are active and suits to have clear of what speak when we speak to control”.

Of general form could say that like intangible find all that can include in the balance, as they would be the marks registered, the rights of author, the patents, the agreements, the royalties, the rights of patent rights or intellectual, the licences, or the administrative grantings; it is in synthesis all that on what the company exerts a real control and that generates or will generate profitability.

In addition to the described, inside the intangible resources have to place the group of appearances that contribute to generate competitive advantages that generally do not have the condition of active. In this group can include: the Corporate Social Responsibility, the reputation, the human resources or the organizational structure, factors that generate value, increasing the profitability of the company. (Truño And Rialp, 2008)

The Institute of Analysis of Intangible (IAI), non-profit organisation formed by companies, organisations and schools distinguishes five areas of intangible that can be identified in the companies:

- Human Capital. It covers knowledges, skills, attitudes and experience of the members of a company.
- Structural Capital (organisational and technological). It refers to the knowledge systematised that it gives to know of explicit form by the organisation. Inside them they include routines, processes of work, technical or programs that increase the creation of value inside the company.
- Main Mark. It represents the group of values and attributes from the total knowledge of the consumer on the mark, that achieves to differentiate the product and offers a value added for the consumer.
- Corporate Social Responsibility. According to the European Union, is the voluntary adoption of social commitments further of the statutory obligations. Such commitments that pretend to increase the levels of social development and environmental protection
- Corporate Reputation. The Forum of Corporate Reputation defines it like: “[...] the group of perceptions that have on the company the diverse groups of interest —stakeholders— so many interns like external. It is the result of the behaviour developed by the company along the time and describes his capacity to distribute value to the mentioned groups”.

In the process of construction of intangible like area of knowledge arise opportunities for the companies and institutions that are able to understand his meaning of global form. The present study pretends to analyse of qualitative form the characteristics of the intangible in the tourist company, with the end to be able to identify which are those that are carrying inside the tourist company and which are considered more notable for the tourist.

3. Methodology

This investigation divides in two big blocks, the first centres in a compilation of the information in base to the work of field, this first stage of the investigation has consisted basically in the application of personal surveys to representatives of the trade, the hospitality industry, the restoration, in addition to the area of cultural services in populations of the Costa Brava (Spain).

The survey consisted in doing to the participants a serail of questions on his behaviour, intentions, attitudes, consciousness, motivations, etc. all oriented to the research of information on the activities of Corporate Social Responsibility carrying by the company in which they work. The aim of this first stage has a double intention: the first, of diagnosis and the second of stimulus.

The script used for the application of these interviews has been realised with the intention to know the profile of the interviewed and his hierarchical position in the job centre.

For this first analysis have taken into account the following areas of the Corporate Social Responsibility,

- Equality of opportunities.
- Cultural diversity.
- Environment.

The second part of the investigation centred in the analysis and detection of the different intangible in the tourist and commercial sector, for this used a qualitative method through the utilisation of focal groups. The focal group is a technician of “lifting” in social studies. His justification and theoretical validation bases in the basic postulate to be a collective representation to level micro of what happens to level macro, all time that in the said speech the participants generate images, concepts, common places, related with a community or social community.

The technician of the focal groups base in the meeting with modality of interview open and structured, in said meeting looks for that a group of individuals that have been previously selected by the researcher argue and elaborate a thematic or social fact that is object of investigation from the personal experience.

The election of this technician of compilation of the information justifies by that with this study want to analyse perceptions, no final behaviours. They wish know ideas, motivations, attitudes and opinions of the tourist on the Corporate Social Responsibility of the distinct businesses of the tourist place. The qualitative results obtained will allow to create a diagram that represent the distinct ideological positions of the participants of the study, that correspond to a territorial context and specific area.

The focal groups or groups of discussion selected for this study base in the interaction between actors that have something to say and think on the CSR and the tourist and commercial sector. They represent different groups of actors of the tourist sector. A heterogeneous composition that guarantees that they produce different levels of interaction, what ensures a debate multi-faceted that reduces the bias that could cause in the results the eventual dominant role of some group or person, at the same time ensures the total structural representativeness when treating of groups reduced.

For completing the diverse individual postures in the sessions the methodology has accompanied of external queries to the focal group, headed to visitors of the place. His opinions also collect in the presentation of results.

It insists in the fact that we work with opinions and perceptions and no with practices or real behaviours of visitors or tourists. In this sense, the information that collects through the focal group allows, no only contribute to this investigation of empirical form, besides, pretends to aim some recommendations, so much for representatives as for employers of the sector splitting of the direct perspective of the user and/or consumer.

4. Results

Below are some of the results in which they stand out the main areas of Corporate Social Responsibility of the populations analysed.

4.1. Equality of Opportunities

We have been able to observe that practically in all and each one of the fields studied (trade, hospitality industry, restoration and cultural services) the employee has the possibility to access to flexible schedules that allow him conciliate the labour and familiar life. Some examples of this flexibility and that have been mentioned by the interviewed: it exists the possibility to access half days, intensive days, modification of turns of work, and even the possibility to access to special permissions for the solution of familiar problems. Although a small percentage of people, especially of the field of the hospitality industry, has manifested that in could do improvements in this appearance. Some of the suggestions manifested with greater incidence go directed to the possibility to expand the schedules in the kindergartens, reduce the costs that give off of his use and also the creation of kindergartens inside the same hotels.

4.2. Cultural Diversity

We have been able to observe that exists a healthy balance between the companies that hire or explain in his staff with employees recently arrived and those that no. Equally happens in the case of the women, especially the field innkeeper presents a higher percentage (86%) happening the contrary in the cultural sector. In the case of the hospitality industry the percentage of contracting of recently arrived increases considerably during the summer, factor conditioned obviously by a seasonal question.

4.3. Actions of RS in Environment

The companies interviewed realise a wide fan of actions in profit of the environment. In his big majority is the recycling of cardboard the one who develops with more normality. It is in the field innkeeper in which it exists a special worry for fulfilling actions that support the energetic saving. They deserve a special quotation those hotels and campings that have implemented actions in profit of the surroundings, between them:

- Turned off automatic of the air conditioned when they open the windows,
 - Light bulbs of low consumption,
 - Filters in the taps for the saving of water,
 - Washers of low consumption,
 - Donation of the organic waste to the municipal kennel,
 - Implementation of a crusher of waters.
- Like challenges or important recommendations in the diffusion and understanding of these practical consider necessary:
- More information, promotion and stimulus for the development of actions of CSR.
 - Breaking with the idea that CSR actions are only for big companies
 - Learn to take advantage of the actions of CSR in profit of the company, especially in the SMEs
 - Use the training like tool for the achievement of a competitive company, socially responsible and sustainable.
 - Communicate the actions of CSR to the strategic publics or stakeholders.
 - Boost the dialogue and the exchanges of experiences with the groups of interest, to follow boosting the CSR.

The second part of this investigation centres in the development and analysis of the speech on Corporate Social Responsibility by part of the focal group.

Like appearances to stand out initially can mention that of general form the participants of the group do not have a clear idea of what is the Corporate Social Responsibility, confuse indistinctly the appearances that could consider of voluntary type by part of the company when realising actions that favour the equality, the cultural diversity or the environment with which are of legal type and therefore compulsory for the companies.

Therefore it proceeds to clear the concept between the participants defining the CSR like a business strategy that self-evident of voluntary form and that goes further of the legal appearances of social and environmental type. Because of the nature of the study, in this point puts special emphasis in the areas of commercial type, related with the hospitality industry, with the restoration and with the culture, that affect of direct form to the business tourist sector and that they are more valued by the visitors.

Like evaluation on the dynamics of the group, fits to mention like positive appearance that the interventions presented evenly, this reflects in an optimum participation and equitable of the time of intervention of all the members of the group, and therefore of the sectors represented.

5. Concrete Results

The sporadic visitors value of special way the development of activities and the provision of cultural knowledge by part of the tourist sector like a form to know better the zone and enjoy more actively of his offer.

The usual visitors, instead, do not give so much importance to the cultural appearances, probably because of the fact that they are connoisseurs of the same after years to visit the region. In this group there is another problem that concerns more and is the relation quality-price and the ups and downs that detects the usual visitor in this sense.

An appearance of coincidence between usual visitors and the actors of the place affects to the model of tourism. These groups demand a model of vicinity that tend did the rural and natural.

In summary, these groups prefer a near tourism of quality and familiar, in the case of the place translates in appearances related with the environmental impact and the model of quality of the zone. This feeling of loss of model of vicinity translates in annoyances for the visitor, that affect appearances related with the cleaning, the waste and even the noises generated in the zone.

The social and environmental responsibility can be an active strategy of creation of intangible for a company or sector has to improve his quality and competitiveness. The tourist sector of the zone finds in front of an important challenge, the need to generate intangible values that increase his competitiveness in front of other tourist destinations of similar characteristics. The challenges that has by in front include in a no exhaustive list:

- The vicinity of other tourist destinations of similar characteristics
- The European opening that increases the offer of destinations to prices much more competitive and for varied profiles of visitors
- The competitiveness in the prices, so much to regional level like European
- The risk to go down the quality in consequence of competition to economic level
- The urban pressure and the risks associated of change of tourist model

Once exhausted the margin of creation of economic value, the social and environmental responsibility can be a strategy that provide value of other characteristics, also perceivable by part of the customer, especially in some highly competitive surroundings.

This study has identified some basic factors valued by the customers of the tourist and commercial sector of the zone, and that go further of the strictly economic factors. This information has obtained from the opinion and assessments of the own visitors and users, that have identified fundamental appearances that could be considered intangible for the sector so much for the social area and like the environmental, that is to say, appearances that could contribute to create social and economic value taken into account by the customers, in addition to the strictly economic value.

These intangible characterise to continuation in three big blocks and arise of the integration of results analysed:

5.1. Intangible of Quality

- Relation quality-price. This is the more clearly factor appreciated by the visitors of the zone. Now well, when this appearance values qualitatively, the visitors declare that they are had to pay a higher price as long as the quality was high or keep. This intangible value can not consider as strictly economic but of quality.

- Received. Inside the qualitative factors valued by the visitors, the received considers key for a good stay in the destination. The that gives to the first impression and to the type of deal received along all the stay.

- Service. Intimately related with the two previous appearances, the service has been strongly valued by the visitors that have participated in the study, this subject has related of clear form with other appearances like the training and specialisation of the workers of the sector in his field of work, but also a knowledge of these employees in other subjects as for example cultural knowledge of the zone, languages that facilitate the communication, provision of options of leisure, shopping, etc. for the visitors, between others.

- Tranquility. Again, we find an intangible value related with the quality of the sector and at the same time with other intangible factors of social and environmental type. When the visitors stand out the importance of the tranquility, do it in relation to the model of tourism in what are interested, being east a model of vicinity. Often it did reference to the risk of the growth, of the increase of noise like consequence of the overcrowding, to the loss of security, for example at night for strolling with minors without risks, etc.

5.2. Intangible Social and Cultural

- Feeding and culture. It gives a notable value to the use of local and regional products in the restoration and especially to the access to the information on habits and culture linked to the feeding. The visitors, especially the foreigners but also those that come from other regions consider that the foods and gastronomic products can be a good vehicle for knowing better the destination.

- Diversity and culture. In a European frame in expansion and that is integrated by new cultures and identities, is increasingly important to link the tourism to the knowledge of the region of destination at the same time that it accepts the diversity and does of her an advantage. The tourists know to appreciate this and when they defend a model of tourism of vicinity do it also in relation with the possibility to know more on the culture of the zone although they value that this do from an optimum knowledge of the culture of origin. The question of the language is in this sense fundamental and the tourists expect that it can them attend and inform in his original language.

- Diversity and age. The visitors recognise that there is different options of leisure in function of the ages and value very positively the fact that the tourist sector know to give a correct answer to the leisure.

They do a call to the diversification of the offer in function of the age putting special emphasis to the childish bands, teenage and of age more advanced, for which say that no always there is all the offer that was desirable.

- Equality, justice and respect. Although it is not easy that the visitors express concrete examples what value exactly in the subject of the equality and the justice, seems that there is an increasing sensitivity for seeing surrounded of a respectful deal to all the world with independence of the age, gender, race or origin.

- Tourism of vicinity. All these factors can be summarized in one only on which there is a high degree of coincidence between the visitors that have participated in this study. The majority declare to have chosen the zone like destination by the fact to treat of small and next villages, by the made possible of a personalised deal and moved away of the big overcrowding and by the dimension reduced in several appearances, no only the physicist. It values that they are small villages but also that the beaches, trades, hotels, restaurants, etc. keep this dimension and the next deal with the customer.

- Rural tourism of nature. Very related with the previous, the visitors participants declare that, for going further of the tourism of sun and beach, was convenient to develop more the tourism of nature, taking advantage of the surroundings and the fact that is surrounded highland, forest and footpaths.

5.3. Intangible Environmental

- Environmental impact and town planning. Splitting of the last intangible values identified in the previous block, the tourist models of vicinity and of nature, arises in the debate a question that is not extraneous to the visitors: the urban growth and the environmental pressure that can exert as well as the effects that can have in a change of model of tourism that do it less next and more crowded. There is surprise between the usual visitors on the growth continued that perceive in the village and express that the moderate growth could compensate with a greater growth of the rural tourism.

- Saving of water and energy. When speak of environmental subjects, the water and the energy are the vectors that mention more clearly and, especially the subject of the water. Especially, there is the perception that from the tourist sector and public consumes more water of the available in a place known as of *secano*. This does reference especially to the irrigation of gardens and to the water used for the cleaning of streets.

- Ecology and consumption. Especially between visitors of foreign origin (fundamentally France) there is surprise on the unsustainable habits in the commercial sector and of the consumption. It stands out the use exaggerated of the stock exchanges of the purchase, boxes of cardboard and containers and packagings in general.

- Waste and reuse. Also between foreign visitors thinks that does lacking to give more value to the waste and boost the reuse.

- Cleaning. They consider clean cities, Now well, would value a model of cleaning more based in the prevention and the sensitisation of restaurants, trades and neighbours, and less based in the a *posteriori* cleaning that generates a lot of consumption of water and causes a lot of noise (especially by the step of vehicles of collected in the narrow streets of the city).

- Noise. Directly related with the previous, the noise is a type of environmental pollution that concerns to the visitors. They consider that the noise comes generated especially by the public services and of cleaning and that, therefore, serious of easy solution.

- Mobility. Especially for youngsters and visitors of age advanced, considers that they are insufficient options of transport with neighbouring villages or to greater cities of tourist type (already was Barcelona, Girona or other average cities).

- Environmental communication. It values positively that the establishments of the tourist and commercial sector do an active communication of the environmental measures that carry to term and do also tasks of information and sensitisation. For example the hotels with regard to the use of towels consider that it would be exportable to other subjects related with the use of energy, recycling, saving of the water, cleaning of beaches, etc.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

This second stage of the study has based in qualitative technicians of research of face to identify appearances and factors that the visitors and tourists value in the tourist and commercial sector further of the price and of the strictly economic subjects.

The basic technician has been the focal group that by the number reduced of participant has complemented with other participatory technicians of assessment by part of the public. Another limitation has been the temporary moment of celebration of the work of field. When effecting to finals of season, apart from the number reduced of participants also does lacking to take into account that his profile is very particular and does not answer of total form to the general profile of the visitors. The profile looked for includes usual visitors and also sporadic, as well as regional and also foreign. But it does not include all the regions and countries of origin of the usual tourism in the zone, neither includes all the ages. Nevertheless, the interventions have been quite rich and varied as to ensure a good collected of data and a first level of information the sufficient useful as to start with to act.

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