Social responsibility and the evolution of corporate philanthropy: An analysis of successful corporate-cause partnerships in an era of the global corporate citizen

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Abstract

This paper explores the ethical challenges to corporate philanthropy and corporate-cause relationships. The study uses Carroll's (1991) hierarchy of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to contextualise changes in how philanthropy is practised today. Based on the original concept and subsequent theoretical enhancements, the article builds upon Carroll's suggestion that CSR is evolving into corporate citizenship. The study is a qualitative analysis of award-winning corporate-cause programmes investigating if and how successful corporate-cause partnerships fulfil the expectations of the corporate citizen. Successful programmes are strategic, blending competence- and market-driven philanthropic motives while measuring both the economic and the social impact of their efforts on the corporation, cause, and community.

Introduction

> Successful philanthropy today is not simply writing checks to the local charity. Philanthropic pursuits are becoming an important way for most corporations to communicate with stakeholders, gauge their interests, and satisfy their elevated expectations. (CECP/ McKinsey & Company, n.d., p. 9)

Corporate philanthropy is changing. Yet the evolution of the practice has been a constant for more than a century, and societal concerns about corporate involvement in social issues are similar to those voiced at least as far back as the 1800s (Sharfman, 1994). Should companies give away hard-earned profits? Is philanthropy just a way to create goodwill? Are corporations trying to assuage guilt for questionable business practices by supporting causes that cover their sins? Are corporate monies going toward social problems that should be addressed by government or other institutions, or even individuals/shareholders rather than the company itself? Is corporate philanthropy ethical, or even legal?

In the late 19th and early 20th century, United States courts upheld rulings against corporations giving money away. Slowly, however, corporate giving gained acceptance and was eventually legitimised through courts and common practice (Sharfman, 1994). Though the most common form of corporate philanthropy is direct funding of charities, today's corporate philanthropy landscape includes a wide variety of types of 'giving' including cash donations, but also other resources like product donations, expertise, and employee volunteering (Sharfman, 1994; Kotler & Lee, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to better define the corporate citizen in terms of CSR expectations and understand how contemporary organisations are fulfilling their discretionary responsibilities through corporate-cause partnerships. This article explores the ethical challenges to corporate philanthropy and the corporate-cause relationship. It investigates how companies communicate their giving activities and how charitable organisations are working with companies to build sustainable programmes. The study uses Carroll's (1991; 1999) hierarchy of corporate social responsibility to contextualise changes in how philanthropy is practiced today. Based on the original concept and subsequent theoretical enhancements, this study builds upon Carroll's suggestion that CSR is evolving into corporate citizenship, resulting in what has become a

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more holistic treatment of philanthropy as part of the CSR mix.

The following literature review explores how corporate giving has evolved by addressing ethical concerns and redefining philanthropy. Carroll's (1979; 1991; see also 1999) oft-cited CSR typology provides a context for actions defining a 'corporate citizen' and develops a more nuanced perspective of how philanthropy fits into the CSR pattern. This paper then analyses award-winning corporate-cause programmes to investigate if and how successful corporate-cause partnerships fulfil the expectations of the corporate citizen. Finally, this paper discusses the implications of corporate citizens' behaviour on the individual corporations and on the causes they support.

Literature review

Much of the literature on ethics and corporate philanthropy advocates for corporate giving by countering arguments that the practice is, on face value, unethical. The primary argument against corporate giving is that corporate profits should go to the shareholders or be invested back into the business. A business's sole obligation is to be economically viable (Shaw & Post, 1993). Early philanthropy by corporate owners was accomplished by the owners themselves giving away their own funds, not those of the corporation. This was further ingrained when court rulings stated corporations could not go beyond their contractual obligations – that is, any activity other than normal business operations was illegal behaviour. Courts ruled against a railroad company in 1881 even though the owners argued their support of a peace rally/music festival had increased business. Courts sided with stockholders in this and other cases involving corporate charitable contributions (Sharfman, 1994).

Nevertheless, Sharfman (1994) argues, corporate donations began to grow in the late 1800s, with companies funding schools, libraries, and other local services that would entice workers to otherwise less desirable communities – early efforts in strategic giving. Some anomalies in corporate giving existed, seeming less strategic and more humanitarian (Macy's, for example, raised money for an orphanage and the base of the Statue of Liberty), however, most truly charitable giving was done by individual owners rather than from corporate coffers. Urbanisation in the late 19th century led to social problems and economic challenges that provided a context for corporate involvement, and courts began to rule in favour of corporations that were contributing to areas that would directly and indirectly benefit the company and/or its employees (Sharfman, 1994).

Critics of early corporate giving pointed out that rather than benevolent behaviour, companies supported causes to fix problems they produced. That is, some of the social problems and economic challenges could be attributed to corporate actions (Sharfman, 1994). Similar accusations target today's corporate giving initiatives. Suspect motives for corporate giving include covering unethical financial dealings, environmental impact, or other exploitative business practices, and righting problems caused by company products or operations (Koehn & Ueng, 2010; Tesler & Malone, 2008).

Many researchers have explored corporate motivations for and consumer/public perceptions of corporate giving (see, e.g., Cherneva, 2012; Fioravante, 2010; Gan, 2006; Koch, 1979; Lee, Lancendorfer & Reck, 2012; Parguel, Benoît-Moreau & Larceneux, 2011; Stoll, 2008). The issue is also frequently discussed in trade publications and the popular press, and appears as a recurring topic in journals like the *Journal of Business Ethics* (see, e.g., Shaw & Post, 1993; Wulfson, 2001; Halme & Laurila, 2009; Shum & Yam, 2011; Ohreen & Petry, 2012; Kabongo, Chang & Li, 2013). The range of arguments varies little, however, with most contending corporations should behave responsibly and shareholders, stakeholders and the larger public should hold them accountable for their range of activities – from everyday business to philanthropic endeavours. The question remains, though – what measure of accountability should be used?

Frequently, Carroll's (1979; 1991) pyramid of corporate social responsibility is the yardstick by which researchers measure companies' actions (see, e.g. Maignan, Ferrell & Hult, 1999). According to Carroll, the most important activity for businesses is to maintain *economic* viability. Second, companies must *obey the laws* regulating their actions. Third, businesses must be mindful of *ethical* practices beyond legal adherence, to act according to societal expectations. For example, contemporary expectations include fairness to employees, environmental sensitivity, fair competition, etc. Finally, corporations have a *discretionary* function. From the outset, Carroll asserted, "These four categories are not mutually exclusive, nor are they intended to portray a continuum with economic concerns on one end and social concerns on the other" (1979, p. 499). Nevertheless, later Carroll's (1991) pyramid suggested the hierarchy of the responsibilities, which was implied but not explicitly articulated in the earlier article. He also defined *philanthropy* as the primary *discretionary* function of business, replacing the term in the final model (Carroll, 1991).

Recently, Diener (2013) proposed a Charitable Responsibility Model of CSR as an alternative to Carroll's pyramid. The difference is a distinction between charity and philanthropy. Charity, according to Diener, is altruistic while corporate philanthropy is connected to economic gain. Diener suggests corporations distinguish 'charitable giving' from 'philanthropic giving' when describing CSR activities. Thus, Diener recommends making the fourth level in the hierarchy simply charitable activities and coupling strategic philanthropy with economic responsibilities at the base of the pyramid.

Diener's (2013) proposal is indicative of the complex relationships corporations have with society today. Contractual obligations once best understood as a company providing a product or service in exchange for some kind of remuneration now include a social contract that goes beyond the simple exchange of goods or services. For example, now, elements of corporate giving can include consumer involvement in the form of cause-related marketing (CRM), further complicating the corporate-consumer-cause relationship and societal expectations (see Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Edwards & Kreshel, 2008). It may not be enough to try to parse out corporate motives for giving into categories like communal obligation, goodwill building, and strategic giving (Porter & Kramer, 2002). Today's giving managers must balance a mixed motives model incorporating all three into a strategic pattern acceptable to society. Further, the contract goes beyond individual communities or even regions, but into the global arena in which multinational operations have delicate relationships and diverse expectations to manage.

Rather than redefine philanthropy as part of the economic foundation of Carroll's pyramid, as Diener (2013) suggests, we can perhaps rethink the structure of the CSR model, not as a pyramid, but as the complex entity it has become – an imperfect metaphor – the corporate citizen. At the turn of the century, Carroll opined, "As we approach the millennium, there has been renewed interest in the concept of corporate citizenship" (1999, p. 290). While not defining the concept, Carroll (1999) suggested corporate citizenship may be a new area of study or another way of framing the themes underlying CSR, like corporate social performance, business ethics, or stakeholder theory. As the corporate voice becomes louder and more recognisable, legitimised by courts and society, it makes sense to identify corporate actions as being that of a *global corporate citizen*. Thus, the conceptualisation of philanthropy has necessarily changed as CSR as a concept has become inextricable from business function as a whole. Business has become more complex – the 'contractual obligations' of the 19th century (Sharfman, 1994) differ greatly from the societal expectations of today's corporations.

The corporate citizen is accountable to each of the tenets Carroll (1979) identifies – economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary. Like a self-sustaining individual, the corporation must have a job or means to support itself. At its core, the corporate citizen supplies value to society through products or services that are exchanged for economic gain. Without this value the corporation cannot exist. Likewise, as a citizen the corporation must obey the rules and regulations set by the communities in which it resides and operates. It must also adhere to community standards and expectations that may not be codified but are rather understood as cultural values. The global citizen must be aware of how its actions in one area may be perceived in another. For example, fair trade practices are often touted by companies seeking consumer approval in the United States. Finally, the corporate entity has the option to make a stronger societal impact and build its reputation as a global citizen by engaging in discretionary activities. Rather than limiting discretionary behaviour to philanthropy (Carroll, 1991) or charity (Diener, 2013), discretionary activities include the range of the citizen's engagement with society.

Social engagement for individuals includes a spectrum of involvement. For example, individuals join professional, civic and social organisations, volunteer for personally relevant causes, and share their expertise with others who may need it. Today, corporate philanthropy is similarly defined and encouraged by groups advocating strong corporate social responsibility (CECP, n.d.). Organisations like CECP (previously known as the Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy)[1] are working to infuse values of social responsibility that encourage community investment in ways that bolster business and society.

Corporate citizens, like individuals, have choices regarding their engagement. Bruch and Walter (2005) have identified four routes companies take to fulfil philanthropic activities: strategic, peripheral, constricted and dispersed, depending on levels of internal and external focus. The researchers define the external and internal perspectives as market orientation and competence orientation, respectively. In market orientation, corporate philanthropy is externally driven, catering to stakeholders' expectations to yield greater market advantage. Competence orientation is internally focused, in which discretionary activities coincide with the corporation's abilities. Both internal and external orientations have strengths and weaknesses. Internally focused activities may not be as strategically planned to meet stakeholder expectations, but may have significant and unique value for beneficiaries. Externally focused initiatives are more strategic in enhancing the company's image to stakeholders with less importance given to social outcomes (Bruch & Walter, 2005). Neither of these perspectives is mutually exclusive, thus, the four routes capture the varying levels of corporate commitment to internal and external drivers (Bruch & Walter, 2005).

Strategic philanthropy, according to the researchers, is the most effective. Companies stress both market and competence-oriented activities. Peripheral philanthropy is that in which companies are more market-oriented and risk straying from their core business with peripheral causes. Their efforts are often unsustainable. Companies engaging in constricted philanthropy emphasise a competence orientation, with less focus on market expectations. These companies may miss opportunities to enhance their images with key stakeholders because their efforts are insular and often hidden to external stakeholders. Companies practicing dispersed philanthropy are less focused. The organisation has no clear strategy on how decisions are made regarding what issues are supported and how. Often, these initiatives are personally driven and involve cash donations. Bruch and Walter (2005) suggest such giving can be effective in certain situations, such as natural disasters, but should not be the norm for corporate giving when strategic philanthropy yields greater results for both the company and the cause.

Strategic philanthropy combines both internal and external drivers to ensure companies benefit from meeting stakeholder expectations and bolstering their reputations, while also leveraging core business competencies to uniquely benefit the charities they service. "They maintain and even strengthen their identity by aligning their social engagement with the overall company mission and vision" (Bruch & Walter, 2005, p. 53).

[1] The CECP, founded as the Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy, is de-emphasising "philanthropy" as its focus, thus now goes strictly by CECP, with little mention of its full name on the current CECP website. While philanthropy is still part of the mix, the CECP encourages the full range of corporate social responsibility (CECP, n.d.).

Bruch and Walter found companies with the most successful strategic philanthropy efforts follow four guidelines. They set measurable goals. They define their involvement, including level and duration of their efforts. They set and define principles to guide decisions. (For example, preferred beneficiaries are defined in advance with the predetermined goals in mind.) And finally, they *credibly* communicate activities to key stakeholders. For example, rather than simply advertising or marketing their involvement in social issues, they report philanthropic efforts as part of CSR reports – integrated into the whole of the company's activities – and they seek two-way communication with stakeholders, engaging them in corporate outreach efforts (Bruch & Walter, 2005).

Bruch and Walter's (2005) findings support well-established strategic planning and communication tactics stressed in trade publications and textbooks, and taught in public relations and strategic communication courses (see, e.g. Kotler & Lee, 2005; Levy, 1999; Sagawa & Segal, 2000). They also mirror industry standards touted by organisations like CECP. CECP stresses that philanthropic efforts should resonate with business strategy. "[P]hilanthropic efforts need to be aligned with the social and political trends that are most relevant to the company's business" (CECP/McKinsey & Company, n.d., p. 23). CECP also stresses measurement – gauging impact on both social and business levels. Perhaps unique to CECP is its emphasis on leadership's key role in directing social responsibility efforts. While others argue that social responsibility must be part of the culture of a company, CECP accentuates the CEO's role as the catalyst for sustainable socially responsible programming. For example, the organisation's annual Excellence Awards are given based on four criteria, including CEO involvement, followed by innovation of corporate social responsibility efforts, commitment to measuring outcomes, and successful collaboration with community partners (CECP, 2014).

This emphasis on the corporate leader driving philanthropic decisions rather than a department or foundation responding to social obligations may be a key indicator that at least some industry stakeholders are embracing the idea of the corporate citizen as a holistic entity. The metaphor, though imperfect, is gaining momentum in practice. The literature suggests the corporate citizen has evolved and is expected to integrate its socially responsible behaviours, serving its own economic interest *and* the interests of the communities in which it operates. A 2010 report by CECP highlights research on companies that embrace socially responsible behaviours as integral to organisational values:

> For companies, increased involvement is driven partly by a growing realization that they can take an active role in solving social problems in a way that simultaneously delivers tangible bottom-line results (either by reducing costs or increasing revenues). This model goes beyond simply aligning philanthropy with business objectives or creating smart signature programs in relevant funding areas; instead, it requires synthesizing core values and financial goals into a single corporate strategy (CECP/McKinsey & Company, 2010, p. 2).

Research questions

Based on the literature reviewed, one indicator of a balanced corporate citizen may be its successful relationships with community partners to meet societal needs while supporting the core business. Therefore, the primary research question guiding this study is: Do successful corporate-cause partnerships fulfil the social/philanthropic expectations of the integrated corporate citizen? Specifically, the study analyses CECP award winning organisational partnerships between 2004 and 2014 to investigate the following research questions:

RQ1: How do corporate partnerships with charitable organisations serve the corporate economic interest?

RQ2: How do corporate partnerships with charitable organisations serve society (or the community partner)?

RQ3: What are the corporations' internal drivers (competence orientation) in their partnerships with charitable organisations (Bruch & Walter, 2005)?

RQ4: What are the corporations' external drivers (market orientation) in their partnerships with charitable organisations (Bruch & Walter, 2005)?

RQ5: How do the corporate-cause partnerships synthesise organisational values and financial goals?

Method

This is a collective case study, exploring several cases together from multiple perspectives to better understand the relationships among corporate and cause partnerships and the social role of corporate citizens (Yin, 2003). The 11 cases analysed were winners of the CECP Directors' Award for each year since it was initiated in 2004. The Directors' Award recognises a successful partnership between a member corporation and a charitable organisation. The charitable organisation receives a cash award to further the social goals of the partnership. CECP gives four Excellence Awards each year. The Directors' Award was chosen as the basis for analysis because of its emphasis on the partnerships between corporations and charitable organisations. CECP initiated the Directors' Award in 2003 (awards are presented in the following year, thus award winners span 2004-2014). The award is given "to a nonprofit demonstrating an exemplary partnership with a corporation" (CECP award application). Awards are judged on the following criteria:

1. Partnership
2. Innovation
3. Dedication to measurement
4. Executive leadership

According to these criteria, winners are deemed to have created a mutually beneficial and unique partnership that goes beyond what either organisation could accomplish alone or with other partners. The winning programmes are innovative, a stretch from traditional efforts. Together, the partners "demonstrate a strong commitment to accountability, benchmarking, and continuous improvement" (CECP award application). And finally, the executive leaders for both organisations must be actively involved in the programme's efforts. Since its inception, 11 partnerships have received the award (see Table 1, appended).

Data were collected from several sources, and analysis, as is common in qualitative research, was ongoing and iterative. Analysis consisted of organising details of each case/award winner, categorising data, interpreting individual instances, identifying patterns, and synthesising for conclusion and discussion (Hidayati, 2011). The process mirrored the constant comparative method in which the researcher 'codes' the qualitative data into manageable chunks of information, then categorises it into themes, and from the themes develops theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2008). Specifically, first, information related to each award winner was downloaded from the CECP website. Data included CECP electronic newsletters, news releases, and videos about the award winners. Next, additional data were downloaded from corporate and non-profit organisation websites about the partnership programmes and about the award, including news releases and press clippings. Information for each award winner was uploaded into NVivo 10 qualitative data analysis programme (QSR International, 2012). Common themes were extracted, starting with evidence related to categories in the research questions. For example, initial themes included benefits to the corporation, benefits to the non-profit, competence orientation, market orientation, and organisational values. Using the software, the data were further analysed to distinguish distinct concepts within themes, for example, types of benefits (e.g. economic, social). As patterns emerged the data were synthesised to develop clear answers to the research questions and build upon a theory of the corporate citizen's discretionary function (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

Results

The research questions posed for this study are interdependent. Based on qualitative data gathered from the CECP website, websites for the charities and corporate partners, and news releases/press clippings, the following findings for each research question build to tell the story of corporations engaging in discretionary/philanthropic activity. Starting with economic benefit to the corporation, followed by social benefits, internal and external orientations, and corporate values, the findings indicate the communication about these successful programmes build an image of the integrated corporate citizen and its range of discretionary activities.

RQ1: How do corporate partnerships with charitable organisations serve the corporate economic interest?

While data gathered about award winners did not explicitly discuss economic advantages for the corporate partners, several advantages emerged from the collective data. First, when companies' primary driving forces were internal, using company resources and expertise to benefit the sponsored programme, companies seemed to be investing in future economic growth for the corporation, its industry, and/or for the community in general. For example, a news release announcing the Direct Relief/FedEx Directors' Award stated:

> Corporate participation in disaster relief efforts has been increasingly important to the business bottom line, as employees and customers look to companies – not just governments or aid organisations – to provide critical relief assistance. Many companies are moved to participate in humanitarian efforts because they have seen the staggering losses inflicted when disasters destroy communities and interrupt the flow of business; working to alleviate the economic impact of such disruptions makes good sense for society and business. (CECP, 2014)

Similarly, companies like GlaxoSmithKline and Eli Lilly and Company supply medical and pharmaceutical knowledge and expertise along with funds to help underserved communities. Eli Lilly explicitly states on its website that "differential pricing of medicines can balance the reward for innovation with access/affordability for low income populations" (Eli Lilly and Company). Pearson, an education company honoured twice with its non-profit partners for its support of education-based initiatives, is bolstering its customer base. Financial companies like Charles Schwab and Citigroup put resources toward promoting financial literacy and better understanding of the financial industry. DonorsChoose.org claims Crate and Barrel's support of the organisation "has deepened Crate and Barrel customer loyalty and inspired civic engagement at DonorsChoose.org" (Katie, 2011, June 1). The award announcement cited research indicating half of Crate and Barrel's customer participants in the programme told others about Crate and Barrel's "gift of giving" and more than half of consumers asked in a large-scale telephone survey (54%) "thought of the company as more 'community minded'".

The return on investments made by these companies may not be immediately measurable, however the connections made by the companies on their websites and through news releases indicate they are giving in ways to support the growth of their respective industries and build or maintain a customer base, thus creating a sustainable future. And at least on some level, they are measuring impact, as evidenced by Crate and Barrel's data.

RQ2: How do corporate partnerships with charitable organisations serve society (or the community partner)?

Each of the Directors' Award winning programmes touts the benefits of the corporate/cause sponsorship. One of the criteria used to determine the award is commitment to measurement. Programmes must show measurable benefit to society – not just amount of money raised or given to charity. For example, at the time of the award, 180,000 Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA) kids participated in a series of 'Money Matters' financial literacy seminars created by Charles Schwab. Charles Schwab Foundation then gave scholarships to 127 students who 'demonstrated exceptional abilities' following their participation. CECP noted in announcing the award that surveys of BGCA 'Money Matters' participants indicate the programme "successfully helps teens to develop sound financial habits that include savings, budgeting, and prudent use of credit cards, as well as to create strategies to set aside funds for a college education" (CECP, 2009). While monetary benefits are reported, the impact for the CECP award winners was frequently stated in social terms: how many people/communities were served (e.g. BGCA); measurable improvements in education- or health-related outcomes (e.g. National Academy Foundation, JumpStart, KaBOOM!, Partners in Health); and environmental impact (e.g. Good360). For example, Good360 president and CEO Cindy Hallberlin stated in the 2012 Directors' Award video, "In our first year alone, the Framing Hope programme in conjunction with Good360 distributed goods to almost half a million families. Had those products not gone to those half a million needing families, they would have filled up 2,500 garbage trucks of waste and ended up in our landfills" (CECP, 2012). Similar statements about at-risk youths completing their high school education, underprivileged students gaining college scholarships, patients treated or cured, communities/nations helped during disasters, contextualise the dollars spent, volunteer hours given, and expertise used to help these causes.

RQ3: What are the corporations' internal drivers (competence orientation) in their partnerships with charitable organisations (Bruch & Walter, 2005)?

For most of the CECP Directors' Award winners, internal drivers (competence orientation) were the focus of discussion regarding the partnerships. Corporate-cause partnerships were rewarded when the charitable organisations took advantage of corporate expertise. While each partnership included monetary donations, the focus of the exchange in communications about each programme was on the value gained through non-cash factors. At least nine of the 11 award winners expressed some internal driving force for their efforts. For example, Charles Schwab developed the multi-session seminars on financial literacy for BGCA and employees volunteered as facilitators. Eli Lilly and Company and GlaxoSmithKline put their expertise in healthcare/pharmaceuticals to work for Partners in Health and The Children's Health Fund, respectively. The Home Depot uses warehouse space and technology to collect out of season and overstock materials for groups through Good360 and builds playgrounds for needy communities through KaBOOM! Pearson supports literacy through Jumpstart and education through the National Academy Foundation. Cisco provides communication technology to help connect homeless and jobless to potential jobs and other resources. Cisco and Eli Lilly and Company explicitly stated their partnerships allowed for innovative research and development for the companies.

RQ4: What are the corporations' external drivers (market orientation) in their partnerships with charitable organisations (Bruch & Walter, 2005)?

Only two companies had little evidence of internal driving forces in the materials about the award-winning programmes, focusing primarily on external forces: Starbucks, and Crate and Barrel. Nevertheless, all winning companies made at least some statement about external drivers – meeting community needs and supporting social needs that resonate with stakeholders.

Starbucks was one of the co-corporate winners with Pearson for their partnerships with Jumpstart (literacy). While education company Pearson had a clear internal connection and made that connection in its statements about aligning with the programme, Starbucks stressed engagement with community. Starbucks U.S. president Jim Alling was quoted, saying, "This is an opportunity for us to show Starbucks' commitment to positive community development, not only today but for future generations" (Pearson, 2006). Materials touting Crate and Barrel's involvement with DonorsChoose.org indicate the CEO's history as an elementary school teacher make the partnership a more leader-driven connection than business competence-driven. Like Starbucks' success involving its customers with Jumpstart, the success of matching customers with the DonorsChoose.org programme indicates Crate and Barrel has tapped into an issue that resonates with its key clientele.

For those companies with a primarily competence orientation, market oriented statements tended to be about customers, shareholders, and employees as key stakeholders driving corporate engagement. More general statements about helping the local community or specific groups' needs also indicated market orientation. For example, The Home Depot then-CEO, Robert Nardelli, was quoted in a news release at the time of the award:

> Having built and restored more than 400 playgrounds together with KaBOOM! over the past 10 years, we have seen first-hand how important playgrounds are to the development of our children and the communities. Led by dedicated Team Depot volunteers, our 345,000 associates are committed to improving the areas in which we live and work (Kaboom!, 2006).

RQ5: How do the corporate-cause partnerships synthesise organisational values and financial goals?

Corporate-cause partnerships synthesising corporate values and financial goals is evident in closer analysis of data used to answer the first four research questions. In discussing the partnerships in news releases, CSR reports, and on their websites, companies often cite corporate values as reasons for their involvement in specific issues. For those that communicated a primarily competence orientation, the blend of values and financial goals was clear. The Home Depot, for example, made a statement blending community commitment, environment impact, and corporate cost savings. And, GlaxoSmithKline's website states one of its core values as, "Improving access to our products, irrespective of where people live or their ability to pay, and we are working to control or eliminate diseases affecting the world's most vulnerable people" (GlaxoSmithKline, n.d.). The company's collaboration with The Children's Health Fund facilitates medical care for homeless and disadvantaged children. The company monitors its community commitments on a progress chart posted on its website. Further, working with community partners to address social issues implements strategic development of products that help charitable organisations but are also marketable to the public. For example, developing vaccines that do not need refrigeration benefits organisations that provide healthcare in places with unreliable utilities and generates a marketable product for the company.

Similar relationships with corporate values and financial goals are evident in corporate relationships like Charles Schwab's and BGCA, educating youths about financial matters. The company's brand is connected to the programme, and the programme connects company values regarding financial planning and stability with potential future customers. Pearson's commitment to literacy and other education efforts reinforce its core value of education and its core business. In a video news release, Applied Materials CEO Mike Splinter connected its partner charity model with the company's business practices. "Partners in School Innovation focuses on the existing human capital within schools and relies on the discipline use of data to drive continuous improvement much like we do at Applied Materials" (CECP, 2013).

Discussion

CECP encourages corporations to engage in holistic social responsibility, going beyond traditional philanthropy to participatory partnerships that build economic and social capital for sustainable business. Its Directors' Award recognises partnerships that are innovative, measurably successful, and leader-driven. Communication about the partnerships highlights their integrative nature and captures snapshots of corporations using their resources to participate as members of society. The data suggest successful corporate-cause partnerships fulfil the social/philanthropic expectations of the integrated corporate citizen.

The social responsibility rules outlined by Carroll (1999) and the strategic approach to philanthropy described by Bruch and Walter (2005) are evident in the structure of the award-winning partnerships. Economically viable companies identify their values and put resources toward building and sustaining their viability through a combined market and competence orientation approach to corporate giving. Their range of activities includes traditional philanthropy, but the focus tends to be on activities that take advantage of corporate expertise (competence orientation), build upon brands (market orientation), or magnify corporate values (organisational values) (Bruch & Walter, 2005). Further, success is measured using multiple factors. Bruch and Walter's (2005) four guidelines for successful strategic philanthropy campaigns include: measurable goals, defined level and duration of involvement, principle-driven decision making, and credible communication to key stakeholders. CECP's expectations reflect the first three guidelines. For example, CECP demands a commitment to measuring outcomes from its award winners, and for at least some, outcomes measured are for both programmatic efforts (charity-based) and corporate returns (on corporate image, product development, and/or bottom line). Success of a programme is less about the dollar amount raised for charitable purposes and more about the impact the programme has for society, the cause, the charitable organisation, *and* the corporation.

Besides the information collected directly from CECP about the award-winning corporate/cause partnership programmes, much of the data collected for this study was from corporate communication to key stakeholders – the fourth element of successful strategic philanthropy – stakeholder communication through channels beyond marketing efforts and news releases (Bruch & Walter, 2005). Evidence shows these corporate givers engaged with appropriate stakeholders throughout the programmes' campaigns. From employees being invited to participate (e.g. Charles Schwab/BGCA), to customers' and clients' involvement (e.g. DonorsChoose), to community participation (e.g., Good360 and KABOOM!), much communication was two-way, with stakeholders directly involved in the campaigns. Such directed and purposeful communication can minimise stakeholder criticism or concern about organisational motives that have been found in earlier studies (see, e.g. Cherneva, 2012; Fioravante, 2010; Gan, 2006; Koch, 1979; Lee et al., 2012; Parguel et al., 2011; Stoll, 2008).

Lessons for future strategic philanthropy campaigns

Corporate leaders and communication practitioners planning strategic philanthropy as part of their CSR efforts should consider their organisations' position in the global community, choosing charitable partners and giving strategies that will complement and help them fulfil their roles as corporate citizens. This analysis of successful philanthropic campaigns suggests a good corporate citizen follows Carroll's (1991) social responsibility hierarchy of economic viability, legal and ethical compliance, and discretionary social involvement – incorporating these core responsibilities holistically, as envisioned by Bruch and Walther (2005). Further, CECP's edict to corporate citizens emphasises the role of corporate leaders as guides for their organisations, heading discretionary (strategic philanthropy) efforts, just as they lead the companies' other corporate responsibilities. Without leaderships' vision and encouragement, the more easily philanthropic initiatives can stray from strategic and fall into one of the less successful categories of peripheral, constricted and dispersed (Bruch & Walter, 2005). That is, corporate efforts are less focused on the corporate whole and are constrained or diluted by other motivational factors.

Finally, the 11 award-winning corporate/charitable partnerships show that while these guidelines are important factors to consider when developing discretionary programmes, corporate citizens, like individuals, must find the balance that fits their corporate ethos and resonates with key stakeholders. Corporations that stray from the formula can have success, as seen in Crate and Barrel's achievements with its DonorsChoose.org programme. Rather than a corporate competence-driven initiative, the programme highlighted the CEO's personal project. Communication with stakeholders about the CEO's background and motivation and involving community and customers in choosing specific beneficiaries made the effort a success. The implication is that motives for such efforts must not be singular, as is often identified in studies of corporate motives for giving (see, e.g. Porter & Kramer, 2002), but multi-faceted, and clearly communicated to key stakeholders.

Conclusion

In the years following pivotal corporate ethical breaches, companies have rallied to establish core values and socially responsible practices, communicating their societal roles in terms equivalent to those used by individuals. Re-envisioning CSR and the whole of corporate operations as that of a global corporate citizen is perhaps a dangerous path – one which is not particularly comfortable. However, the evolution of the corporate identity through court rulings and accepted engagement in social issues indicates the culture is allowing the corporate voice to be a part of societal decision-making. Thus, until changes in legal and acceptable practices occur giving corporations less power as 'persons', acknowledging the current status of the corporate being is vital to establishing ground rules for its participation in society.

Limitations

This study analysed successful corporate philanthropy programmes as defined by CECP's Directors' Award, examining award winners from 2004 to 2014. Other corporate-cause partnerships exist with varying degrees of success that could offer valuable lessons if analysed through a similar lens. In addition, data were limited to publicly available documents. Future research should include partnerships that are not necessarily as successful or effective. Further, the research should extend to interviews with corporate leaders and their counterparts at charitable organisations, and analysis of internal corporate communication, if accessible.

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Table 1: CECP Directors' Award Winners 2004-2014

Date	Programme description	Non-profit	Corporation
2004	'Referral management initiative': Ensures children get to medical appointments with specialists	The Children's Health Fund	GlaxoSmithKline
2005	Partnership w/ Pearson: Literacy programme Partnership w/ Starbucks: 'Read for the record campaign' – Starbucks offers limited ed./custom-published version of *The little engine that could* to customers	Jumpstart	Pearson plc & Starbucks Corporation
2006	Community playground building programme	KaBOOM!	The Home Depot, Inc.
2007	Programmes to prepare students for college and the workplace	National Academy Foundation	Citigroup Inc. & Pearson plc
2008	Programme providing voicemail service to connect poor and homeless individuals to prospective employers, landlords, case managers and family members	Community Voice Mail (Now known as Springwire)	Cisco
2009	'Money matters: Make it count': Offers teens in underserved communities a series of financial workshops on topics including budgeting, spending wisely, banking, savings, credit, investing, entrepreneurship, saving for college and education beyond high school	Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA)	Charles Schwab Foundation
2010	Multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) programme: Eradicate multidrug-resistant tuberculosis in Russia	Partners In Health	Eli Lilly and Company
2011	Co-branded DonorsChoose.org gift cards programme: Since 2006, Crate & Barrel has sent 1.1 million co-branded DonorsChoose.org gift cards to its customers, who choose educational programmes to support	DonorsChoose.org	Crate and Barrel
2012	'The framing hope warehouse' programme: Engages community-based nonprofits w/ warehouse capacity to partner with several Home Depot stores & redistribute donations to smaller nonprofits that might otherwise be unable to benefit from the programme	Good360	The Home Depot
2013	At-risk San Jose, CA schools programme focus: Works with high-need schools in San Jose to increase the number of students who graduate from high school inspired, prepared to have success in college and life	Partners in School Innovation	Applied Materials
2014	'Ensuring access to health during emergencies': Programme to improve the health of people affected by natural disasters or the limited access to medical care throughout the world	Direct Relief	FedEx