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Involvement of employees in Corporate Social Responsibility: An explorative case study

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Assignment description

Firms are increasingly facing the challenge of how to cope with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and the literature on the subject has increased substantially over the last decades. It is evident that firms are more concerned about how to handle their work with CSR, as protection of all stakeholders' interests is a big challenge that firms have to cope with. This study seeks to explore how firms try to facilitate engagement from employees in their work with CSR, and whether the work with CSR contributes to employee motivation. Existing literature considers employees to be crucial for nurturing successful CSR work, but it has been little research on actually how employees react and perceive their firms' CSR programs. This research will be conducted through an explorative case study of employees and management in two service firms; one professional service firm and one facility service firm.

Preface

This master thesis is written within the program Strategy and International Business Development, and it is the authors' concluding part of a Master of Science degree in Industrial Economics and Technology Management at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

We would like to thank our supervisor Arild Aspelund, for guidance and valuable feedback on this master thesis.

We would also like to thank all the informants from the case firms. Through their participation in our study, we were able to collect the necessary empirical material for conducting this master thesis. The informants gave us valuable insight into their perceptions of their CSR practices, something we highly appreciate.

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Abstract

Firms all over the world are increasingly challenged with how to cope with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and CSR is more commonly becoming a decisive factor in processes to recruit, retain and motivate the most qualified employees. Research shows that firms can capture advantages with respect to the workforce when succeeding with engaging employees in their CSR program. Hence, it is interesting **to explore how managers can optimally facilitate employee engagement in CSR.** There has been limited research on how employees' perceive their firm's CSR program, and as this is considered to be important for management to know in order to properly facilitate employee engagement in CSR, this will be given particularly attention in this study.

There are two research questions that are assessed in this study. The first is the main research question which involves how managers best can facilitate employee engagement in CSR, and the second is a corresponding sub-question that involves whether CSR can be used to motivate employees. These questions are answered through an explorative case study of two Norwegian case firms; one professional service firm and one facility service firm.

The first research question is answered by considering how the firms facilitate employee engagement in the work with CSR, in terms of how they manage their CSR strategy, what CSR activities they engage in, and how they communicate the CSR work internally in the organization. We have explored three different categories of CSR activities, namely *corporate volunteerism*, *skill-based engagement* and *on-the-job engagement*, and how employees perceive these activities. Through answering the first research question, we also hope to arrive at a conclusion to the sub-question, on whether CSR is a factor that motivates employees in terms of making them aim for more success at work.

The results show that managers can best facilitate employee engagement in CSR through *on-the-job* activities. Employees perceive the **CSR program as more credible when the firm handles its own issues first, and managers must therefore prioritize *on-the-job* activities before external activities** as *corporate volunteerism* and *skill-based engagement*. **Managers must prioritize personal communication over written communication, as personal communication creates more awareness among the**

employees. Also, as it is crucial to know the employees' perception of the firm's CSR involvement in order to succeed with implementing a CSR program that engages them, the employees' perception must be continuously assessed so that the firm's CSR program is tailored after the needs and wants of the employees. This study further finds that CSR does not seem to motivate employees, but that it to some extent is contributing to job satisfaction and pride. 

Sammendrag

Bedrifter i hele verden blir i økende grad utfordret på hvordan de skal håndtere bedriftens samfunnsansvar (CSR), ettersom CSR blir en stadig mer avgjørende faktor for å rekruttere, beholde og motivere de mest kvalifiserte ansatte. Forskning viser at bedrifter kan få fordeler med tanke på ansatte når de suksessfullt klarer å engasjere ansatte i sitt arbeid med CSR. Det har vært lite forskning på hvordan ansatte oppfatter sin bedrift sitt arbeid med CSR, og siden dette er viktig for ledere å vite for å legge til rette for engasjement fra ansatte i arbeidet med CSR på best mulig måte, vil dette bli gitt ekstra oppmerksomhet i denne studien.

Det er to forskningsspørsmål som er undersøkt i denne studien. Det første er et hovedspørsmål som innebærer hvordan ledelsen best kan fasilitere engasjement fra ansatte i sitt arbeid med CSR, og det andre er et tilhørende underspørsmål som innebærer hvorvidt CSR er en faktor som motiverer ansatte. Disse forskningsspørsmålene er svart på igjennom en utforskende saksstudie av to norske bedrifter; en bedrift som leverer profesjonelle tjenester, og en bedrift som leverer tjenester innenfor serviceytelse.

Det første forskningsspørsmålet er svart på gjennom å undersøke hvordan bedriftene fasiliteter engasjement fra ansatte i sitt arbeid med CSR, igjennom å se på hvordan de håndterer sin CSR strategi, hvilke CSR aktiviteter de velger å engasjere seg i og hvordan de kommuniserer arbeidet med CSR internt i organisasjonen. Vi har undersøkt tre forskjellige kategorier av CSR aktiviteter: *bedriftens frivillighet*, *ferdighetsbasert engasjement* og *på-jobben engasjement*. Gjennom å analysere det første forskningsspørsmålet, håper vi også å kunne være i stand til å svare på det tilhørende underspørsmålet, altså på hvorvidt CSR er en faktor som motiverer ansatte på den måten at de viser en større innsats på jobb som et resultat av CSR.

Resultatene viser at ledere kan best fasilitere engasjement fra ansatte i sitt arbeid med CSR gjennom å implementere *på-jobben aktiviteter* før den engasjerer seg i annet type CSR. Ansatte ser på bedriftens CSR program som mer troverdig når bedriften håndterer sine egne problemer før den engasjerer seg i CSR aktiviteter av en mer ekstern karakter. Ledere må derfor prioritere *på-jobben aktiviteter* før eksterne CSR aktiviteter innenfor *bedriftens frivillighet* og *ferdighetsbasert engasjement*. Denne studien viser

også at ledere må prioritere personlig kommunikasjon over skriftlig kommunikasjon, siden denne kommunikasjonsmetoden skaper mer bevissthet blant de ansatte. I tillegg, siden det er avgjørende å vite hvordan ansatte oppfatter bedriftens arbeid med CSR for å kunne lykkes med å implementere et CSR program som engasjerer ansatte, må bedriften vurdere ansattes oppfatning kontinuerlig for å være i stand til å skreddersy programmet etter behovene og ønskene til de ansatte. Studien viser videre at CSR ikke ser ut til å motivere ansatte, men at CSR til en viss grad kan bidra til jobbtilfredshet og stolthet.

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1 Introduction

Both globalizers and anti-globalizers share the view that we are living in an increasingly globalized world (Gonzalez-Perez, 2013a). Researchers agree that internationalization of firms into the global market place causes enterprises to meet challenges in their day-to-day business other than what their predecessors did in the earlier days. As a consequence of globalization and the internationalization of firms, the need for businesses to act ethically has become increasingly important during the last decades. Managers are to a greater extent seeing the importance of developing a set of internal guidelines for which behavior that should be expected in their operations abroad. As a result, firms are putting an increasing emphasis on incorporating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a part of their strategy.

There exists an extensive literature on the external benefits a firm can reap from succeeding with its work with CSR, such as gaining competitive advantages and a good reputation. Lately, there has also been a growing literature on what internal benefits CSR can possibly generate, namely benefits captured within the organization. Literature seems to agree that one of the greatest internal benefits firms reap from succeeding with integrating CSR in their organization is a motivated and dedicated workforce. In addition, being known as a socially responsible firm is likely to help the firm in recruitment processes and in retaining employees. The primary reason for this is that there exists a growing trend that people want their work to have a meaning; people seem to want to earn a living while at the same time giving something back to the society. There is a growing awareness among firms that people seem to prefer working for companies that “walk their talk” and actually do make a difference (Strandberg, 2009). Strandberg (2009) argues that the companies that manage to “walk the talk” by embedding CSR throughout its operations in a way that is trustworthy will be the employer of choice in the labor market of tomorrow.

Firms have managed to recruit, retain and motivate employees for centuries without using CSR strategically, so one might ask: how has CSR suddenly become so decisive in such processes? The answer is that enterprises today to a great extent operate in the global marketplace, and hence the competition has intensified. Employees with much greater knowledge and skills are required compared to some decades ago (Alas, et al., 2014). Therefore, to stay competitive and to survive in the global marketplace of today, it is crucial for a firm to have skilled and dedicated employees that are highly motivated to do their jobs.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how managers can best facilitate employee engagement in CSR programs, in order to reap the benefits that may stem from succeeding with this. There has yet been little research on how employees actually engage in, react to and perceive their firm's CSR program (Gond, et al., 2011; Lee, et al., 2013). It is believed that this study will contribute to the explorative theories within this field of the topic of CSR, and hence also inspire future research within an area in which there as only been conducted limited research. Through this study, we seek to answer the following overarching research question (RQ), with attention to the corresponding sub-question (SQ) listed:

RQ: How can managers best facilitate employee engagement in CSR?

This research question aims to explore some relevant factors connected to how managers can successfully facilitate employee involvement in the CSR work. This study seeks to understand how managers can succeed in engaging their employees in CSR programs. Particular attention will be given to understand how employees perceive the different CSR activities, as it is important for management to know what their employees think of the different activities in order to construct CSR programs that engage employees. It will also be investigated how firms can best communicate their CSR work in order to enhance employee awareness of the CSR program, as this is believed to be a prerequisite to ensure employee engagement in CSR. Other aspects that are also relevant to answer how management can best facilitate employee engagement will also be highlighted.

Through exploring these different sides of how to best facilitate employee engagement in CSR, from the perspective of both management and employees, we also hope to arrive at an answer to the corresponding sub-question:

SQ: Can CSR be used to motivate employees?

With this sub-question, we seek to answer whether CSR programs is enhancing employee motivation. Enhanced employee motivation is in this study interpreted as employees who are aiming at more success at work, and this is consistent with Lindner's (1998) definition; that motivation can be defined as an inner force that drives individuals to achieve personal and organizational goals. It will be distinguished between whether CSR has the potential to engage employees and to make them take pride in their company, or whether it is actually enhancing their motivation.

2 Conceptual background

This chapter aims to supply the relevant theory for addressing the research question and the corresponding sub-question. The first section, section 2.1, will present the emergence of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) over the last decades. Section 2.2 aims to clarify the term CSR, to discuss what the term means and how it is usually defined. The third section, section 2.3 provides an overview over the theories that are used to arrive at the literature studied. The fourth and last section, section 2.4, is the most comprehensive section and that section depicts the theoretical framework that is constructed for this thesis.

2.1 The emergence of Corporate Social Responsibility

Through history, enterprises have always shown a certain concern for the society, and it is argued that the concept of CSR is just as old as enterprises themselves. However, corporate acts of charity were rather seldom in the beginning of the previous century. The practice in the beginning of the twentieth century was rather that wealthy business individuals made donations from their personal funds. It was an expectation from corporations that their wealthy business leaders should contribute to the society. This indicates that the moral obligation of firms as we know it today might have developed from the expectation of corporations that their leaders should make philanthropic donations. (Gonzalez-Perez, 2013b)

It is believed that the modern era of CSR originated in the 1950s. The concept was then referred to as Social Responsibilities (SR). H.R Bowen formalized the modern usage of the concept when he in 1953 tried to answer which responsibilities it was reasonable to expect business people to take. At this period of time, several scholars tried to define the concept of CSR in a more precise manner than what had been done up to that date.

However, at this time, there were also people who argued that corporations cannot have responsibilities; only people can be said to have responsibilities. Milton Friedman was one of the leading advocates of this view. He argued that as long as a firm stays within the rules of the game, which in his view was to engage in open and free competition, the only social responsibility corporations should be expected to take was to maximize the firm's profits. Even though some scholars, as Friedman, opposed the growing movement, it certainly continued to be a continuously growing recognition that corporations have responsibilities that extend beyond satisfying economic and legal obligations throughout the second part of the twentieth century. (Gonzalez-Perez, 2013b)

The Brundtland Report was published in 1987 and did for real put environmental issues on the political agenda. The report, which is also referred to as “Our Common Future”, introduced the concept of *sustainable development*; the world should ensure to meet the needs of the population today without having to compromise future coming generations in fulfilling their needs. One of the intentions of the Brundtland Commission’s mandate was to raise the level of commitment to action among firms. (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987)

While the Brundtland Report was mainly focused on environmental issues, John Elkington (2004) pointed out the need of integrating the social and economic dimensions with the environmental agenda before real environmental progress could be made. He argued that the environmental language would have to resonate with business brains (Elkington, 2004). In 1994, Elkington introduced what he called the Triple Bottom Line (TBL). He argued that firms should prepare three separate bottom lines, namely the financial-, social- and environmental bottom line. The first involves to measure corporate profits, the second to measure how socially responsible the firm is and the third is a measure of how environmentally responsible the firm is in its operations. Fauzi et al. (2010) argues that the focus on CSR has further increased after Elkington introduced the concept of TBL, and that firms were now to a greater extent taking the interests of all its stakeholders groups into account (Fauzi, et al., 2010).

Porter & Kramer (2006) claims that managers that lack a strategic approach to their work with CSR, will experience great costs if the firm is later judged for violating social obligations. It seems like this factor, namely that firms are adopting CSR as preventative strategy, has also been important in the emergence of CSR. Society tends to view subsidiaries of international firms as a single entity, as multinational firms are somehow tied together by a single name. An unfortunate incident in one of the places where the firm has operations may not only affect the reputation in that country, but may also rapidly affect the reputation of a subsidiary on the other side of the world. This aspect forces firms to look seriously at how their business is affecting all of their numerous stakeholders (Zyglidopoulos, 2002). As both consumers and shareholders seem to reward socially responsible corporations (Gonzalez-Perez, 2013b), managers in the 21th century are increasingly seeing the importance of developing a set of rules for how the firm should behave.

2.2 The term CSR

The topic of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a contemporary phenomenon which is frequently researched and discussed in literature. There exist several definitions that

describe the term both within the corporate and academic world (Dahlsrud, 2008), and most firms in the industry have their own formulation of the term which is tied up to the firms' vision and values. The prevalence of definitions of the term CSR can be connected to the perception that CSR is a fuzzy term with unclear boundaries (Shahin & Zairi, 2007).

The definitions of CSR differ from incorporating equity, human rights and welfare, protection of stakeholders' interests and volunteerism, but common for most of them is that they include ethical business operations in some way. According to Shahin & Zairi (2007), the concept of CSR seems to be a large umbrella that includes a vast number of concepts as philanthropy, human resources, environmental concerns and public and community relations, in other words a loosely defined term. However, there exist some definitions that are more accepted and referred to than others. Based on an analysis of 37 definition made by Dahlsrud (2008), the most frequent definition of CSR found on internet is from the Commission of the European Communities which states that CSR is "a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis". This definition includes five aspects, where at least one or more of the aspects are common between most of the definitions that exists, namely volunteerism, stakeholders, economic, social and environmental concerns.

Even though the concept covers more or less the same areas, it is hard to develop an unbiased definition due to the fact that CSR can be viewed as a social concept that adapts to the surrounding challenges of society. Managers recognize CSR as a concept that fits their business purposes, such as quality management, communication and human resource management, and they therefore adapt the term to align with their firm's specific situation and challenges (Marrewijk, 2003). This is another reason why it is hard to obtain an overall definition of CSR, as it is biased towards the interests and challenges of those that engage in CSR.

Another reason why the concept is hard to define is because some of the practices included in the firms' CSR strategies today are not necessarily new CSR practices, but old HR-practices as ethics, compliance, diversity and equity. It is therefore evident that some practices that used to be under HR, is nowadays considered as CSR, or that some HR practices at least overlap with CSR practices (Gond, et al., 2011). When exploring the field of CSR it might therefore also be valuable and interesting to shed some light on the field of HR.

Norway is an advanced welfare state where the legal framework is well developed. To operate in Norway, all Norwegian laws have to be followed, and these laws include some of the issues that are considered as CSR, such as gender equality, diversity, minimum wage, compliance, health and safety at the work place. Due to this, Norwegian firms can already be said to be socially responsible firms as they comply with the Norwegian legal system which is quite extensive when it comes to the environment and the conditions at the work place.

The Norwegian government defines CSR as what the firms do on a voluntary basis beyond complying with the existing laws and regulations of the countries in which they operate (St.meld. nr. 10 (2008-2009), 2008). As this study investigate two firms in Norway, this definition will be the guideline for how CSR is perceived in this study, but the study will also explore the case firms' interpretation and perception of CSR and use that to form the background for the findings and the analysis of this study.

2.3 Theories used for constructing the theoretical framework

The concept of CSR has been researched for several decades, but there is yet no consensus on an accepted general theoretical framework to analyze CSR in firms (Russo & Perrini, 2010). Some research shows that the *stakeholder theory* addresses the firms' CSR approach (Russo & Perrini, 2010), while the *resource-based view* might be useful to understand why firms engage in CSR, and how CSR contributes to sustainable business (Branco & Rodriguez, 2006). During the last decades, Herzberg's (1968) *motivation-hygiene theory* has been a commonly used theory to assess employee motivation. This theory classifies factors at work based on whether they contribute to satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

These three theories will form the basis of the theoretical framework presented in section 2.4, and will be further explained in the three next sections. However, it is important to notice that as no general accepted framework to analyze CSR is in place, neither *stakeholder theory* nor the *resource-based view* can exclusively explain the firm behavior related to CSR, while the *motivation-hygiene theory* is only one possible theory, out of several existing, that can be used to explain the case of motivation with respect to CSR.

2.3.1 The stakeholder theory

The *stakeholder theory* posits that businesses exist to create maximum value for all stakeholders, where stakeholders include those that have a direct or indirect interest in

the business, as employees, suppliers, society and customers. Lee et al. (2013) states that CSR is originated from the *stakeholder theory*, where the idea is to minimize or avoid harm to stakeholders.

A firm needs to align the interest of all stakeholders if they want to achieve a successful business. If a firm shall succeed with their business, they need to rely on the knowledge and abilities of their employees. This study will consider the employees as the relevant stakeholder group for the firm, as it is intended to explore the effects CSR has on the employees in terms of work related behavior.

2.3.2 The resource-based view (RBV)

The resource-based view (RBV) tries to explain how firms can use valuable resources and capabilities to achieve a sustainable business. The firm's resources and assets should form the basis for strategic planning within the firm, and the success of the firm will thereby depend upon the internal capabilities and the external capabilities (Hart, 1995).

The RBV claims that a firm resource can contribute to sustainable business if it is valuable, not easily duplicated by other firms, cannot easily be substituted by another resource and if the resource is rare (Hart, 1995). The resource is the basic unit of analysis when applying the RBV and such a resource can be both physical and intangible assets as well as employees' skills and social processes (Hart, 1995).

Some research claims that RBV is useful to understand why firms engage in CSR (Branco & Rodriguez, 2006). From the perspective of RBV, CSR can be viewed as an intangible resource that can provide internal benefits. CSR engagement can have important consequences that are associated with employees (Branco & Rodriguez, 2006), such as employee motivation, commitment, retention and pride.

For this study, CSR will be considered as resources that can create internal benefits and contribute to sustainable business. The employees will be treated as the relevant stakeholder group, and CSR as the unit of analysis, when using the RBV to explore how employees as stakeholders are affected by their firms' CSR approach.

2.3.3 Motivational theory

Motivation can be defined as an inner force that drives individuals to achieve personal and organizational goals (Lindner, 1998), and hence make individuals aim for more success at work. Employee motivation is considered a complicated management issue,

as motivation is the key to initiate decision-making processes for achievement of goals. According to Bhatti, et al. (2008), it is difficult to obtain a consensus on factors that are responsible for increasing the motivation among employees.

Herzberg (1968) suggested a theory about satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work, which is referred to as the *motivation-hygiene theory*. He claims that the factors that contribute to satisfaction are completely separate from those who lead to dissatisfaction, and divides those factors into *motivational factors* that create satisfaction if they are in place, and *hygiene factors* that create dissatisfaction if they are not in place. The *motivational factors* are related to what is done at work, and lead to satisfaction through achievements. If the *motivational factors* are not in place, it will not necessarily lead to dissatisfaction, as dissatisfaction are created by *hygiene factors* that are not in place. (Herzberg, 1968). Thereby, different factors at work can either be seen as *motivational factors*, which implies satisfaction versus no satisfaction, or *hygiene factors*, which implies dissatisfaction versus no dissatisfaction (Sachau, 2007).

The *motivation-hygiene theory* has been widely embraced by managers, but Herzberg (1968) has gotten a lot of criticism for his theory and some researchers even claim that his theory is “dead” (Sachau, 2007). However, recent research within psychology claims that happiness is more than the absence of unhappiness, and this research is clearly associated with Hertzberg’s theory (Sachau, 2007). Sachau (2007) has reexamined Herzberg’s *motivation-hygiene theory* in the light of recent research within psychology, and he argues that Herzberg’s *motivation-hygiene theory* can continue to serve as a framework for research that involves motivation. According to Sachau (2007), firms can benefit from using Herzberg’s theory, as it can help to propose and evaluate satisfaction and productivity programs.

Herzberg’s (1968) theory is viewed as a general, but not easily testable, theory of satisfaction and motivation, and Sachau (2007) claim that the *motivation-hygiene theory* is best understood as a framework for understanding the dual nature of satisfaction versus dissatisfaction. This study will include CSR into the *motivation-hygiene theory* by examining whether or not CSR can contribute to employee motivation.

2.4 Facilitating CSR engagement – a constructed theoretical framework

The rest of the conceptual background is divided into two main parts. First, in section 2.4.1, it will be explained why employees are often viewed as one of the main reasons firms engage in CSR. Following that explanation, it will be presented what employees can gain from the CSR engagement through fulfilling their needs, and what advantages

a firm can capture from this. The second part, section 2.4.2, consists of how firms should manage their CSR strategy in order to capture the desired outcomes described in section 2.4.1.2. Figure 1 below shows the setup of the theoretical framework, and is constructed on the basis of the literature studied regarding CSR and employees.

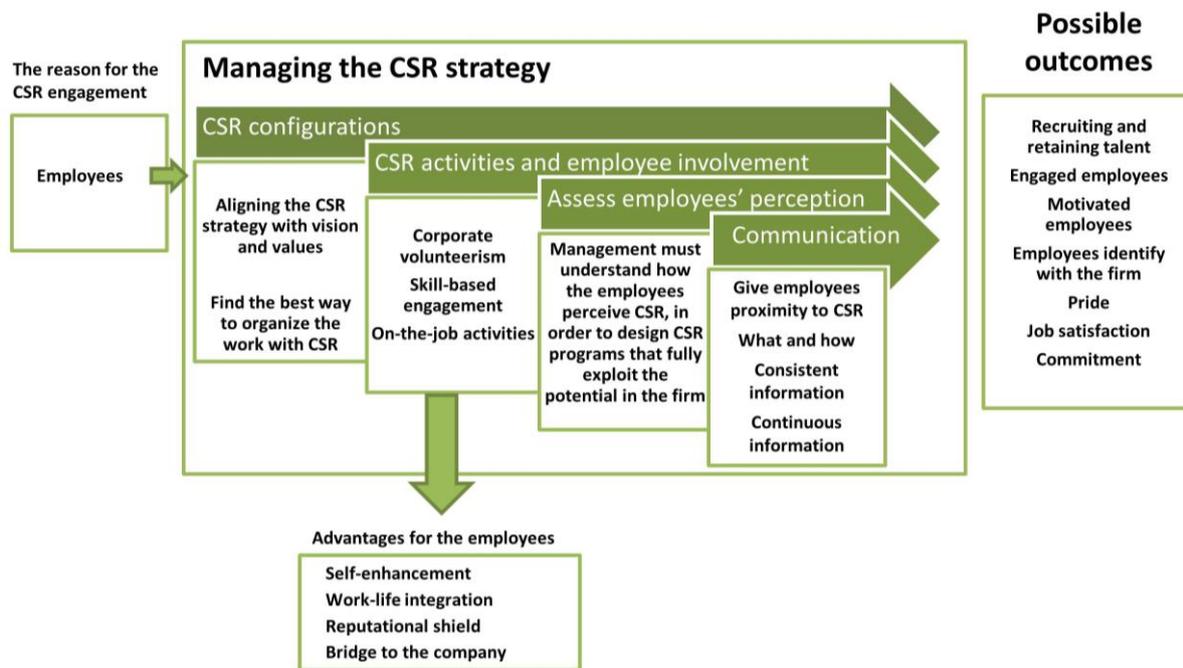


Figure 1 - A constructed theoretical framework, based on the conceptual background

2.4.1 Employees as a reason behind the CSR engagement

Literature disagrees regarding the actual motivations for firms to engage in CSR, and is most often alternating between financial reasons, the desire to be philanthropic and the need to recruit and retain the best employees (Hurn, 2008). The aim of this section is to present why employees is one of the main drivers behind CSR, as this is the relevant focus area for the research questions of this study.

Research shows that people often want more from a job than just performing their duties. In order to be fully committed to their firm, it is becoming more and more usual that firms use CSR as a tool to recruit, retain and engage employees (Mirvis, 2012). Through a good CSR strategy, a firm can influence how both current and future employees look at the firm (Mirvis, 2012). In a study conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, employee motivation is in fact highlighted as the second top factor that helps managers in making the business case for CSR, after reputation which was rated as the top factor (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008).

This subchapter is dedicated to give an explanation for why employees are one of the main reason behind firms' CSR engagement. The explanation will follow the argument that if managers manage to make a CSR strategy that will fulfill certain needs that their employees have, it could be turned into advantages for the firms.

2.4.1.1 The needs that employees may fulfill through CSR programs

There seems to be some agreement in literature that CSR has the advantage that it makes work more meaningful for employees. This can be connected to Maslow's theory of needs, where achievements and the desire to be useful and necessary in this world is included after the basic needs are covered (Maslow, 1943). Several jobs can be meaningful in themselves, but for certain firms and industries this meaningfulness can be hard to see. For these firms, CSR can be viewed as a solution that can help employees find their work meaningful, as it can give them a chance to positively affect some important issues (Bauman & Skitka, 2012). Mirvis (2012) supports this view, as he argues that a paycheck will probably keep a person on the job physically, but the paycheck alone is not enough to keep a person on the job emotionally. However, Mirvis (2012) also argues that Maslow's theory rarely applies directly to people in everyday lives; almost everyone have motivations concerning material things as well. Therefore, it might be hard for firms to target CSR initiatives directly to employees' needs, as the employees often have motivations to do their job which precedes CSR and the need to do something good.

Bhattacharya et al. (2008) argue, in a similar manner as Mirvis (2012), that while a job gives returns in terms of payment, benefits and advancement opportunities, incorporating CSR in the job-environment can be a way for a company to satisfy one or more high-order psychological needs of its employees. As described by Maslow (1943), human beings have basics needs, starting with survival and security and increasing to self-realization and self-esteem. Bhattacharya et al. (2008) uncovers at least four such higher-order psychological needs that employees seek to fulfill through proximity to the firm's CSR initiatives, as shown in table 1.

Table 1 - Needs fulfilled through CSR. Adopted from Bhattacharya et al. (2008)

Psychological needs achieved through CSR	Description
Gives opportunities for personal growth	Personal growth is proved to be one of the reasons why employees like to work for socially responsible firms. Employees may feel emotionally rewarded when they express their responsibilities to other in their immediate or larger surroundings. Research also supports that employees who work with CSR programs often adopt new skills that help them in their future career. The reason is that CSR related work often involves tasks that are far from the employee's daily routine.
Establishing a “reputation shield”	Criticism against the company and its operations can not only be harmful to the company, but it can as well hurt employees' self-confidence. CSR initiatives help employees fight such negative rumors by teaching external stakeholders (or even themselves) about their company's values.
Improving integration of work-personal life	Employees seek to improve the integration of their personal life and their work life, so that they can move more smoothly between the two spheres. Research shows that CSR can be a tool in fulfilling this need, as the implementation of CSR can make employees feel that they to a greater extent can balance the needs of work and family.
Building a bridge to the company	Research shows that employees who work in distant locations have a tendency to feel isolated from the headquarter or regional offices. CSR is claimed to be a tool for the company to demonstrate a commitment to employees, and to provide a bridge between colleagues working at different locations.

2.4.1.2 The advantages a firm may capture

2.4.1.2.1 Retaining and attracting the best employees

As described in table 1, employees may get some of their needs fulfilled through their employer's CSR program. When this is achieved, employees are likely to identify with the company (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008). In fact, the study of Bhattacharya et al. (2008) find considerable support to the theory that employees, identify with companies that they believe act in a socially responsible way. The advantageous outcomes of CSR with respect to the workforce will be reaped when managers succeed in making their employees identify with the company (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008).

When employees identify with the company, typical advantages that occur are that employees take pride in their company and that they get highly satisfied with their job. In addition, employees that identify with their company will aim for more success at work. Satisfied employees that take pride in their company will in turn lead to a commitment to continue employment. Bhattacharya et al. (2008) argue that success comes when a firm is able to attract, motivate and retain the best employees.

As Lockwood (2004) argues, there will be a shortage of labor in the near future, and hence attracting, motivating and retaining talent has become very important. She further argues that talent management is a strong argument for CSR today as well as in the long term (Lockwood, 2004). Bhattacharya et al. (2008) claims that much of the strategic thinking regarding CSR has been restricted to actions that intend to engage external stakeholders, such as consumers and watchdog groups. They claim that managers often seem to miss the strategic approach intended to engage employees, as described in this chapter (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008).

2.4.1.2.2 Employees as powerful advocates of the firm's reputation

Dawkins (2005) argues that employees are one of the most important communication channels for companies to communicate their CSR work to external stakeholders. Employees have a wide reach among external stakeholder groups and are considered to be a highly credible source of information among external stakeholders. Naturally, their word weights far more to external surroundings than the words of a communication manager or of a glossy brochure. Therefore, engaging employees in the work with CSR is a key to win powerful advocates of the firm's work with CSR. The potential of using employees as advocates is however claimed to be under-utilized. (Dawkins, 2005)

2.4.2 Managing the CSR strategy

This section will start with considerations regarding how a CSR strategy should be aligned with the vision and values of the firm, and proceed with a discussion of who is usually responsible for carrying out the CSR work. Then it will be presented how employees are usually engaged in CSR, and how the employees perceive the CSR activities, through three different types of CSR activities. After that, the next section will describe how managers should assess their employees' perception regarding CSR, proceeding with an explanation of the importance of letting employees influence the CSR work. The last section will deal with how managers should communicate CSR internally in their organization.

2.4.2.1 CSR in the context of vision and values

This section intends to describe the concepts vision and values, and will proceed with explaining how and why these concepts should be closely connected to the firms' CSR strategy.

2.4.2.1.1 Definition of vision and values

The *vision* should express a long-term goal which points the firm towards a future destination. The vision does not necessarily have to be planned step by step, but it should define a desired future state and provide a basis when the strategy is formulated (de Wit & Meyer, 2010).

The strategic directions of the firm are influenced by a common set of *values* among the organization's members (de Wit & Meyer, 2010). The organizational values should be the core of how the business is run. *Values* drive the culture, and should be the basis of all actions and behavior inside the organization (de Wit & Meyer, 2010).

2.4.2.1.2 Aligning a CSR strategy with vision and values

A successful CSR strategy must be aligned with the firm's vision and values (Strandberg, 2009). Most current CSR strategies have a vision-centered approach, and the starting point for design the CSR strategy is often the firm's vision (Knox & Maklan, 2004). The goal when creating a CSR strategy must be to create CSR oriented approaches to business activities (Vilanova, et al., 2009). A firm must define its role from a CSR standpoint, which means putting the vision at the core of corporate practices regarding CSR, so that vision and values become the driving force of the CSR program (Knox & Maklan, 2004). People increasingly want to work for responsible

organizations, and establishing believable vision and values is the key to attract new employees (Strandberg, 2009). If CSR activities are aligned with business, corporate culture and social needs, employees' perception tend to be more positive and supportive (Lee, et al., 2013). Lee et al. (2013) also emphasize that when the CSR activities fits with the corporate culture, it is more likely that employees accept the CSR program and view it as a positive attribute.

According to Vilanova et al. (2009), one of the main problems with implementing CSR into the firm seems to be integrating and embedding CSR into the vision and corporate activities. Many firms seem to adopt a CSR strategy only for reputational reasons, while CSR is actual a central business issue that has an impact on most business operations and thereby must be integrated into the core values of the firm (Vilanova, et al., 2009; Porter & Kramer, 2006).

2.4.2.2 CSR configurations – Who is responsible?

The leadership of CSR helps shape organizational and definitional boundaries for CSR and this may vary after where the responsibility of CSR is placed within the firm. The literature suggests three different configurations for the location of CSR within the organization; CSR as a shared function across departments, CSR as a separate function and CSR as a part of HR (Gond, et al., 2011). This section is dedicated to explain these three configurations.

2.4.2.2.1 CSR as a shared function

Sometimes, the management of CSR can be shared between several departments. This is often done in such a way that HR takes care of the social dimensions of CSR, the department of Communications or Marketing handles the external communication of CSR and another department takes care of the environmental dimension (Gond, et al., 2011). This configuration demands a high level of coordination between the departments, and might lead to a poorer integration of the CSR strategy (Gond, et al., 2011).

2.4.2.2.2 CSR as a separate function

CSR can also be treated as a fully autonomous entity which acts on its own (Gond, et al., 2011). In this case, the entity is usually organized as a network of managers and employees that coordinate the strategy. When activities are initiated, the CSR department can mobilize people from other departments both for consultation regarding issues and for participation.

2.4.2.2.3 CSR and HR

Some research shows that the CSR strategy often stems from the HR department, or at least that the part of the CSR strategy that includes employees is the responsibility of HR. Although the concept of CSR has been investigated for decades, few studies have looked at the interface between HR and CSR (Gond, et al., 2011). HR plays an important role in the workforce of a firm, through promoting positive behavior, creating engagement and to follow up the employees in general. As a CSR strategy should be embedded into the whole firm and its employees, HR and CSR should be linked together (Gond, et al., 2011). It is often HR that has the responsibility of communicating and implementing ideas, policies, cultural and behavioral change into the firms, and the HR department can therefore be central when it comes to integrating CSR throughout the organization (Strandberg, 2009). According to Strandberg (2009), HR should be the key partner to ensure that firms “walk the talk”; ensuring that the firm is actually doing what it claims to be doing.

2.4.2.3 CSR activities with focus on employee perception

Literature confirms that CSR is an important issue for employees; a British study claims that nine out of ten British workers consider it as important that their employer act socially responsible (Dawkins, 2005). Despite that, it has been little research that explores the employee’s actual perception of their firms CSR programs (Gond, et al., 2011; Lee, et al., 2013). Rodrigo & Arenas (2008) have tried to understand employees’ attitudes towards their firm’s CSR program. Their research shows that some employees feels that through CSR, their work is contributing to a better society, while other employees merely view the state as responsible for satisfying social needs, and thereby only view CSR as management fashion (Rodrigo & Arenas, 2008).

Employees are often interested in participating in their firm’s CSR initiatives, and research shows that more firms are using CSR to engage employees to do more than just their job, and through that produce value both for the firm and society (Mirvis, 2012). A firm must carefully consider which CSR activities it should engage in, and what the overall goal for the engagement is. If a CSR strategy consists of different random initiatives and activities, without a sense of how all of it fits together, it may not yield the possible benefits that the firm wants to accomplish (Mirvis, 2012). The CSR activities of a firm can be divided into three main categories; *corporate volunteerism*, *skill-based engagement* and *on-the-job engagement* (Mirvis, 2012), which will be described in the three next sections.

2.4.2.3.1 Corporate volunteerism

Corporate volunteerism usually involves philanthropy, which is the desire to help people through voluntary acts of charity (Carrol, 1998). This can be different local initiatives like care for the elderly or drug addicts, help cleaning the neighborhood or donating money to a good cause. Philanthropy is one of the most visible ways a business can contribute to society, but the concept leads to controversy about the legitimacy of CSR (Carrol, 1998; Wulfson, 2001).

Lantos (2001) argues that for businesses, philanthropy should be limited to be a part of strategic thinking where the objective is to achieve a win-win situation, and that the firm has to reap benefits from engaging in philanthropy. Philanthropy has the ability to contribute to employee morality, in the sense that it increases employee loyalty to firm and enhances employee pride (Shaw & Post, 1993). Therefore, if philanthropy is a part of a strategic consideration, it can be a win-win situation for the firm through contributing to engaged employees (Shaw & Post, 1993; Lantos, 2001).

2.4.2.3.2 Skill-based engagement

Skill-based engagement is about addressing different social concerns with knowledge, as pro bono work (Mirvis, 2012). Pro bono work means that the firm provides their business services for free, and this give employees a chance to contribute with their skills and thereby support a good cause. According to Mirvis (2012), pro bono activities are a growing trend within CSR. The reason for that might be that pro bono involves important activities that might help employees find meaning in their work (Parboteeah, et al., 2004). Employees are often motivated through being allowed to engage in pro bono, and this can give them satisfaction, boost morale and increase productivity (Parboteeah, et al., 2004). Many firms also allow their employees to work pro bono abroad. This teaches employees how to work in different cultures, and hence they learn a lot about themselves and it gives them a perspective that they could not have gotten in their home country (Mirvis, 2012).

2.4.2.3.3 On-the-job engagement

On-the-job engagement means including CSR activities in the daily work life, through implementing CSR oriented initiatives into business activities, like sustainable supply chain management, environmental procurement, cause-related marketing and green business initiatives (Mirvis, 2012). This can be done through greener operations, ethical and sustainable sourcing of materials and supplies, and environmentally friendly produced products and services. Employees that are engaged in CSR can help with

these matters, not only by helping the firm comply with being more sustainable, but also to raise questions and to find diverse solutions for implementation of such alternatives within the actual job situation (Mirvis, 2012). Research shows that employees support including CSR initiatives into their daily work lives, as this make them feel that they do more through their jobs (Mirvis, 2012). In order to reap the benefits that can come from engaging in CSR, it is important that the firm incorporate their CSR activities into job products that are tailored to the needs of the employee (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008).

2.4.2.4 Assessment of employees' perception of CSR

Few firms devote enough resources to gain insight into how their employees perceive their CSR programs (Bhattacharya et al., 2008). In order to design CSR initiatives that will fully exploit the potential in the firm, management must have an understanding of how CSR is perceived by the employees of the firm. As the employees usually are a large part of the CSR strategy, it is important for management to know the employees attitude toward CSR, and to understand how the employees want to contribute. According to Gond et al (2011), the employees' perception of CSR can be assessed using four levels, as shown in table 2.

Table 2- Assessment of employees' perception of CSR, freely after Gond et al. (2011)

Level	How to assess employee perception	Description of assessment
<i>Level 1</i>	Informal feedback	Managers should assess the employees' perception of the CSR work through informal channels. By asking questions when they meet, and visit the different business sites of the firm, they will be able to gain an overall understanding of what the general attitude is.
<i>Level 2</i>	Assess the employees' knowledge of CSR initiatives	This assessment can be quite diverse, ranging from statistical measurements or direct assessment of knowledge through an internal communication channel. Through supervising how many employees that participates on certain CSR initiatives, the management will know how many actually utilize the opportunity to contribute.
<i>Level 3</i>	Assess the employees' general attitude towards CSR	The employees' general attitude can be assessed in form of a questionnaire or a survey. However, these tools usually highlight and evoke positive reactions from the employee, in the sense that it is easier to reply a positive answer on a questionnaire, than what actually is discovered during a conversation or an interview.
<i>Level 4</i>	Assess the impact CSR has on employees' attitude and behavior	The firm should develop assessment tools that can monitor the impact CSR program has on different factors like job satisfaction, employee recruitment and retention, loyalty, pride and commitment.

Gond et al. (2011) have shown that CSR assessment is currently only in the early stages of the proposed assessment plan in figure 2. In order to fully monitor the effects of the CSR strategy, firms should use all four levels as this can give a more correct picture of the actual status regarding the perception of CSR work within the firm (Gond, et al., 2011).

2.4.2.5 The importance of letting employees influence CSR work

Some research shows that employees' engagement can push managers into the direction of CSR, and that employees often play a key role in developing and improving CSR programs (Gond, et al., 2011). A study of firms in France in 2011 also showed that 5 out of 22 firms have developed internal contests that are meant to fund employers' ideas and initiatives within the field of CSR (Gond, et al., 2011). Earlier studies that explores the employees' ability to influence the firm's work with CSR mentions internal intranet sites as a good channel for employees to give feedback to the work within CSR, and also an important arena for influencing the work and bring their own ideas (Gond, et al., 2011).

Employees can be considered as key stakeholders for developing CSR programs (Strandberg, 2009). Research shows that if employees are engaged into the work with CSR, and are able to bring their own ideas into the work, they are more likely to follow through with the implementation (Strandberg, 2009).

2.4.2.6 Handling internal communication of CSR

2.4.2.6.1 Communication as a tool to give employees proximity to CSR initiatives

If managers are to reap the benefits described in chapter 2.4.1.2, a prerequisite is that employees are aware of the initiatives that their firm implements. Research shows that managers fail in bringing their employees close to their CSR initiatives. A study conducted by Bhattacharya et al. (2008) shows that while many employees have a vague idea that they work for a socially responsible firm, their knowledge about the specific activities the company engages in is about nonexistent. The study also shows that the employees' knowledge seems to be program-specific, which means that while an employee could be highly engaged in one of the firm's CSR initiatives, he or she could at the same time be completely unaware of the firm's remaining initiatives. The reason is not that employees do not care about CSR programs; in fact the study shows that they are eager to know about the firm's initiatives. The reason rather seems to be that employees find it hard to discover more about the initiatives. Bhattacharya et al. (2008) concludes that one of the major challenges managers face in the implementation of their CSR initiatives is to increase their employees' ownership to the CSR activities initiated by the firm, where the goal is to bring them from a state of unawareness to a state of engagement. Even firms that use big amounts of money on CSR initiatives fail to communicate to their employees what good they actually do (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008).

Employees are generally interested in receiving information about their firms' CSR initiatives (Dawkins, 2005). Bhattacharya et al. (2008) conclude that an important tool of bringing employees closer to CSR initiatives is communication. Internal communication is an important tool in order to engage employees, as this is the communication method that reaches the firms' employees most effectively (Mirvis, 2012). Though internal communication a firm can tailor and pitch its CSR initiatives to the employee segment that is most receptive for this type of communication (Mirvis, 2012).

2.4.2.6.2 What and how to communicate

A company should first and foremost communicate the successes of its engagement in CSR. In addition, it is important that the communication includes the reason why the firm engages in CSR activities, the details of the program, what resources that are allocated from the firm and the challenges that the firm face in the work with CSR. (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008)

Dawkins (2005) addresses the importance of using bespoke communication when targeting CSR communication at employees. He further argues that firms should favor communication channels that are familiar to their employees. The combination of using bespoke communication and familiar channels is proven to be effective in communicating CSR programs to employees (Dawkins, 2005). Many companies favor intranet as a channel to communicate CSR initiatives, but it is argued that firms face challenges in communicating information about CSR using intranet (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008). Companies often miss the opportunity to connect with employees by fumbling away important messages about CSR on internal intranet pages (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008).

2.4.2.6.3 Communicate consistent information with high credibility

In establishing an internal communication strategy, it is suggested that firms should learn from how they communicate their CSR initiatives to the public and apply some of the same strategies in their internal communication. In the same way as consumers and other external stakeholders learn about the company's CSR initiatives through a number of sources, through media, blogs and chat rooms, employees will do the same. As a result, it is more important than ever to pursue a communication strategy that has high credibility in order to prevent employee cynicism. In achieving this, it is recommended to prioritize objective information over information that tends to be feel-good rhetoric, as the latter is likely to be seen as empty PR. (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008)

Dawkins (2005) addresses the importance of giving consistent information both in external and internal communication. By communicating in a consistent manner, the firm makes the message both easy for employees to understand and to disseminate further. This is also a way to equip employees to answer questions from external stakeholders on whether the firm is taking their social responsibilities as seriously as they claim, which is also what Bhattacharya et al. (2008) argue is a way to establish a “reputation shield”, as shown in table 1.

3 The methodology

This chapter will explain the methodological approach to this study. The procedures for this study are described in detail, so that all assumptions and choices taken are transparent for the reader. The chapter will start by presenting the choice of research method, and will proceed with discussing the research design and the nature of the research method follows. After that, a presentation of how the literature was selected for the conceptual background will follow, before we will introduce the case firms and the qualitative interviews. Thereafter, the data analysis method will be presented, before the research quality in terms of validity, reliability and limitations will be discussed.

3.1 Choice of research method

The intention of this study was to get an insight into how managers best can facilitate employee engagement in CSR, and to investigate whether CSR is motivating employees. Employees are proven to be one of the most important resources a firm has, and this is therefore an important area of research. To address the research questions stated in the introduction, a qualitative case study was chosen as the research method. The case study is believed to be a method that allows investigators to retain a holistic overview of a real-life event (Yin, 2003), and is therefore seen as a good method to find answers to the research questions given.

3.2 The research design

The literature proposes numerous ways of conducting research, and each method has a different approach to how research data should be collected and analyzed. Yin (2009) offers five major research methods: experiments, surveys, archival analysis, histories and case studies. The choice of research method is connected to three different conditions, which deals with the nature of the research question, whether or not the method requires control of behavioral events and if the research focuses on contemporary events. Depending on the answers to these conditions, the outcome proposes a relevant research method for the actual study, as shown in table 3.

Table 3 - Research methods (Yin, 2009)

Research method	Form of research question	Requires control over behavioral events?	Focuses on contemporary events?
Experiment	How, why	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, what, where, how many, how much	No	Yes
Archival analysis	Who, what, where, how many, how much	No	Yes/no
History	How, why	No	No
Case study	How, why	No	Yes

The form of the research question vary between “who”, “what”, “how”, “where” and so on, and is often a good indicator of what research method that should be used (Yin, 2003). The main research question in this study is a «how»-question, which favors the use of a case study, an experiment or a history. The research was intended to be conducted through interviews, and was not dependent on control of behavioral events. Therefore, the second condition was not applicable in this case, something which favors the case study and a history as research methods. The focus on how to facilitate employee engagement in CSR is a topic that is interesting for many businesses today, and therefore this study can be viewed as a study of a contemporary event. Even though the concept of CSR has been researched and discussed during several decades, it is continuously evolving in businesses today, and the relation between CSR and employees is becoming a more contemporary field of research. Therefore, there is a greater focus on CSR in relation to employees as a contemporary event, rather than as a historical event. By considering these three conditions when choosing the method

for this study, the case study was clearly an appropriate method for answering the research questions in this paper.

A case study can be seen as an empirical research method that explores a contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real-life context, and is particularly useful to understand and interpret complex situations from real life (Yin, 2009). Through the use of a case study, the research can create knowledge regarding a certain topic within organizational, social or individual context (Yin, 2009). The objective of this study is to capture under what circumstances organizations can successfully facilitate employee engagement in CSR, and whether or not CSR programs lead to employee motivation, something which is further evidence that this is an appropriate research method for answering the proposed research question and the corresponding sub-question.

3.3 The nature of the research method

A researcher also has to choose between a qualitative and a quantitative research strategy when conducting the research. The difference between these strategies is that the qualitative strategy is used to understand the complexity of a phenomenon through open-ended questions, while the quantitative strategy is used to test specific variables through closed-end questions and the use of statistical method (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

To discover qualities or abilities of a phenomenon, the qualitative research is the most suitable strategy (Repstad, 1993). In this case, the researcher can study the phenomenon in-depth in order to gain a comprehensive overview of a complex, real-life phenomenon. Also, this strategy allows for flexibility and more questions to arise during the research process (Repstad, 1993). On the other hand, the quantitative strategy is often used to describe a phenomenon with statistical variables, which in certain cases can limit the wide view on the case studied. For this study, the qualitative strategy is therefore preferred over the quantitative strategy as this study is a case study that explores the phenomenon CSR through gathering rich and detailed data. CSR is a broad concept, and thoughts, beliefs and values are often included to properly describe this subject, and the authors of this study therefore claim that numerical data was not sufficient to explore and describe the wanted objective of this paper.

We will argue that the qualitative case study was the appropriate research method for the research questions explored in this study. The qualitative research gave the flexibility needed for gathering data based on the attitude, thoughts, processes and ideas of the firms studied. The qualitative case study as the research method was

valuable in the sense that it seeks to explore practices and gives the researcher the ability to delve in-depth into a complex phenomenon. This argumentation justifies the choice of research method, as the theoretical method describes the process performed in this study. Anyhow, it is important to notice that every method has its drawbacks, and the various strategies that can be chosen for research are not mutually exclusive (Yin, 2003). The limitation regarding the choice of method will therefore be discussed in section 3.9, at the end of this chapter.

3.4 **The conceptual background**

The literature used to write the conceptual framework for this study was selected based on its relevance for answering the research question and the corresponding sub-question. The conceptual framework is organized such that the reader can assess the essence of the study, and the theory that matters for this study is presented, which according to Marshall and Rossman (2011) is how a conceptual background should be built up. **The conceptual background is developed by the authors of this study,** and aim to uncover the literature that already exist on how to best facilitate employee engagement in CSR and on if CSR lead to motivation among employees.

The literature was studied during the research process, as learning all the literature before conducting the interviews could possibly constrain the information desired to learn from the informants of the study (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The conceptual background is therefore finalized after the interviews, in order to ensure that the path of the research was open to learn from the informants, and not limited to only be influenced by theory.

The theoretical foundation behind the conceptual background consists of research papers. These papers are either given by our supervisor, or found through Google Scholar, Scopus, JSTOR or the library system at NTNU. When searching for relevant papers, several keywords and combination of keywords was used. The main keywords that gave the indented results included CSR, Social Responsibility, Corporate Social Responsibility or Corporate Philanthropy, and those keywords were combined with either employees, motivation, job satisfaction or similar types of words that have the same meaning.

3.5 **The case firms**

When choosing case study candidates, some operational criteria must be applied (Yin, 2009). As most firms today are engaging in CSR, it could practically be interesting to

talk to all firms in the world. However, some criteria had to be applied when we searched for potential case firms. First, we needed case firms which made it possible for us to interview both managers and employees, preferably several from each category. In addition, we wanted to talk to firms that are international. We were also dependent on having case firms that consist of a large work force, as the probability for this type of firms to have a more thoroughly integrated CSR strategy was larger. Large firms also often consist of a larger diversity of employees, and for this study, it was important to include opinions and thoughts from different types of people. Additionally, large firms are more likely to face challenges with implementing CSR internally in the organization, and hence it is more interesting to study those firms as this study wants to capture the complexity of implementing CSR in firms.

After stating the criteria necessary for the wanted case firms, the number of relevant firms was still high. As we wanted to go in-depth in firms, we believed that 1-3 firms was most suitable for this study, as that amount would also make it easier to handle for inexperienced researchers.

Another important criterion had to be that the firm was willing to provide the resources needed for this study. We sent emails to around 20 of the large international firms in Norway, by using a list made by one of Norway's largest newspapers¹. Among the answers that were received, two of the firms were particularly willing to invest time and resources into our study, and thereby those two became the case firms selected for this study.

Firm 1 is a professional service firm, which supplies services connected to competence, within audit, tax and advisory. Firm 2 is a facility service firm, which supplies services within cleaning, catering and real estate. Both firms are large international firms, and a more thorough description of the firms will be found in chapter 4, section 4.1. A presentation of who was interviewed will come in the next section which addresses the qualitative interview.

3.6 The qualitative interview

An interview can be seen as a type of conversation, only with purpose and structure. The purpose of an interview is usually to understand a specific subject from the

¹ <http://www.dn.no/nyheter/naringsliv/2014/06/24/2148/DN500/her-er-norges-500-storste-selskaper>

interview objects' point of view through unfolding their thoughts, beliefs and experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The goal of an interview is to obtain a description of a real world situation in order to understand and interpret the phenomenon. Knowledge is produced through interaction between the interviewer and the informant, and this is the main advantage of using the interview for research (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

The literature offers several types of interviews to use for research, and this study has collected data based on what Yin (2009) calls the *focused interview*. A *focused interview* last for a short period of time, is often open-ended, but usually follows an interview guide with a set of questions prepared in relation to the research question (Yin, 2009). The interviews in this study were the main source of information. The interviews with managers lasted between 60 and 70 minutes, and the interviews with employees lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. The timeframe of the interviews was set by the firms after the amount of time they were willing to spend per interview. Twelve interviews were held in total, eight in firm 1 and four in firm 2. In firm 1, two managers and six employees were interviewed. One of the managers was interviewed by phone, and the rest at firm 1's headquarter in Oslo. From firm 2, two managers and two employees were interviewed; one manager at firm 1's headquarter in Oslo, and the rest at the firm's locations in Trondheim. All interviews were held between March and April in 2015. All managers that were interviewed had something to do with the firm's CSR work. The employees interviewed were intended to be selected randomly, as the intention was to provide a variety of people for the study.

In the rest of the study, the informants from firm 1 is numbered, and the informants from firm 2 is named by a letter, as shown in table 4 below.

Table 4 - The informants of the study

Firm	The firm's informants
Firm 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manager 1 ● Manager 2 ● Employee 1 ● Employee 2 ● Employee 3 ● Employee 4 ● Employee 5 ● Employee 6
Firm 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manager A ● Manager B ● Employee A ● Employee B

According to Yin (2003), protection of the human subjects used in a case study is very important. The informants were aware, before the interview, that they would be anonymous in this study. The reason for anonymity is to encourage the informants to talk freely, as they then know they cannot be cited on their statements. The numbered order of the informants is therefore not necessarily the same as the order they were interviewed in, and the gender of the informants is not necessarily the same in this study, as in real life. This is done so that readers of this study, who are aware of the identity of the informants, will not necessarily recognize the informants based on their gender and on what order they were interviewed.

For each interview, it was prepared a list of questions that was meant to work as a guideline for the interviews. The questions were mainly open-ended, as the goal was to capture as much information as possible, but without forcing specific answers out of the informants. Even though the interview guide was quite comprehensive, we wanted the informants to talk as freely as possible, and the informants was encouraged to talk about their own feelings and reflections around CSR. However, some of the employees needed more closely ended questions to get the conversation started, as some of them had limited knowledge about the field CSR. The informants in general contributed with large amounts of information, so the interview guide was not always followed systematically. However, we were aware of the guide during the whole interview, so that

all questions were answered from all informants before the interview ended, in order to provide answers on equal questions from all informants.

The study is written in English, but all interviews were held in Norwegian. This especially affected the quotes used in the findings, as these needed to be translated. The quotes are therefore translated after best efforts, with both investigators double-checking and approving the translation.

3.7 Analysis of the research data

According to Yin (2003), analysis of qualitative case study data is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of performing case studies. There are few fixed methods to guide inexperienced researchers, but much depends on the investigator's own style of rigorous thinking (Yin, 2003). The authors of this study have also written a pre-diploma thesis, which was a case study about CSR, conducted the same way as this master thesis. Therefore, the authors have already been through a similar process once, and hence an analysis of similar data has been conducted once before. This has made the authors better prepared for performing a similar analysis in this master thesis.

Every step of the analysis process is shown in figure 2 below, and the process is described under the figure.

Data analysis process

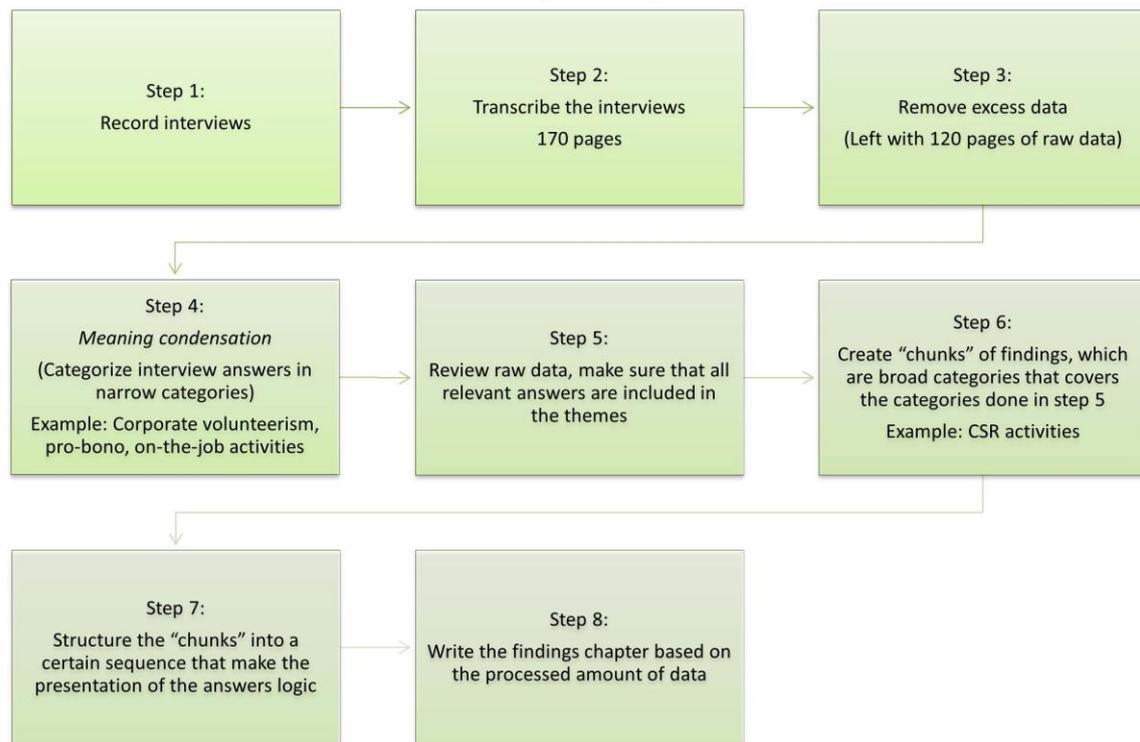


Figure 2 - The data analysis process

As shown in step 1 and 2, all interviews were recorded and thereafter transcribed. The transcription of 12 interviews yielded around 170 pages of raw material, which can be said to be an extensive amount of unstructured data to process. In step 3, the data was scrutinized and some of the data that was not directly relevant to investigate the research questions was removed. Then, it remained around 120 pages of data that needed to be analyzed.

In step 4, the data was categorized after all the themes that were relevant for our study. Through such categorization, the answers are reduced from a large text into shorter section, and this method is called *meaning condensation* (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The transcribed interviews were then reviewed along with the categorized answers, in step 5, to make sure that the categories were covered with answers from all the informants. After categories are developed, the results should be summarized into key "chunks" of findings (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The categories were narrowed down to such "chunks" in step 6, and those "chunks" included the main aspects of the research questions. In this way, the findings chapter was organized according to the

conceptual background of theory. This categorization meant putting all possible themes as subcategories into broader categories; an example is that the themes *corporate volunteerism*, *skill-based engagement* and *on-the-job activities* were put under a broader category which was called CSR activities. Before using the results, we were left with answers categorized into broad categories, which included many narrow subcategories. In step 7, the categories were then structured after a certain sequence of how the answers were meant to be presented in the study. This gave a complete overview of the material, such that no relevant data were to be missed when writing the findings chapter. The findings chapter was then written, as shown in step 8, where the goal was to present all findings that were relevant to answer the research questions.

3.8 Validity and reliability

Previously, it was argued that the qualitative case study was a proper method for this study, but it is also recognized that no method is perfect. This section intends to justify the choice of research method for this study, through discussing the quality of the paper. The two main measures to establish quality of a research paper is to ensure validity and reliability of the research (Yin, 2009).

It is important that the study is accurate, and establishing validity is therefore an important step of the study. There are three aspects of validity that has to be considered, namely *construct validity*, *internal validity* and *external validity*. However, *internal validity* is not applicable to descriptive or exploratory studies (Yin, 2003), as is the case for this study, and will therefore not be considered.

Construct validity involves establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied, and this is often viewed as problematic within case studies as researchers often let subjectivity influence the collection of data (Yin, 2003). Several sources of information can be used to verify answers given during the interview, which will enhance the *construct validity* of a study (Yin, 2003). These sources can be interviews from other informants inside the same firm, to support the informants' answers, or annual reports from the firms that confirms what the informants says. Two case firms with several informants were used to make sure that it was a variety within the interviews. Also, two other ways to enhance the *construct validity* is to let one of the key informants review a draft of the study (Yin, 2003), and take the interview back to the informants for a re-check (Denscombe, 1998). However, this was not desired by any of the informants. The informants said that they trusted us to handle the information right, and as long as their answers were anonymous, we were free to use all information and the citations we wanted for this study.

External validity involves knowing whether the findings of a study can be generalizable beyond the case study performed (Yin, 2003). One way to enhance the *external validity* is to make sure that the informants represent a fair sample of a population, so that the results can be transferable to other parts of the population. In our study, the cases and the informants cannot necessarily said to be random, but was chosen after criteria explained in section 3.5 and 3.6. However, we do not consider this to affect the *external validity* to a great extent, as this study does not intend to provide generalizable conclusion, but rather to but rather to provide an insight and ideas for further research. A further discussion of the generalizability of the results is given in chapter 6, about limitations of the results and further research.

The methodology needs to be described thoroughly in order to secure reliability of the study (Yin, 2009). A high reliability indicates that if the same study is to be conducted again with similar procedures, the researcher should arrive at the same results and conclusions as the authors of this paper. In order to strengthen the reliability of this study, the methodology is described in every step from the beginning of the research to the conclusion. Through a thorough described methodology, the reader should be able to learn and understand the assumptions and choices that are undertaken for this study, such that is possible to conduct the same research in the future and thereby obtain the same findings and conclusions.

The questions in the interview guide were written in order to capture what we actually aimed to explore. According to Yin (2003), the questions in an interview guide should be prepared for the investigators, not the informants. This is because the questions should be a reminder for the investigator of what needs to be collected, and should help keeping the investigator on track during the interview (Yin, 2003). The interviews were extensively prepared in order to make sure that all informants gave answers to the same questions. The interview situations were also practiced several times to get a feeling of how the interview situation would be like.

As mentioned earlier, the interviews were transcribed after they were finished, and the transcriptions also involved some reliability and validity issues as the empirical data changed from being an audio recording into being written words. The transcriptions are the data that was used in the analysis, but as they are constructions of real life interviews they may therefore not be accurate (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The measure to secure validity and reliability of the transcribed interview is that both of the investigators checked the transcription against the audio record, to make sure that there was no confusion about words or sentences. The recordings were of excellent quality, and hence it was little uncertainty about what was said during the interviews. Another

issue lies in the fact that oral language is different from written, and thereby it is hard to know the exact correct way of how to transcribe (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The focus should therefore be on what is the useful transcription for the research. The interviews for this study was transcribed word-by-word, but certain pauses, repetitions, interjections and the tone of language was not included, as we did not see that as relevant for the analysis of the data.

3.9 Limitations of the method

Although we find the qualitative case study to be the suitable research method for this paper, it is also important to recognize the drawbacks of the method. Many researchers have criticized the case study for lacking systematic procedures, not being able to use the findings for generalization and for allowing biased views influence the direction of the findings (Yin, 2003). Also, it is important to notice that the case study is a challenging research method that demands time, effort and extensive resources (Yin, 2009). Despite the fact that the case study as a method has received a lot of criticism, it is still a common method used by researchers today. This is because case studies can offer research that support and complement existing theories, they can contribute to knowledge regarding different phenomenon and they allow for collection of detailed and rich data (Yin, 2009).

We recognize that quantitative research would also be a suited approach to answer the research questions in this study. Quantitative research tend to provide more solid and objective research, since it uses numbers and present findings in the form of tables or graphs (Denscombe, 1998). Quantitative research allows for conducting systematic information from large groups of informants, something that would definitively have been valuable for our study. Also, quantitative results have the ability to present more precise information, without “drowning” the reader with an information overload (Denscombe, 1998). Through using a quantitative method, we could have obtained a holistic view of a large group of samples, and it would have been more likely to see the general attitude of CSR among more employees. However, there were several reasons why we chose to not perform a quantitative case study. First, the time span of this study is limited to 20 weeks. A quantitative case study needs extensive time and resources to be performed properly, and thereby 20 weeks was a too limited timeframe to handle such research. Second, qualitative research is often associated with descriptions (Denscombe, 1998), and as our objective was to describe the facilitation of employee engagement in CSR and hence to investigate the employees’ perceptions on different matters, we believed that qualitative research was most likely to provide the desired depth in the answers.

We also acknowledge that we could have used surveys, experiments or history/archival studies. If we were to use a survey, we could have included many more informants in our study. A survey could have been sent out to all employees in a firm, and hence we would have increased the amount of answers, which again would have provided a wider basis of information for general conclusions. However, a survey would probably not have given deep and thorough answers as the interviews did. Since we aimed to understand the thoughts and perceptions of the informants, we decided that a survey would not give sufficient information of the perception on the topic CSR. Experiment as a research method was rejected, as we saw that to be out of our range. First, we have never conducted research that included experiments before. Second, an experiment would have demanded control over behavioral events, and we decided that we did not have resources to do that. Additionally, we believed that the chance of getting a firm to cooperate on experimental research was small, so we thereby rejected experiments as a research method. If we were to perform a history study, or an archival study, we felt that we had to rely too much on the “dead past”, as Yin (2003) calls it. These research methods mainly rely on documents, and cultural and physical artifacts as sources of evidence (Yin, 2003). As we saw the real-life interview to be the most suited tool to gather the wanted data for this study, we hence believed that the case study was the most suited method. Additionally, as mentioned, the timeframe of this study is limited to 20 weeks, and hence we believed that a certain amount of interviews would give sufficient data to handle during this time period.

Additionally, we could have combined research methods, as no methods are mutually exclusive (Yin, 2004). Another way to approach the research questions with combining research methods could have been to combine the qualitative interview with a quantitative survey. Then, we would have interviewed managers and sent out quantitative surveys to the employees. This would have given more statistically significant results regarding the employees' perception of CSR, something that would have been valuable for our study. Survey data is often used within case studies, and they can produce complementary quantitative data to the case study evidence (Yin, 2009). Therefore, by combining a qualitative survey and quantitative case study, we could have gotten more solid and significant results, which would have had better potential for generalizability.

According to Yin (2009), the most important drawback of the interview that has to be considered is bias. Bias can occur through poorly articulated interview questions or through the responses from the informants. The interviews are the empirical basis for our study, and the main challenge is hence that the empirical material relies on

interpretation, both the informants' interpretation of our questions, and our interpretations of the answers. Through properly documenting the methodology, and the procedures performed during this study, we aim to increase the reliability to such an extent that we overcome bias. Posing good questions was one of our best approaches to overcome bias from the informants, as the questions were asked in such a manner that the informants should not feel that they had to defend themselves, but rather that they were encouraged to answer honestly.

A larger sample of both managers and employees would have been valuable for our study, as this would have provided a wider basis for reliable conclusions. Especially in firm 2, more employees should have been interviewed, as the answers from two employees are not necessarily reflecting the true meaning of all employees. Since the employees interviewed are to some extent considered talking on behalf of many other employees, it can be assumed that opinions of the selected group of employees are representative for more employees in the firms. However, it must be taken into consideration that there are many employees that can have other opinions that are not reflected through the results presented in this study. Therefore, the group of informants can be assumed to be a limitation in itself, as they might not be a true and random selection of all employees, as explained in section 3.6. The timeframe of 20 weeks is also applicable to this limitation, as we experienced that 12 interviews was enough data to process during this period.

It is also possible that the answers given, both from management and employees, may be a source of error. It is likely that all informants want external people to perceive their firm in a positive way, and hence it is hard to tell if all informants are telling the truth, and what they actually think and believe. This is particularly the case for the employees, as it is likely that the employees want to be loyal towards their firm and their employer, and hence it is possible that they tend to avoid shedding negative focus on their firm. This indicates that they might have been cautious and reluctant to some extent with respect to the answers they provided.

Another limitation that it is important to recognize is that the level of knowledge with respect to CSR is different among the employees. This might have influenced the data material gathered. When employees have little knowledge, it is likely that they are not capable of answering thoroughly to open questions. Therefore, it is a risk that the interviewer might pose leading questions in order to make them elaborate their opinions, something that is not desirable as this can reduce the value of the data material. To try to avoid that, the informants received an e-mail before the interview, where some example questions were given. This was done with the intention to make

them start to think and reflect around the subject CSR, so that they hopefully would provide extensive answers during the interview.

4 Findings

This chapter aims to present and explain the observations from the two firms that are relevant to construct a background for answering the research question and the corresponding sub-question. The chapter is divided into five main parts. Section 4.1 is an objective presentation of the case firms, while section 4.2 to 4.5 involves the observations obtained from the firms. Section 4.2 will investigate if CSR is considered as important among the employees in this study. Section 4.3 will investigate motivation, pride and engagement with respect to employees as a result of the CSR program. Section 4.4 will explore how the firms communicate their CSR work within their organization, while section 4.5 deals with aspects of managing the CSR-strategy.

It is important to notice that, as expected, there are some differences between how managers believe their employees' perceive their CSR program, and what employees actually perceive. These differences can be assumed to be a result of the fact that employees and managers are in different positions. Managers are the ones that to a great extent have made the decisions regarding the CSR work, while employees are the ones that to a greater extent observe the results of the decision. Therefore it is only natural that there exists a gap between what the two parts think of this subject. These differences are something that we have chosen not to give considerable attention in the cross-case analyzes that will follow each section, as it will always be a fact that managers have a different perspective about different situations in the firm than the employees, due to their different positions in the firm.

Anyway, we see it as important to present the firms' stories from both the managements' and the employees' perspective, as this gives a valuable and holistic picture of the firms for our study. In the different sections in this chapter, the observations from the firms are presented first from firm 1's perspective, and then from firm 2's perspective, before we will present a summary that includes a cross-case analysis. However, section 4.3, which deals with motivation, pride and engagement as a result of CSR programs, the observations from the firms are also divided into management perspective and employee perspective. This is due to the fact that this section involves considerable aspects that are relevant for answering the research questions, and is therefore given more attention.

4.1 A presentation of the case firms

4.1.1 Firm 1

4.1.1.1 Description of the firm and their public view on CSR

Firm 1 is a professional service firm, that supplies business services within audit, tax and advisory. They have 210 000 employees worldwide, where around 1200 of them are based in Norway. Their main focus areas within CSR are environment, employees and society. They acknowledge that as a firm, they have a certain influence on the environment. Therefore, they are continuously trying to work with different initiatives to cope with their responsibility for the environment. They consider their employees to be their most important resource, and try to facilitate engagement from employees in order to create motivated and proud employees that contributes to a long-term value creation for their firm and its customers. They wish to use their role in society to share their competence and contribute to development through pro bono projects, among other things.

4.1.1.2 Configuration of the CSR strategy

Firm 1 has organized the work with CSR as a separate function underneath the management committee. The CSR function consists of some of the partners of the firm, and a representative from each business unit within the firm. The CSR function is responsible for the CSR strategy, and decides what initiatives to engage in within CSR within a budget provided by the management committee.

4.1.1.3 The CSR strategy

Firm 1 has a stated CSR strategy which includes both internal processes and external contribution to society, which aligns with the strategy and guidelines from the mother company. Competence is a common thread through their strategy. As a part of their profession, they offer pro bono projects to their collaborators, and through external contributions they offer help to the disadvantaged people in the society. The firm works very systematically with their strategy, where the goal is to integrate CSR more and more into their firm, through strategic partnerships and implementation of CSR initiatives into their business activities.

4.1.1.4 Main CSR activities

Firm 1 mainly cooperates with one global non-government organization (NGO). This global NGO receives pro bono work and donations within a given budget each year.

Firm 1 has chosen not to give Christmas presents to their employees, but to donate the same amount of money they would have used for presents to this NGO instead. The headquarter in Oslo also has different local initiatives, among them a cooperation with a local NGO where the employees participate in different activities. The cooperation with the local NGO involves what they call a “neighborhood cooperation”, where several firms within the same area are contributing to help disadvantaged people in the neighborhood.

The CSR program also involves different activities in-house, with focus on the environment. These activities typically involve paperless business, recycling, driving electric cars and different similar activities. Firm 1 has also placed their head office intentionally close to a public transportation junction, with the intention of urging their employees to travel publicly.

Firm 1 has a plan to implement what they call an “impact day” in order to engage more of the employees in the CSR work. An “impact day” involves a day at work where the employees can use their time to contribute to society with their skills and knowledge, and this day will be a part of their pro bono efforts towards the society.

4.1.2 Firm 2

4.1.2.1 Description of the firm and their public view on CSR

Firm 2 is a facility service firm, which supplies services within cleaning, catering and real estate. Firm 2 has over 500 000 employees worldwide, and around 14 000 are based in Norway. Their main focus areas within CSR are people, environment, business and partners in the society. They consider their employees to be the heart of the company, and their most valuable resource. They consider their employees’ behavior to be a part of their CSR program, and focuses on corruption, relationships and workplace standards as important factors regarding their CSR work. Firm 2 aims at positively influence the environment, through reaching specific environmental goals that are included in their daily work routines. Their intention is to run a sustainable, prudent and ethical business, and through sensible partnerships with other societal actors they seek to contribute positively to the society.

4.1.2.2 Configuration of the CSR strategy

Firm 2 has organized CSR as a shared unit across business units, where Human Resources (HR), Health, Security and Environment (HSE) and Corporate Affairs are the main units working with CSR. The different business units are working with the parts of

the CSR initiatives that suit their daily business the most. There is a focus on CSR in every chain of the operations, and the operational leaders, who are responsible for 20-40 employees, are responsible for conducting the CSR work at their level in the organization.

4.1.2.3 The CSR strategy

Firm 2 has no explicitly stated strategy regarding CSR, but is working with developing one. They have routines, code of conduct and general guidelines from the global mother firm that they follow within the CSR work. Many of their CSR initiatives are directly connected to their business activities, which mean that there are procedures for how the business activities should be performed after the specific CSR requirements, especially with respect to people. They have procedures for everything they do, and for every possible type of customer and supplier, and these procedures are designed after their CSR guidelines.

4.1.2.4 Main CSR activities

Firm 2 employs 132 different nationalities in Norway, and therefore takes on a role as an integrator of different nationalities in the society, something which is a large part of their CSR work. In general, firm 2 is specifically concerned with integrating different nationalities, and also to do so by inviting the families of their employees to different family days.

Firm 2 mainly cooperates with one global non-governmental organization (NGO). Firm 2 have chosen not to give Christmas presents to their employees, but to donate the same amount of money they would have used for presents to the NGO instead. They also have other activities aimed at the same NGO, which includes both raising money and helping out otherwise, through different suitable initiatives that employees can help with. One example of this is a knitting campaign firm 2 arranged, where employees were encouraged to knit hats to premature babies in countries where the global NGO has operations.

Firm 2 focuses mainly on the environmental aspects of their job activities, especially within the business field cleaning. Despite the lack of an explicitly stated CSR strategy, firm 2 has very specific plans and guidelines regarding the environment that are directly connected to what their employees do at work. They are concerned with only using Nordic Ecolabelled products, something which also many of their customers demand, and it is non-acceptable to use uncertificated products within their job activities. They

also focus on minimizing waste, having the right environmental certifications, using the right equipment and following environmental standards in procurement.

4.2 How employees perceive the importance of CSR

Firm 1

Most of the employees in firm 1 seem convinced that companies should have a certain responsibility for the society. Some mention that since the firm is a part of the society, it is natural that the firm takes on some social responsibilities. Employees seem to view their firm's engagement in CSR as something they expect a firm to have in place, and as something they will miss if it is not present. However, some are more restrained in emphasizing the importance of CSR, as employee 5:

"It is not necessarily right [that companies should have a social responsibility]. (...) In my opinion, although you are a company that earns money, it is not automatically like you must be out there helping people and making a difference. I think it partly depends on which industry you operate in, and your operations"

The employees are clear that CSR is not one of the top things that they care about when choosing their employer. In general, they view it as something that must be in place; if the new employer lacks it completely, they would probably think twice before starting working there. However, the employees seem to be satisfied as long as the new employer does not have any "skeletons" in their resume. This is what employee 4 answers when she is asked whether she thinks CSR is important when choosing her next employer:

"Yes, I think it is. But, it is not what is going to be decisive in the end, if I am going to be totally honest with myself. (...) It will probably be more of... if it is very limited what my next employer does within CSR, then I would have thought a bit about it and it would probably have been negative in a way. On the other hand, if the firm did a lot [within CSR] I would think that it was a really great thing. I think there is a big span there, between those that only do a limited effort and those that do a lot, where most firms are located somewhere in between. I think it [CSR] would be a positive thing, but not decisive when choosing my next employer"

What employee 4 expresses is representative of what many of the employees think about the matter. All the employees in firm 1 seem to perceive it as important, to a smaller or greater extent, that their firm take its part of social responsibilities, as they view it as something they expect a firm to have in place.

Firm 2

When employees in firm 2 are asked whether it is right that companies, and their company in particular, should have a responsibility for the society, **it appears as the employees believe that companies are to a certain extent obliged to take on social responsibilities.** The view of employee A on whether it is important that companies take on social responsibilities is quite representative for how the employees perceive the importance of CSR:

“It is very important. At least for companies as big as ours... that we care and can contribute with something, that is important. I do not think I would have worked in a company that does not take on some social responsibilities (...)”

In general, the employees in firm 2 also view CSR as more of a thing that they expect a firm to have in place, than as something that is decisive when choosing their next employer. Employee A explains that it is very important for a firm as big as hers to contribute to the society. Both employees in firm 2 confirm that they will take into account how their potentially new employer behaves with respect to social responsibility. However, they stress that this is only one of many things that they will consider. Even though the employees believe it is important for firms to take their social responsibilities seriously, it appears as this is a topic they dedicate little time to reflect on in their everyday life.

Cross-case analysis and summary

From what the employees tell, it seems like their firms' CSR programs are more of a hygiene factor to them, as it creates dissatisfaction among the employees if their employer does not have an adequate CSR program in place. To a certain extent, it seems to be important for the employees that a firm is conscious of its social responsibilities. However, it appears as evident that they will not check their next employer's CSR program in detail, as this factor is only one of many things they will consider when assessing a potentially new employer.

4.3 Motivation, pride and engagement as a result of CSR programs

This section will investigate how CSR programs affect employees, where aspects such as motivation, pride and engagement will be given attention. First, in section 4.3.1, it will be analyzed how CSR in general seem to affect the employees. Then, in section 4.3.2, the specific CSR activities the firms engage in will be analyzed, where the focus will be on how the employees perceive the activities, and how the activities affect them. The view of both management and employees is presented in both subchapters.

4.3.1 How CSR affect employees

Firm 1 – Management perspective

The managers in firm 1 seem to have the perception that CSR programs hopefully would, and most likely do, contribute to pride among their employees. Manager 2 tells that CSR is increasingly a topic of conversation compared to some years ago. To a certain extent, the managers in firm 1 seem to believe that their CSR activities are related to the pride that their employees take in their company. This is emphasized by manager 1:

“We believe that it [CSR] is one of the elements that can contribute to dedication, which again may help us in retaining employees that otherwise would have been tempted to say yes to another offer. In my opinion, to create a dedication among employees is particularly important in a company that has a high turnover rate. If we have done something in particular (...), we try to present it in social medias. It is evident how such things create a pride among employees. If we post something on social medias, it often happens that employees are reposting while writing “proud of my firm” and such things, and to create such feelings among employees is also something we want to obtain.”

Manager 2 explains that she believes especially the employees who have been involved in CSR related work have found the work meaningful, while manager 1 also believes that the employees who have not been directly involved, also experience a certain pride.

Firm 2 – Management perspective

The managers in firm 2 believe that the firm's CSR work is creating a certain pride among the employees. Both manager A and manager B emphasize that CSR is a part of their culture, and help contribute to a stronger and coherent workforce. Their culture is characterized by pride, and both managers believe that all their employees know that they are a part of something bigger. The managers believe that they manage to create workplaces where employees feel that they do more than just their job, and that their CSR work is a large part of that. Manager B feels that their CSR work enhances the credibility of the firm among both current and prospective employees, and by initiating credible CSR initiatives, they create engagement among the employees which is spread throughout the organization.

Firm 1 – Employee perspective

As described in chapter 4.2, the employees in firm 1 think of their firm's work with CSR as something that should be in place. However, when they are asked what the CSR program of their firm gives them in terms of motivation and pride, they are rather vague in their responses. Employee 2 has the following reflections:

“I think it means something to employees. But whether employees think of it as something that makes them extra proud when they are walking to the office that day... of that I am more uncertain.”

The view of employee 2 is shared by many of the employees in firm 1. Employee 1 also underlines that a good CSR strategy is not something that could make him motivated to work for a firm. There seems to be an agreement among employees that their firm does not stand out compared to their competitors. This seems to be one of the prominent reasons why employees do not take pride in their company as a result of CSR related work. The view of employee 3 seems to be representative for many of the employees:

“We do not feel that our company does anything different from our competitors, so I think we could probably have been more proud. (...) We are not any better than the companies that we compare ourselves with. I think that to feel proud, you must feel that you are stretching the rope a bit further, which I cannot say that I believe we do. We have el-cars, others have el-cars. We

give our Christmas present away, others give the Christmas present away (...). Thus, we do not differ from others.”

When employee 5 is asked whether he feels proud to work for a socially responsible firm, he answers in a similar manner as employee 3:

“I would feel proud if my firm did something completely wild stuff, or if they used a lot of time and resources on the work. I am not particularly proud of my firm, I am not. If people ask me why I work for this particular company, it is not like I answer that I work here because of the CSR program of the company. I have never really mentioned it. Except from the Christmas presents, that conversation comes up sometimes, but otherwise I have never really talked about it.”

Firm 2 – Employee perspective

Employees in firm 2 claim that they are proud of their firm's work with CSR. Employee A clearly states that she gets proud when her firm engages in different CSR initiatives. She also believes that the rest of the employees are proud of what is done, but that there probably exists someone who is not aware of firm 2's CSR initiatives as well. In her opinion, it is important for everyone to know about the CSR work, as greater knowledge will contribute to more pride among the employees.

Employee B also believes there is a pride within the firm, especially among those that have been directly involved in contributing to the CSR work; such as those who were involved in the knitting campaign. She says that even if she has not contributed directly, the CSR work is affecting her positively and has made her more proud of the firm. She further explains that some CSR initiatives have the potential to create a lot of engagement, as they become topics of conversation at work.

Cross-case analysis and summary

From what the informants tell, CSR is limited to be a factor that has potential to engage employees and to make them take pride in their company. It is not a factor that seems to have any particular effect on their motivation. However, it seems to be a difference between the two firms with respect to whether the employees take pride in their firm as a result of CSR. The employees in firm 2 seem to be more affected by their firm's CSR program compared to employees in firm 1. The employees in firm 1 seem harder to

“please” and to make proud as a result of the CSR program. The employees in firm 1 seem to be concerned about whether their company is any different from competitors with respect to CSR, when evaluating whether it can be justified to take pride in their company as a result of the CSR program. The fact that employees in firm 1 consider their employer’s CSR program to be nothing different from competing firms’ CSR initiatives, seems to highly affect the pride the employees take as a result of their firm’s CSR initiatives. In both firms there seems to be a tendency that the degree to which employees are involved directly in the work with CSR affect whether the employees find the firm’s work with CSR meaningful and whether they take pride in it. Thus, it is clear that through direct involvement of employees in CSR programs, managers are more likely to succeed with engaging employees and to make them get a certain pride and satisfaction from the CSR program.

4.3.2 How specific CSR activities affect employees

Up until this point, it has been analyzed whether employees perceive CSR to be important, and also whether employees and management believe that CSR in general has the potential to affect employees. This section is dedicated to present more in detail how employees and management perceive the different CSR activities, and to what extent these activities have the potential to affect employees in different ways. For each category of activities, a short and neutral repetition of which type of CSR activities the firms engage in, is given as a reminder for the reader.

4.3.2.1 Corporate volunteerism

The two firms investigated in the study both have a similar partnership with a global NGO, as explained in section 4.1. Every year, the two firms give away Christmas present on behalf of the employees. In addition to the partnership with the NGO described, the head office of firm 1 also has something that they call a “neighborhood cooperation” with a local NGO. In cooperation with this NGO they try to involve employees in city walks that are arranged, among other things. In addition, employees have the possibility to buy notebooks from the local NGO in order to raise money for them. Firm 2 on the other hand, has arranged a knitting campaign, where the goal was to knit hats to premature babies in countries where the global NGO has operations.

Firm 1 – Management perspective

Manager 1 explains that the Christmas gift is the thing that gives everybody the chance to contribute; regardless of the amount of time they have available to engage in the

firm's CSR activities. She further explains that since they engage employees in the process of choosing the NGO they should cooperate with, this contributes further to making an engagement among the employees. About 800-900 employees participated in the selection of the partner, so she underlines that there is an engagement connected to this CSR activity. There are many people who want to join and to give their opinion, which she thinks is a good thing.

The “neighborhood cooperation” with the local NGO was initiated as a result of suggestions from the employees. The employees wanted the firm to be better in facilitating volunteer work which the employees could engage in. Manager 1 explains that it is easier to involve a greater number of employees in volunteerism in the close surroundings, than if the employees were to be involved in the partnership with the global NGO.

Manager 1 explains that the interest in participating in the events arranged together with the local NGO has been relatively limited. For one event, only 10 out of the 700 that works at the head quarter, signed up. She explains that she believes the primary reason is that the employees feel that they do not have time to prioritize it, and add that it is not important for them to make everybody contribute:

“What is important to us is that they who want to engage, is given the opportunity to engage”

She further explains that they experience that the engagement connected to the events that are arranged in cooperation with the local NGO extends far beyond only those who are participating directly:

“Despite the fact that there are only 10 that have signed up out of 700, there are many who write to us telling that they believe the initiative is really great. There are many who associate with the event, even though they did not participate”

Firm 2 – Management perspective

In firm 2, the management explains that to give away the Christmas present on behalf of the employees, is a way to make the employees contribute and to get them involved. Manager A explains that it is important to choose an NGO that is global, because of the wide diversity they have in their firm.

In firm 2, it was not the employees who voted for the organization that they wanted to support. According to manager B, it was a certain working environment committee that decided which organization the firm should cooperate with. When manager A is asked whether she think it would have been an advantage to include the employees in the decision process, she answers that she does not know if that would have been a good idea, as it would be a complex task to handle so many opinions.

When manager B is asked whether she thinks the employees have an ownership to the contribution the firm make to the NGO, she answers that at least the employees at her office has an awareness of it. She explains that employees carry the wristband, which they got from the NGO, with pride. She further explains how they get one of the project coordinators in the NGO to come and speak at the Christmas table about what the organization is currently doing worldwide. She underlines that this is important, as the employees have to know what the Christmas present contributes to. She underlines that the firm cannot give the Christmas present away without showing what the present is actually dedicated to help. Both the two managers in firm 2 experience that the cooperation with the NGO creates engagement and a certain pride among the employees, in addition to giving the firm goodwill, as manager B elaborates:

“(...) in a stressful everyday life as our employees often face, it should be allowed sometimes to share some feelings, and this will create a sense of camaraderie, which also creates a sense of unity. So you get a twofold thing; the pleasure of sharing, and an internal unity. It creates some sort of pride.”

When manager B is asked whether she believes the employees appreciate that the gift is given away, she answers that she thinks there exist both employees who appreciate it and employees who do not.

In firm 2, it has also been arranged a knitting campaign, and manager A underlines that the campaign created a considerable involvement and engagement across the organization. A large amount of hats were sent as a result of the campaign, something which created a lot of enthusiasm, she confirms.

Firm 1 – Employee perspective

Among the employees in firm 1, there seem to be slightly different opinions about the Christmas gift that is given away each year. Many of the employees mention that it is

better that their gift is dedicated to a good cause instead of using the money on a gift that employees will never use, as exemplified by employee 6:

“Usually, such company gifts are just boring, so if I think selfishly about it, it would either way only have been a gift that you never really wanted. Then I think it is much better that it [the Christmas gift] is dedicated to someone the money means a lot more to. I think it is just great that the gift is given away”

The reason why employees think it is a good thing that the present is given away, seem to be that the employees think it is nice that the present is given to someone who need it more than themselves. However, when the employees talk about the Christmas present, they do not give the impression that they take any pride in the fact that the present is given away. As was mentioned in 4.3.1, the employees are to a great extent comparing what their firm does within the field of CSR to other firms, and this is also the case with regard to volunteerism activities. The employees believe that their firm's charitable activities lack credibility as the firm is only doing the same as everybody else.

Even though the majority of the employees feel fine about giving away the Christmas gift, there seem to be one aspect that, at least some of the employees, react on. Some mention that they think the responsibility for much of the volunteerism is slightly skewed, where too much of the responsibility is placed in the hands of the employees. Employee 3 explains:

“I often get some comments from people who think the firm dumps the responsibility for charity on the employees. We must buy notebooks and we have to donate the Christmas gift. The feedback I receive is that employees experience that the firm is not willing to take that responsibility themselves; they just push the employees in the front [of the volunteerism]. (...) It is a bit odd that the firm buys notebooks [from the local NGO] and then expects employees to buy the notebooks from the firm. The firm could rather take the expense themselves, and then distribute the notebooks to the employees.”

She further explains how she and other employees feel that when it is their money, the firm can dispose them freely. However, when management is challenged to double the amount employees give, from their own “wallet”, the answer is a clear no. Employee 3 further explains that part of the reason why the management delegates some of the

responsibility to employees may be with the intention of trying to include employees in the work with CSR. However, she explains that it rather feels like some sort of forced saving or forced volunteerism.

When the employees are asked whether they would choose to give money to an organization, or if they would choose to get engaged in some kind of CSR related work, what the employees answer is perfectly represented by the statement of employee 1:

“Then I would choose to engage. When giving money, you obtain no ownership to it. You just give the money away. (...)”

It seems like this view is general for the employees in firm 1. They find it hard to get an ownership to the present that is given to the NGO each year. For some the reason is that they feel they know too little about what the present is dedicated to help, and how much money that is given. In general, the charitable donations to the global NGO seem to be the CSR activity that engages the employees in firm 1 the least.

The “neighborhood cooperation” firm 1 has with the local NGO, seems to be perceived differently among the employees. Some employees think that the firm has utilized the opportunity to include employees in this cooperation; something which they believe is a good thing. Employee 2 also emphasizes that it is great that the firm is also making a contribution in the close surroundings as their office is located in an area that previously was the home of many disadvantaged people:

“We see the drug addicts and the disadvantaged people everyday, when we are walking to the office in our suits and dresses, so I think it is really great that my firm supports initiatives in the close surroundings. By doing this, we are not just only a rich company that conquers what used to be their district”

Employee 5 is a bit more restrained when talking about the cooperation. He explains that he thinks especially younger employees feel that arrangements in close surroundings, such as the city walk where employees are supposed to clean the streets together with drug addicts, are rather awkward:

“Suddenly you meet a friend or other you know while you are walking around picking rubbish. I also believe that some would think it is uncomfortable to deal with a drug addict.”

Many of the employees tell that they have noticed that the events arranged together with the local NGO met limited support and that few were interested in participating.

Firm 2 – Employee perspective

In firm 2, it seems like the employees to a greater extent are having positive thoughts related to the cooperation their firm has with the NGO. When employee A is asked what it means to her that her firm engages in CSR, she talks about the partnership her firm has with the NGO as something that makes her proud:

“The biggest thing [we do] is the cooperation with the NGO. We give them some funding and have a partnership... they come here and talk about what they do. Instead of giving a Christmas present to the employees, we give it to the NGO. I feel proud to work in this firm when we do such things”

Employee A further explains that she has only gotten positive feedback from other employees on the firm’s choice to give the Christmas present away; the employees in general think it is better to give the present away instead of getting something that they do not want. Employee B is a little more restrained when it comes to speaking highly of the present the firm gives away:

“It is a little mixed what employees think about this topic. There is someone who thinks that the firm could have given a small attention to the employees, and in a way I kind of agree on that... But on the other hand, we get our salary and we do not need that gift when we have the opportunity to help someone. And this is something I try to explain when I receive questions about the topic. (...) I think it is difficult. It is especially the Norwegian employees that complain.”

The knitting campaign seems to have engaged the employees a lot. Both employees explain that they think the knitting campaign was a success. Even though they did not contribute directly, they both tell that the campaign affected them positively. Employee B tells that when the NGO visited them during Christmas, they got to see pictures where

the babies were wearing the knitted hats, and that people really enjoyed this as they recognized hats they had knitted. She explains that she think the campaign led to a certain pride among the employees, and that when the campaign started, people talked about it in the hallways and the message spread rapidly. Also employee A verifies that there was a considerable engagement when the knitting campaign was arranged.

Even though the employees in firm 2 feel that the volunteerism their firm engages in has a positive effect on them in terms of pride, they underline that it does not seem like the message about what good the firm does within this field reaches all employees. In fact, employee A mentions that she only believes that about 50% of the employees know which organization the firm has a partnership with.

4.3.2.1.1 Cross-case analysis and summary

The *corporate volunteerism* the two firms engage in seems to have different effects on the employees in the two firms. None of the employees, neither in firm 1 nor in firm 2, seem to get motivated from this CSR activity. It does not seem to have any effect on the degree to which employees are aiming at more success at work as a result of such activities. However, *corporate volunteerism* seems to have a certain potential to engage employees, and to make them take pride in their company. The analysis of the two firms shows that there exists a difference between the firms regarding this. In firm 2, the employees seem to take pride in the activities that is carried out, both the donation of money and the knitting campaign. Especially the knitting campaign appears to have been a great success in terms of employee engagement. The campaign turned into a hot topic of conversation in the organization. In firm 1, the employees seem to feel that the *corporate volunteerism* the firm engages in lacks credibility, as they feel that their company is only doing the same as every other firm in their business sector. This seems to affect the extent to which the employees take pride in their company as a result of this CSR activity. It seems like the employees find it hard to take pride in actions that are just the same as what everybody else in their business sector also is doing. The employees in firm 1 seem to be fond of the fact that the Christmas present is given away, but this is not because they feel a certain pride from giving the present away. It rather seems to be because they feel like they do not need the present, and therefore they consider it as better that someone who needs it more get it. From what the employees tell, it seems like there is an annoyance among the employees as they feel that management is putting too much of the responsibility for the volunteering donations on them. They seem to wish that management to a greater extent make visible what are their contributions as a firm.

4.3.2.2 Skill-based engagement

Firm 1 offers pro bono work directed towards the NGO they cooperate with, which implies that they deliver services for free to the NGO. The management in firm 1 also has a plan of implementing an “impact day” in the near future; a day of CSR work that contains activities similar to the pro-bono work that is conducted today. With “impact day” management aim at engaging more of the employees that want to contribute. As only firm 1 is engaging in *skill-based* activities, only firm 1 is relevant to examine in this section.

Firm 1 – Management perspective

The management in firm 1 is clear that they want to use their role as a firm to spread competence and enhance development, partly through pro bono work. Society is an important aspect of their CSR work, and pro bono work is considered to be one of the ways they engage in the society. Manager 2 says that she experience that the employees who work on pro bono projects have a very positive attitude towards the CSR program.

The “impact day” they plan to implement intends to engage more of the employees that want to contribute, but who claim not to have time for a long-term pro bono project. Both manager 1 and manager 2 state that “impact day” is an initiative that will to a larger extent involve both employees and society, something that clearly fits with their CSR strategy. As manager 2 states:

“An “impact day” will engage more people than pro bono work. Pro bono work is limited, as the whole organization cannot participate in pro bono work. But everyone can participate on an “impact day”.”

Manager 2 further argues that she believes the employees find meaning in participating in pro bono, as the employees then see actual results of the CSR initiatives. This is also supported by manager 1, who believes that engagement in pro bono work creates proximity to the CSR work, and really engages the employees. This argumentation is a part of the reason behind the implementation of “impact day”, as the employees find meaning in pro bono work, the management wants to give more employees a chance to contribute through pro bono.

Firm 1 – Employee perspective

The employees in general express that they would like to contribute with their competence through pro bono work. Several employees mention that pro bono activities are something they can benefit from as well, in terms of new knowledge and perspectives. However, whether or not they want to contribute depends strongly on how much time the pro bono work demands. Some of the employees emphasizes that they would really like to participate in pro bono project, and that pro bono engagement is something that really would have created an ownership to the CSR work. One reason for that is the fact that those organizations that receive pro bono are often very different from firm 1's regular customers; something that often gives different and interesting job tasks which the employees feel that they can learn something from. If the employees were to choose between donating money to an organization, and to contribute through their skills, most of them say that they would definitely have picked the last one, as long as it does not affect the time they use on regular project work.

An aspect that recurs through the informants' answers, is that time is a scarcity when it comes to pro bono, and that most employees will prioritize actual project work instead of pro bono. This is due to the fact that the employees are measured after how much time they use on project work, in something they call utilization, and they explain that they aim at having as much utilization as possible. As employee 5 states:

“If I get an alternative, to choose between some random internal work and pro bono, I would definitely choose pro bono. But if I get the choice between project work and pro-bono, I would choose project work”.

Employee 5 further argues that if the system was different, and that you could earn utilization time on pro bono work as well, he believes the engagement around pro bono work would have been larger. He emphasizes that this is an important barrier for many, as everybody knows that utilization time is the number one priority. The same perception is shared by several employees. However, some employees say that if pro bono could have been limited to two days a year, or something like that, they would have been more willing to spend time on it, as long as it is not a long-term project that demands the time they would have used earning utilization.

Several employees emphasizes that actively involving the employees in pro-bono will give the employees a personal relationship to the CSR work, which is perceived by the employees to be one of the best ways to engage the employees. However, most of the

employees acknowledge that pro bono is demanding both in time and resources, and that it is not possible to engage all employees in such a way.

4.3.2.2.1 Summary

It seems like the perception of pro bono work is divided, as some would really like to contribute, while others will rather prioritize project work. Some employees seem to be fond of pro-bono work, as they get the chance to work with clients that are different from the clients they usually serve, and therefore they feel that they gain new knowledge and new perspectives. Thus, as employees see direct personal benefits from engaging in pro-bono, this is a CSR activity they appreciate. However, it does not seem like they get more motivated for their job in general from participating in such activities, but it is certainly an activity that engages employees in a positive way.

Through contributing with skills and knowledge through pro-bono work, instead of using money for charitable donations, the employees feel that they can actually see the result of what they are contributing with. The fact that they can see the direct results, also seem to be a reason why employees are fond of this CSR activity. They feel that actual attendance in the work creates more awareness, ownership and engagement. Those that would prioritize project work are also willing to contribute through pro bono, as long as it is limited in time. The issue is therefore that pro bono often means sacrificing utilization and project time, which lead to less involvement from the employees. However, management plan to implement an “impact day” once a year, where every employee can contribute, something that seem to be a perfect fit with what the employees actually want.

4.3.2.3 On-the-job engagement

The *on-the-job* engagement the firms engage in is twofold, and therefore this chapter is divided into two categories:

1. **Environmentally related in-house activities.** Among the environmentally related in-house activities both firms engage in are public transportation, minimizing waste and to have a paperless business. Firm 2 are additionally concerned with only using Nordic Ecolabelled products within their cleaning business.
2. **Being an inclusive employer.** Both firms make an effort to be an inclusive workplace, although they do so to a quite different extent. As firm 2 is dependent on hiring employees that otherwise would be outside employment and people

from foreign nationalities to fulfill the firm's positions, this is a CSR activity that is closely integrated with the firm's business strategy. Firm 1 also has some initiatives where people that are outside employment get an opportunity to work for them part-time, and hence they give them a second chance in the labor market. This is not nearly as integrated in firm 1 as it is in firm 2, but it is still a part of firm 1's work with CSR.

4.3.2.3.1 Environmentally related in-house activities

Firm 1 – Management perspective

The managers talk about CSR initiatives which are included in the daily business life as small initiatives that demand relatively few resources. These are activities that are easily implemented, and the management believes that such activities are contributing to job satisfaction for their employees. Manager 1 explains that they consider environmental initiatives as important in their daily work life, and believes such initiatives are a part of the CSR work that they can be proud of.

Firm 2 – Management perspective

The management are continuously profiling themselves on the environment, towards their employees, and believes that their employees care very much about the fact that their firm and its business activities are environmentally friendly. Manager A states that operating a sustainable business is something they are very concerned about, and this includes many small in-house initiatives that affect the environment in a positive way.

Firm 1 – Employee perspective

The general perception among employees in firm 1 is that the CSR initiatives that are implemented into business activities are a good way to reinforce the work with CSR. Employee 3 explains:

“One should try to sneak in CSR wherever it feels natural, for example in recycling of food. That is completely unproblematic.”

Employee 3 also believes that initiatives like recycling are easy for every employee to join, and it makes them feel like they at least do something. Many of the employees comment the firm's recycling projects in a negative way, and claim that they are not sufficient. Small and too few garbage bins are one example of something they are not pleased with, and too few recycling categories are another one.

According to some of the employees, firm 1 lack a strategic approach to how they can integrate CSR into all parts of their business. Some comment that especially within procurement, the focus on CSR is insufficient. Employee 3 argues that there are no clear guidelines on which environmental considerations that should be taken into account when purchasing supplies. She believes that CSR could have been included a lot more into procurement, by taking especially more environmental considerations when the firm is purchasing supplies. She claims that there are few specific requirements within the procurement division, and that the ones who are responsible for procurement do not know when to think economy and when to think environment. She also indicates that if firm 1 was more conscious about the environment within procurement, it could actually matter to the employees. There seem to be a tendency in the firm that employees view their firm's external and more "fancy" CSR activities as less credible when there still exists issues within the firm, such as an insufficient recycling, that is yet to be solved.

Even though the employees are not completely satisfied with the way CSR is integrated into firm 1, they seem to agree that firm 1 still has a way to go, and they hope that these issues are given attention. Several of the employees mention that some initiatives have been very successful, such as encouraging employees to drive electric cars and to switch to public transportation. Employee 3 explains:

"I have been driving my car for many years, and resented the fact that I suddenly had to start taking the subway. But now, I love the subway, I almost race home and at the same time watch people who are stuck in traffic. (..) People have really changed their habits. It has been a very successful initiative, to move the head quarter to a more central location so that we can use public transportation."

Firm 2 – Employee perspective

The employees in firm 2 believe that recycling and using Nordic Ecolabelled products are important CSR activities that are closely connected to their everyday work. Employee A explains that if their customers are not particularly good at considering recycling and environmentally friendly products, it happens that she suggests to the customers different ways of doing things in a more environmentally manner, something she view as an important social responsibility. However, she points out that this has not occurred often, and that she believes this is something they should have a larger focus on as customers seem to want it as well. And she states explicitly that this work help to

enhance her job satisfaction, as she feels that she contributes and helps both customers and the environment.

Employee A states that the focus on CSR is also incorporated into procurement. The fact that they take environmental considerations when it comes to the general supplies needed for the offices and within their business operations, seem to be very important both for employee A and B. Employee B explains that she appreciates that her firm uses their opportunity to be environmentally friendly, as that is something she feels is important for her in her job.

4.3.2.3.2 Being an inclusive employer

Firm 1 – Management perspective

Manager 1 emphasizes that people are an important part of both their business strategy and their CSR strategy. She argues that being an inclusive employer is a part of running a responsible business, and that offering job training to those that are outside employment is an important part of it. They continuously have some people that are part-time employees, with the goal to make them more prepared to get back into the labor market. Manager 1 argues that through such activities they are able to give something important back to the society, something she believes can help engage employees and make them feel proud of their firm.

Firm 2 – Management perspective

When manager A and manager B are asked what they think motivate employees to do a good job, none of them mention the function the firm has as an integrator in Norway as one of the factors. When manager B is asked whether she believes that the employees appreciate what the firm does with taking care of people who otherwise would have been outside employment, she answers that they do not know this as they have not talked to all employees about it. It does not seem like the managers have thought through whether this part of their CSR work may have an effect on employee motivation and the degree to which employees take pride in the company. However, the two managers themselves seem to take a certain pride in the work the firm do in giving everybody a chance to work for them. Manager B explains that they often speak of how they are the number one integrator in Norway, and she seems to be touched by how the firm is in a position where they are able to help:

*“Two of the boys that we have offered jobs were criminals.
Today, they do not even touch alcohol, have two kids and do a*

really good job for us. For these guys to get their salary, pay their rent and to feed their children... what a pride they get from it. Those family dreams... it really touches me. “

Manager A explains that one of the things they will prioritize in the future is to be better at telling the good stories, because they believe it happens so much great things within the firm.

Firm 1 – Employee perspective

Some of the employees mention the fact that their firm employs some people that have been outside employment for a long time, and that they believe this is an important focus. However, employee 3 comments that firm 1 should have done more, and explains that:

“I believe that we are a firm consisting of so many strong and resourceful people, that I believe we could easily have included more of those that are outside employment.”

This is also supported by employee 5, who believes that the firm would benefit from having a diverse workforce. Employee 3 also argues that her firm should try to be an inclusive workplace in an even more organized matter than what it is today, and that the HR-division should have taken the initiative to enforce such a project.

Firm 2 – Employee perspective

The employees in firm 2 does not seem to be aware that the work the firm does to include people who otherwise would have been outside employment, is a part of what their employer include as the firm's social responsibilities. When the employees are asked about their firm's social responsibilities, none of them mention the work the firm does as an integrator for Norway's new citizens. However, when they are asked directly about it, it seems like they take pride in how the company manage to include so many different nationalities, and of how the firm functions as an integrator for Norway's new citizens. Employee A explains:

“Many have just a little to start with, and I feel that we manage to help them. Often, they have to show that they have a regular income before they are allowed to bring their families to Norway, and we have helped them in achieving this as we have

jobs to offer them, and that feels very good. Right now, I have one employee that has worked for us for three years, and he is now waiting for his family to arrive. You can see it on his posture and motivation... it has changed completely. Today he is a big smile.”

Employee A further stresses how the firm is not good enough at communicating such sunshine stories:

“We do so much good, but why do we not bring it out there?”

She believes that if the firm was better at sharing such sunshine stories, it could have contributed in making employees more proud of their firm.

Even though the employees are not aware that being an inclusive workplace is a part of what their employer regard as the CSR work, the employees seem to really appreciate the diversity that is present in the firm. The employees emphasize how they truly enjoy working with people from other cultural and religious backgrounds than themselves. When employee B is asked what she thinks of having so many nationalities at work, she answers that she thinks it is really great. She explains that she and the other Norwegians learn much from the employees that has another origin than Norwegian, and vice versa. This is also verified by employee A:

“There is one who has just retired, and she asked if it was possible to have some interns at her house, because she really enjoys listening to their stories and their background. She loved working together with people from other countries.”

4.3.2.3.3 Cross-case analysis and summary

On-the-job activities seem to be the initiatives both firms could profit most from developing a more strategic relationship to. Such activities are not motivating employees in terms of making them more productive at work, but they really seem to engage employees. It seems like CSR initiatives that are implemented into the business activities are perceived by all employees to be good, as this makes the CSR work feel more natural and credible. It is evident that many employees consider some of the *on-the-job* activities to be necessary, such as proper routines for recycling and the role of taking care of people who struggle in entering the labor market, as something that should be in place. At least, they should be in place before the firm engages in external

and more “fancy” CSR activities, for the CSR program to emerge as credible to the employees.

The *on-the-job* activity of being an inclusive employer is closely integrated with the business strategy in firm 2, while firm 1 only to a limited extent has implemented this as a strategic CSR activity. In the case of firm 1, the employees seem to wish more from their firm within this field, so this CSR activity could be something that firm 1 could benefit from doing more of in the future. In firm 2, employees seem to be more proud of the function that the firm has as an integrator in the society, than the managers are aware of. It seems like the firm has not utilized the potential this aspect of their CSR strategy may play to positively influence their employees, and that they could profit from exploring this potential to a greater extent. The fact that neither of the employees interviewed in firm 2 seem to be aware that this is an aspect that management considers to be a part of their social responsibilities, verifies this. From what employees in firm 2 tell, this could be said to be the CSR activity with the greatest potential to engage them and to make them feel proud of their firm.

4.4 Internal communication of CSR

Both firms use relatively similar communication channels to communicate their CSR work out to their employees. Intranet and e-mails are the most frequently used channels in both firms. In addition, both firms have an annual Christmas table, where the NGO they cooperate with has a presentation about their work, and about where the contributions from the firms end up.

4.4.1 The challenge of internal communication

Internal communication is considered to be a challenge for the management in a firm. Therefore, in this section it will only be presented observations from the managers point of view.

Firm 1

The managers from firm 1 state that internal communication is very important, as their goal is to spread the CSR message throughout the organization and hopefully reach all employees. According to manager 1, the biggest challenge with communicating CSR is to reach employees at all levels. Manager 1 explains:

“The hardest thing about CSR, is communicating it properly”.

Manager 1 further argues that it is one thing to plan CSR initiatives, and make sure that the work is conducted, but it is another thing to make sure that it is communicated well enough. She emphasizes the importance of internal communication, as the main goal is to make sure that their employees actually know what the firm does within CSR. She also explain how important it is to actually communicate specific CSR activities that they do, in order to make employees feel an ownership to CSR, to achieve that they feel it is something they are actually contributing to through their work. Manager 2 argues that internal communication is important in order to make the employees conscious about firm 1's involvement in CSR.

Firm 2

Firm 2 are currently trying to get a proper communication strategy in place, in order to have a more systematic approach to how to communicate their CSR work out to their employees, as both managers emphasizes how important it is to communicate the CSR work. Manager A explains that sometimes they are communicating it too randomly, and that she thinks it will work better if they have a system for it. Manager B says that their internal communication methods have improved the last years, after they started focusing more on it, and support what manager A says regarding the CSR work being communicated quite randomly before. Both manager A and manager B agree that the management have gotten a more conscious attitude towards internal communication, and that this has led to the message about CSR being spread better throughout the firm.

4.4.2 How and what information is communicated

Firm 1

All employees from firm 1 mention intranet and e-mails as the channels their firm uses to communicate the message of CSR. However, several employees mention that e-mails are not a particularly good channel of communication, as it is too easy to just delete the emails that are not directly connected to their work. The employees believe that those who feel CSR is an important factor usually are better at being up to date on their firm's CSR work. Several of the employees explain that they do not even try to follow the information that is communicated about CSR, and claim that the reason they know less than they probably should about CSR, is because they do not prioritize time to look at the intranet and to actually read about their firm's CSR work. However, it seems to be a general perception that intranet is a better channel than emails, as the intranet allows the employees to read about CSR when they have time, instead of

receiving emails that they only delete. This is emphasized by the statement of employee 5, which is shared by several of the employees:

“I believe many of the employees care [when they get an e-mail], but the problem is time. I think there are many people who do not have time to read the e-mail. And that is the general issue; the firm has to find other ways to communicate information, as many of us are bombarded with emails every day it is often delete, delete and delete. And then you end up only reading work-related e-mails, because you do not have time.”

According to several employees, personal communication is the communication channel that works best. The employees point out the presentation from the NGO that firm 1 cooperates with as a good source of information regarding the CSR work. However, the employees seem to disagree to which extent their firm is good at communicating CSR. Employee 5 claims that sometimes, for example when firm 1 gives away their employees' Christmas presents to the NGO they cooperate with, it lacks information about what the donation actually was used to, and the firm should give more thorough and specific information in order to create an ownership to these donations. This is contrary to what employee 3 says, when asked about his firm's communication of the Christmas donations:

“I feel that they are very good at it [communication]. They make videos for the Christmas table, so I believe it is up to each employee to make sure that they follow the CSR work.”

It seems to be a general perception among the employees that are actively involved in the firm's CSR work, that the firm is communicating the CSR work sufficiently. On the other hand, the employees that are not active in the CSR work, and hence do not prioritize to read the CSR information provided, feel that it is not sufficiently communicated.

The employees also mention staff meetings as a good arena to discuss the firm's CSR work. According to them, they are more receptive for information given during the staff meetings. An update about the firm's CSR work during these meetings will therefore give the employees a clearer picture of what is actually done within the CSR work.

Some of the employees explain that they believe that some CSR initiatives create more interest than others, and that the firm should more actively work to communicate the right message to the right employees. This is emphasized through the statement from employee 5:

“I think that the firm has to work actively to figure out what to communicate in terms of which themes are relevant for me, I think that is important”.

Firm 2

In firm 2, the intranet is an often used communication channel. However, manager A believes that the intranet is not necessarily the best channel, as it is not all of their employees that have access to it, and checks it regularly. Also, as firm 2 has a lot of employees from foreign countries, it can often be troubles with written communication as many of the employees do not understand the language. Firm 2 try to solve that through not only communicate in Norwegian, but also to show them movies and pictures of certain happenings related to the CSR activities. Contrary to manager 1, manager 2 believes that the intranet is an excellent way to communicate the CSR work, especially to younger people. Manager B further argues that the most important aspect of written communication is that it is an efficient way of communicating, something which she states is important for the firm. However, employee B argues in the opposite direction of her managers when it comes to emails; she claims that emails are not good information channel, as the employees would only click on the message and forget it, and thereby missing the point.

Manager B truly believes that it is personal communication which is most effective; the CSR work is easier spread if it is communicated through words. This is supported by manager A, who believes that their operational managers are also one of their most important channels for communication. She explains that:

“Our operational leaders are important in the work with CSR as they contribute to engage the employees. They [the operational leaders] are visible and they truly see the employees, and that is alpha omega.”

Both employees agree that personal communication is one of the best methods. The presentation that the NGO they cooperate with have at every Christmas table is one of the communication channels that create most awareness around the work with CSR.

However, there are some problems with the Norwegian language as firm 2 consist of some many different nationalities. Employee A comments that after a presentation one time, almost none of the employees understood what the message of the presentation actually was, as many of the employees are not fluent in Norwegian. Employee A further explains that she believes that as little as 50% of the employees know which NGO firm 2 cooperates with. This is supported by employee B, who believes that there are still many employees that miss the message regarding CSR due to failing communication.

Both employee A and employee B feel that especially staff meetings lack communication regarding CSR. Employee B expresses that she wishes the CSR work could be more discussed during staff meetings, as this will show the employees more directly what is actually done within the CSR work. Also, since it is compulsory attendance at the staff meetings and as this is an arena where they are used to receiving important information, more employees will be receptive of the information given and hence receive the message.

4.4.3 Frequency and credibility of information communicated

Firm 1

It is clear that the employees believe that personal communication is the communication method that create most awareness, as it is the method that makes the information most credible. They emphasize that such communication should be given more frequently, as this will likely get more employees on board with the CSR work. The employees specifically mention the presentation from the NGO they cooperate with as a good way to communicate the firm's work with CSR, as this presentation help create ownership to the CSR work among the employees.

The employees seem to have different perception of written communication of CSR. Some employees in firm 1 believe that they can find the necessary information on the intranet sites, and some others do not, and some also feel that the intranet is updated to seldom. Employee 3 wishes that the intranet was updated more frequently, and that it was a more systematic approach to frequently communicate information about CSR activities, as he thinks the firm would benefit from that in terms of more awareness and more engagement among employees.

Employee 5 comments that the information communicated regarding CSR would have been more credible if it also came directly from management, or some of the partners,

more often. He wants more active involvement from management, in order to get a feeling that the work with CSR actually matter for the whole firm, and this is a view that is shared by most of the employees. Most employees explain that they do believe that the CSR work is anchored in management, but that they want the management to be more “hands on” with the work. As employee 5 explains:

“If one of the more prominent partners had been more involved, I believe it [the CSR work] would have reached a higher level than it is by now. I believe the employees would have had a more conscious relationship to CSR then.”

Employee 5 further argues that it is one thing to get an email from the consultant that is responsible for CSR, and a completely different thing to get an email from a partner, or the CEO, as he believes this would have made the CSR work more credible:

“If the CEO had sent a mail regarding CSR, it would have had a completely different effect”.

Firm 2

The CSR work is communicated by the NGO that they cooperate with during the annual Christmas table, and both management and employees from firm 2 argues that this is a good way to communicate credible information. However, employee A emphasizes that the message has to be more consistently communicated the rest of the year. In addition, she says that many employees does not attend this lunch, which implies that many employees miss this annual big announcement of the effects of the firm’s CSR work.

Employees in firm 2 feel that the work is communicated too seldom, which they believe leads to employees missing the message about CSR. Employee A also says that she can be more conscious regarding bringing information about the CSR work during staff meetings as this would make employees receive information about CSR more often. Employee A also emphasizes that they do have many great stories within firm 2, which is a result of their work with CSR, but that these stories are rarely communicated out to the employees. However, she feels that they should have done that, as communicating real stories will create an impression on more employees, as such stories are often considered to be highly credible.

4.4.4 Cross-case analysis and summary

Both firms use intranet, e-mails and presentations as a way to communicate their work, which the managers seem to think are proper channels of communication. However, the employees do to some extent disagree on which communication channel that is the best. Intranet and e-mails seem to be good channels for those that have already been involved in CSR, and hence care more about the topic. The employees that have been involved in the firm's CSR work seem to be the ones who prioritize time to check updates. But for employees in general, the intranet and e-mails does not seem to be satisfactory channels, as several of the employees do not catch the information communicated through these channels.

It is clear that personal communication seems to be the preferred channel among the employees; most of the employees believe it is personal communication that creates most awareness among the employees. This is the channel where most employees actually receive the message, and most employees agree that the firm should be better at personal communication. When employees are told directly about their firm's CSR work, they seem to absorb the message to a greater extent, and this also creates more ownership to the CSR work. According to the employees, staff meetings seem to be a possible arena where the firms should communicate their CSR work, as this is an arena where employees are used to receive important information and therefore are highly receptive of the information given.

4.5 Managing the CSR strategy

This section aims to explain how the firms manage their CSR work, in terms of how the CSR work is connected to their vision and values, how the employees are given the possibility to influence the CSR work and how managers assess their employees' perception of the CSR work.

4.5.1 CSR in the context of vision and values

Firm 1

The managers from firm 1 argue that their CSR strategy is designed closely with their vision and values, and that it is very important that their values are embedded in their CSR strategy. Manager 2 states that their values show explicitly that they work with CSR, as the values reflect that they care about people and society. Manager 2 further argues that through their values, they express that they know the world is bigger than

what happens within their firm. Manager 1 also argues that the values of a firm have to be a natural part of the CSR strategy. As manager 1 says:

“If the values are not embedded into the CSR strategy, I can hardly imagine that the CSR strategy is sustainable over time (..). The CSR strategy has to be embedded into the business strategy, and the vision and values have to be embedded into the CSR strategy. It is the only way that CSR can become an integrated part of the business - which is the direction we are moving in.”

Manager 1 further argues that firms in Norway have a way to go regarding CSR before they can compare themselves to firms in some other countries in the world. According to manager 1, the largest issue in Norway is to think of the CSR strategy as a sustainable investment for the firm. It is still a gap between thinking CSR, and actually making it valuable for the firm, in the sense that CSR is an important factor for firm success, she argues. In order to succeed with the CSR work, it is essential that it is closely connected to the business strategy and the firm's vision and values, and that CSR is an integrated part of the business.

Both employee 4 and employee 5 explain how they find their firm's values credible, and that the values seem to fit right into firm 1's intended CSR strategy. However, employee 5 does not feel that firm 1 has exploited their values thoroughly with respect to the CSR strategy. Employee 5 explains how the connection between values and CSR could have been made more credible:

“I believe they [firm 1] should have integrated the values more, and used them as an entrance for management involvement, to show that management truly supports the firm's values and the CSR strategy”.

Employee 5 further argues that it is possible that the values are integrated into the CSR strategy, but that the firm should express this more in the daily working environment.

Firm 2

The managers in firm 2 argue that their vision and values are closely connected to their work with CSR, and that this is something they are very good at. As manager A says:

“We are good at using them [their values] practically as they permeate management evaluations, courses that we have, and so on. They are definitively not only nice words that we bring forward during fancy speeches.”

This is also confirmed by manager B, who says that firm 2 is conscious that their values are kept in accordance with the CSR strategy. Manager B explains that the CEO of firm 2 always repeat that it is people involved in what they do, and this is clearly expressed through their values and reflected in their CSR strategy.

4.5.2 Employees influencing CSR

Firm 1

In firm 1, the CSR function is composed of representatives from each business units which are responsible for planning, implementing and conducting the CSR initiatives, as explained in section 4.1.1.2. The management has several stories where employees, both within the CSR group and outside, have brought forward ideas which have been implemented in practice. Manager 2 argues that it means a lot for firm 1 to give the employees the possibility to contribute to the CSR work through bringing forward ideas, and that they put a lot of effort into making it work.

The management in firm 1 also mentions the employee survey as a way that the employees can influence the CSR work, as the results from these surveys affect the further work with CSR. Manager 1 has an example from one year, where the employees wanted that firm 1 could facilitate more voluntarily work, and this led to firm 1 becoming a part of the “neighborhood cooperation”, which is further described in 4.1.1.4.

Employee 4 explains that the CSR group, consisting of both partners and employees, has the mandate to decide which CSR activities the firm should initiate; and hence the employees in the CSR group are a large part of this decision. Some of the employees mention that they know which employee within their business units that has a seat in the CSR group, and that they would have brought ideas about CSR to that person. However, not all employees know who they would bring their ideas to if they had some, as indicated by employee 3:

“If I asked someone in my department, how they would have proceeded with the idea [within the CSR work] if they had one, they would said that they had no clue.”

Employee 3 further argues that the distance between a regular employee and the CSR group is too far; and that she does not even know who is a part of it. This is similar with employee 6, who states that he probably would have brought ideas regarding CSR to HR, as he would not know where else to bring it. Even those who know where they can bring their ideas, believes that it is not communicated good enough that employees have the opportunity to contribute with ideas and where they can bring such ideas.

Firm 2

In firm 2, they have no systematic procedure for the employees to bring ideas within the CSR work. However, the employees in firm 2 believe that they have the possibility to influence their firm's CSR work. Both employees say that they can come up with ideas and suggestions, and that they would have taken those ideas and suggestions right to the management. Employee B is very clear that she believes the employees can affect the CSR work a lot, and she states that:

“Firm 2 care very much about us employees bringing forward ideas and suggestions. And I think they take it very seriously.”

However, employee B further argues that she believes the management could have done more to inspire the employees to bring ideas about the CSR work, and this is also the opinion of employee A. Employee A also believes that she is in a position to inspire the employees to bring ideas to her, due to her position as an operational leader; that she can bring forward to the management.

4.5.3 Assessment of employees' perception of CSR

Firm 1

Firm 1 has one annual employee survey, which include some questions about the firm's CSR work. They also have an employee survey every second year, which covers only CSR. This survey has two goals, where the first is to map the perception their employees has of CSR and CSR related initiatives, and the second is to understand what employees want to change or improve. According to manager 1, this survey is very useful for firm 1's work with CSR, as they use the results to improve their CSR strategy. She further explains that they use the survey to monitor the effect this seems to have on the employees, and initiate actions depending on the answers.

Firm 2

Firm 2 has an annual employee survey, which is quite extensive, and include some questions about their CSR work. However, manager A states that they have not explored what their employees in general know about their CSR work, and especially not what they think about the different CSR activities. Manager A further explains that assessment of their employees' perception of CSR is something they might consider to implement in the future.

4.5.4 Cross-case analysis and summary

The managers in both firms argue the importance of integrating their core values with the CSR work. However, according to the employees, this have to be stated more clearly, as it seems like it is still a potential for exploiting the values more within the CSR work. There seems to be a tendency that the employees feel that the CSR work would be more credible if the management succeed in this.

It seems like most employees believe that there is a possibility for them to bring their own ideas into the CSR work, but that their firm lacks a system for how this could be done properly. According to the employees, managers must communicate to the employees that ideas within the CSR work are appreciated and where they should bring their ideas if they have some.

Employee surveys are about the only way managers assess their employees' perception of the CSR work. However, all managers are clear that employees are an important part of their CSR work, and that their opinions and perceptions are valuable for their CSR work.

5 Discussion

This chapter aims to discuss the research question and the corresponding sub-question. The questions will be re-stated before each section as a reminder for the reader. As the results from this study should be considered by managers that work with CSR, section 5.3 is dedicated to present important implications for managers.

There exists a gap between how managers believe employees perceive the CSR program, and the actual perception of the employees. As mentioned in the beginning of chapter 4, this is something that is not given considerable attention, unless it is important to properly answer the research questions. It is believed that there will always be a difference between what managers believe compared to what the employees believe.

5.1 RQ: How can managers best facilitate employee engagement in CSR

5.1.1 Integrating CSR with vision and values

According to the literature, if the CSR work is to be successful, it must be aligned with the firm's vision and values (Dawkins, 2005; Vilanova, et al., 2009). Vilanova et al. (2009) also claim that it is often challenging to integrate vision and values into the CSR strategy. According to the informants from firm 2, they seem to have managed to permeate their values within their CSR work and everything else they do within the business. However, a challenge with integrating the vision and values into the CSR work is recognizable in firm 1. The managers from firm 1 argue that the values must be a natural part of the CSR strategy, or else it is not sustainable over time. However, some of the employees in firm 1 seem to feel otherwise. The findings show that some employees believe that firm 1 has to integrate their values more into the CSR strategy in order to make the connection between values and CSR more credible. Employees seem to feel that firm 1 must reinforce their vision and values into their CSR strategy, so that the vision and values become the visible driving force of their CSR work. In this way, CSR will become more integrated into the firm, and thereby feel more natural for the employee, instead of CSR being something adjacent to the business.

5.1.2 What CSR activities engage employees?

The activities the firms engage in seem to have different potential to involve and engage the employees. The activities that seem to engage the employees the most are activities that employees think of as more integrated with the firm's business activities. It

seems like they think of such activities as more credible, as it is more natural for them that a firm take care of its own issues before engaging in external CSR activities.

According to Shaw and Post (1993), philanthropy has the potential to contribute to employee morality, as it increases employee loyalty and enhances employee pride. The findings from this study show results quite contradictory to this as our study indicates that *corporate volunteerism* is the CSR activity that has the least potential to engage employees and to make them take pride in their company. It appears like the employees in firm 1 feel somewhat distanced from the volunteerism activities their firm engages in. The employees seem to be fond of that the Christmas present is given away, however the reason does not seem to be that the employees take any pride in the fact that the present is given away. It rather seem to be another logic behind their perception; they feel they do not need the present, and therefore they think it is better that the present is given to someone who need it more than themselves. The employees in firm 1 compare the *corporate volunteerism* activities their firm engages in to those of their competitors. They believe that what their firm does is nothing else than what their competitors do, and this seems to negatively affect the proudness they take in these activities. It appears as quite clear that if management in firm 1 wants to achieve that employees take pride in the company as a result of their CSR activities, they must do something that stands out from what their competitors do. Then *corporate volunteerism*, which theory indicates is one of the CSR activities that most firms engage in, is not the optimal choice. Also, the employees seem to be somewhat skeptical to the fact that their firms engage in activities that are so distanced from the firm's business activities, especially when the firm, according to employees, lack some of the activities that are more natural for the firm to engage in, such as a good recycling arrangement.

The employees in firm 2 on the other hand, seem to take greater pride in their firm as a result of the cooperation the firm has with the NGO. This could be explained by the fact that employees in firm 2 does not seem to compare themselves to similar firms as the employees in firm 1 do, and may perceive the charitable activities their firm engages in more of as activities that are unique for their firm and they therefore take greater pride in the firm as a result. A possible explanation for why there is a difference between how the employees in the two firms perceive *corporate volunteerism* could lie in the nature of the firm and what type of people that are employed in the firm. Firm 1 hires highly educated and skilled people, while firm 2 consists more of uneducated and unskilled employees. An explanation could be that educated people might be more conscious and likely to ask critical questions regarding their jobs, while uneducated people are more concerned with the fact that they need a job that is safe; the important factor is to

earn an income for themselves and their families. The job situation of higher educated people might be more secure, and it is therefore possible that they have more prejudices and are observant to the other aspect of the job than only earning an income. This can be connected to Maslow (1943) and his hierarchy of needs; where unskilled might be more concerned with the safety of having a job, while higher educated people are seeking self-realization through other aspects of the job. Therefore, it can be assumed that higher educated people are more likely to critically reflect around aspects within CSR, than just accepting it as a good “thing”. This could be the explanation why employees in firm 1 somehow seem harder to “please” in comparison to the employees in firm 2.

Pro-bono, the *skill-based* activity firm 1 engages in, seems to be an activity that employees to some extent are fond of. In general, the employees have the opinion that if they had the choice between donating money and to engage in pro-bono work, they would choose the latter. The reason why they are fond of this activity is that they think such activities are creating much more of an ownership to the firm’s CSR program and hence make them more engaged. According to Parboteeah et al. (2004), pro bono involves activities that might help employees to find meaning in their work, something which to a certain extent is contrary to what is observed in firm 1. The employees are in general clear on one point; they have chosen to work for a professional service firm, and thus their primary motivation to work is far from making the world a better place. They are motivated by complex tasks and the possibility to challenge themselves. However, it seems like the reason why employees are fond of pro bono is somewhat related to that they want to challenge themselves in new arenas. Bhattacharya et al. (2008) argues that employees who work on CSR programs may achieve personal growth as they often adopt new skills that they might later benefit from. This is also the impression the employees give; through pro bono they can work with customers that are totally different from their regular ones, something that can give them different perspectives and new challenges. What seems to make employees skeptical to engage in pro bono though, is how the reward systems are arranged, something which will be discussed later.

On-the-job activities seem to be the group of CSR activities that should be in place before a firm chooses to introduce CSR activities that are more distanced from its business activities. In firm 1, and partly also in firm 2, it seems to be an opinion that the firm lack a strategic approach to how one should best integrate CSR into the firm's business operations. It seems like the employees categorize *on-the-job* activities as having high credibility, as they have more the potential of blending into what is the firm's

business activities and hence what employees perceive as relevant in their daily working environment. According to employees, a firm's CSR program loses credibility when there are evident issues present on the job that is not taken care of, such as an insufficient system for recycling, while the firm is using its time on more external and "fancy" CSR activities, as pro bono and volunteerism. There seem to be a wish from the employees that their firm to a greater extent should try to incorporate CSR in the business activities. Examples that emerges are that firm 1 could to a greater extent include CSR in procurement of goods, and that firm 2 could be better at advise its customers on how to choose environmentally friendly solutions for recycling and other things.

Another example of how one can successfully implement an *on-the-job* activity, and hence how a firm can make sure to integrate CSR into its business activities, is how firm 2 has taken on a role as an integrator in the society. They have exploited a possible win-win solution that seems to be perceived as sympathetic by their employees. However, from what the employees explain, there seem to be an unexploited potential to affect employees positively and to make them proud of the effort the firm is doing with including so many employees that otherwise would have been outside employment. In fact, employees seem to appreciate this CSR activity a lot more than the firm's managers seem to be aware of. It appears quite clear that the employees see a great value in working for a company that entails so many different nationalities. They get to learn things that they otherwise would not have the chance to learn. Bhattacharya et al. (2008) argues that if managers manage to fulfill needs that their employees have, the result could be greater motivation and pride among the employees. From what is told by employees and management in firm 2, this type of *on-the-job* activity certainly has the potential to fulfill certain needs among the employees, such as personal growth as a result of interaction with people with other nationalities than themselves. If the activity has the potential to be a *motivational factor* to employees, is uncertain, but the activity definitively has the potential to engage the employees and to make them take pride in their firm. In firm 1, some of the employees mention that the firm could to a greater extent employ people who have difficulties in getting access to the Norwegian labor market of different reasons. By those employees, this is viewed as a HR-related activity that can make their CSR work stand out compared to their competitors, and it is also mentioned that this is a very good way to give back to the society through CSR. According to Gond et al. (2011), HR and CSR should be linked together in order to embed the CSR strategy into the whole firm and its employees, and thereby make CSR a more natural part of the business. As *on-the-job* activities that are HR-related seem to

appeal to employees, both firms could benefit from improving the cooperation between HR department and the people responsible for CSR.

What seems to be the primary reason why employees are reluctant to engage in CSR work, especially pro bono, is the time it would demand and how the firm's reward system is designed. Firm 1 has a reward system that reward employees in terms of utilization, after how much project work the employees have undertaken during a period of time. Naturally, the employees aim at having as much utilization as possible, as this is how their work is measured. From what the employees tell, this seems to be a problem especially for the newly recruited employees, as they often strive more to get enough project work. It seems like managers could profit in terms of employee engagement in their CSR program, if they designed the reward system differently. Some CSR work already profit the employees to some extent, but it appears that this is not enough to be a driver for employees to engage in CSR. The ultimate solution appears to be that CSR work is rewarded equally as project work.

5.1.3 Handling the challenge of internal communication

Research shows that managers often fail to bring employees close enough to their CSR programs. This is also what the managers in the two firms seem to believe is most difficult; to make sure that their CSR work is communicated well enough to make the employees actually know what the firm does within CSR. The answers from several employees also indicate that this is a challenge, as many of them are not aware of all the initiatives that the firms engage in. Theory shows that if the firms want to reap benefits from the CSR engagement, the employees must be aware of the firm's CSR initiatives, and employees often only have a vague idea of what their firm does within CSR (Bhattacharya et al., 2008). This is consistent with the findings of this study, as it seems like one of the things that prevents the two firms from reaping internal benefits of their CSR program is that the employees do not have adequate knowledge of their firm's CSR initiatives to get an ownership to the CSR program.

Theory shows that intranet is the communication channel most frequently used by firms to communicate CSR, something that is also the case for the firms investigated in this study. In addition, emails and presentations by the NGO are also frequently used communication channels. Bhattacharya et al. (2008) argue that firms often face a challenge in communicating CSR work through the intranet, as the message about CSR often get fumbled away among other information. This is also recognized as a challenge in the two firms investigated in this study. In firm 1, the information the employees receive through intranet and emails is often ignored as they prioritize other information

that is more relevant to them first. The intranet gives the employees the possibility to read the information when they want, or have time, something that the employees in firm 1 rarely prioritize. This study shows evidence that only the employees that are already engaged in the CSR initiatives care enough to check the information that is spread through written information channels. This indicates that if the firm wants to reach out to a greater group of people, they should limit the use of such written information. In firm 2, many of the employees do not even have regular access to intranet and to check their email, something which makes the use of such communication channels very challenging to use.

The type of communication the employees in this study seem to favor is personal communication. Dawkins (2005) argue that the best communication channels are those that are familiar to the employees, hence communication channels that they are used to receive other information through. This is also evident from this study, as the employees want more of the CSR work to be communicated through informal face-to-face communication, which is how they are used to receive other information that are relevant for them. Both employees and managers in the two firms argue that staff meetings could be an excellent way of communicating the CSR work, as this is an arena where they are used to get information that are relevant to them, and hence they are receptive of the information that is given during such meetings. However, none of the firms exploit the potential of staff meetings as an arena where CSR information can be communicated. According to the employees, personal communication through staff meetings or other familiar communication channels could be an opportunity for the firm to create a much larger awareness of CSR than what is currently achieved. From what the employees tell, the firms should also be better at using middle management strategically as communication ambassadors of CSR, as they are the ones who meet the employees on a daily basis.

According to Dawkins (2005) it is very important to use bespoke communication when targeting employees, meaning that managers must adapt the communication of CSR to the employees. Through tailoring and pitching the CSR work to the employees that are most receptive of the type of information, the message will to a greater extent reach the employees (Mirvis, 2012). In this study, it seems like management in the two firms fail to tailor their communication to what information the employees are receptive of receiving. This study indicates that employees want their management to make an effort to figure out what information that is relevant for them. This is another argument why staff meetings could be an arena where CSR information could be given, as in such meeting the different business units are gathered and therefore this is a good

opportunity to communicate the CSR work that is most relevant for this particular unit's daily work. Thereby, the employees will receive the message about the CSR work that is most closely connected to the unit's business activities, which the employees express, is something that they want. Firm 2 in particular seem to have problems of tailoring their communication to their employees, which is related to that their workforce is of a particularly international character. It is evident that to arrange a presentation from the NGO once a year in Norwegian while the majority of the employees do not speak Norwegian, and to even regard this as the main way of communicating the past year's work within CSR, is not a way to tailor your communication to the employees. The employees in firm 2 strongly indicate that this is not sufficient, and that if the firm wants to reach all employees with the communication of CSR, they should take this into serious consideration.

5.1.4 Importance of assessing employee perception

Research shows that few firms devote extensive resources to understand their employees' perception of CSR (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008). This seems to be consistent with our findings, as the case firms in this study use relatively few demanding resources to assess their employees' perception of the CSR work. Both firms have an annual employee survey that includes the subject CSR, and firm 1 also have an employee survey which only deals with CSR every second year. The firms make statistical measurements of the answers, which are compared with the answers from previous years. However, a yearly survey is not sufficient to gain a comprehensive overview of the employees' perception of CSR. Gond et al. (2011) argue that firms should develop assessment tools that can monitor if CSR program has any effect on job satisfaction, pride and motivation among employees. From our findings, it does not seem that the management has considered developing more extensive tools to monitor their employees' perception. The managers do to a great extent believe that their employees' perceptions are important in designing the CSR strategy, but it is clear that they are not sufficiently assessing the employees' perceptions.

5.2 SQ: Can CSR be used to motivate employees?

Bhattacharya et al. (2008) argue that employees identify with companies they believe act in a socially responsible way. They further argue that employees can get some of their personal needs covered through CSR programs, something which in turn may lead to employee satisfaction and commitment to the firm. Our study indicates a difference in the extent to which employees in the two firms get their personal needs covered through CSR, and in whether they take pride in their company as a result of the CSR program.

Employees in firm 1 view the CSR program the firm has as a *hygiene factor*. They view CSR as a sympathetic attribute, and it is a general expectation among the employees that the firm should do certain things related to CSR. If a firm lacks such initiatives, employees will look at it as a negative factor that might affect the decision of whether or not to work for a firm. The degree to which the employees in firm 1 take pride in their company and get motivated as a result of the CSR program seem to be limited as a result of them having the perception that their firm's CSR program lacks a certain credibility. This seems to be due to two reasons. First, the firm's employees seem to believe that their firm does exactly the same as every firm within the same business sector, and therefore they find limited reasons to take pride in their firm as a result of the CSR program. Second, they watch their firm engage in CSR activities that are not related to their business activities, while they see issues at the workplace or related to their business operations that are yet not fully covered.

In firm 2, the CSR program is also viewed to a certain extent as a *hygiene factor* by the employees. However, the employees in firm 2 seem to be, to a greater extent than the employees in firm 1, proud of the work their firm is investing in CSR activities. The employees express that when they reflect on the work their firm does, they are proud of what they do. From what the employees tell, there seem to be three possible explanations why employees in firm 2 to a greater extent take pride in the CSR work conducted by the firm. First, firm 2 has integrated their CSR strategy more with their business strategy, as they are to a greater extent engaging in *on-the-job* activities. The employees appreciate the large diversity that exists at their workplace as a result of their firm's function as an integrator in the society. They see the results of CSR in their everyday work life, something that seems to positively affect the pride they take in their company. Second, as the nature of the employees' work tasks are of a less complex nature than the work tasks of employees in firm 1, it could be that employees in firm 2 get less personal needs covered through their work tasks compared to the employees in firm 1. CSR could therefore have the potential to play a greater role in fulfilling personal needs among employees. Third, as the employees in firm 2 is less educated and skilled compared to the employees in firm 1, it would be eligible to claim that employees in firm 2 are likely to be less critical to what their employer does. During the interviews, it appeared as the employees in firm 2 had thought less through their firm's work within the field of CSR. The employees have observed that their employer supports a NGO, something that they think is nice. However, their reflections seem to be limited beyond this point. Employees in firm 1 on the other hand, seem to reflect a lot more on the topic; they reflect on what their firm does compared to competitors, whether the CSR work is credible enough and on whether or not the CSR program is related to the

business strategy of the firm. As mentioned before, employees in firm 1 are highly educated people, many of them also within fields as economy and strategy, and hence they seem to be somewhat more difficult to “please”.

So, can CSR be used to motivate employees? Bhattacharya et al. (2008) argues that employees may get some needs covered through their employer’s CSR program, and that employees then in turn will identify with their company and take pride in it. Further it is argued that employees aim for more success at work as a result of CSR programs (Bhattacharya et al., 2008), which implicitly means that they get motivated. This study supports that employees may get some personal needs covered through their firm’s CSR work and that CSR programs may lead employees to take a certain pride in their company. However, this study does not support that employees are aiming for greater success at work, and hence that they get motivated, as a result of CSR programs. Quite contradictory to the claim by Bhattacharya et al. (2008), this study shows evidence that CSR is to a certain extent limited to be a *hygiene factor* to the employees; they expect a firm to have CSR initiatives in place and it will create dissatisfaction if such initiatives are not in place.

5.3 Implications for management

Managers should prioritize *on-the-job* activities, as they should strive to include CSR where it is natural in their business. Employees perceive the CSR program as more credible when the firm takes care of its own issues first before handling issues of a more external character. The CSR program loses credibility if *on-the-job* activities are left unhandled, while the firm engages in activities that are external to what are the firm’s core activities. If managers wish their CSR work to be successful in terms of employee engagement, they must therefore make sure to utilize the potential of *on-the-job* activities, before entering external CSR engagement such as *skilled-based* activities and *corporate volunteerism*.

Another important implication from this study, is that employee engagement seems to be highly related to the degree to which employees are directly involved in the CSR activities initiated by the firm. As *corporate volunteerism* is the CSR activity that demands the least direct contributions from employees, this is also the CSR activity that this study indicates have the least potential to engage employees. If employees are not contributing directly to CSR initiatives, the result is that employees find it difficult to get an ownership to the CSR activity. This implicate that managers should exercise caution when deciding to engage in *corporate volunteerism*, such as charitable donations or

other types of charity, as such engagement is shown to have limited effect on employee engagement.

Managers must carefully consider the personal characteristics of their employees, when designing their CSR program. This study shows evidence that the level of education of employees need to be considered, as this seem to affect how the employees perceive the credibility of their firm's CSR program and the degree to which they take pride in the company as a result of CSR initiatives. Higher educated people asks more questions about the program, and have an overview of the business sector that allows them to compare their firm's CSR initiatives to the initiatives of other firms, and this seem to negatively affect the pride the employees take in the CSR program. An implication for managers in firms that employ a group of highly educated people is therefore to create a CSR program with high credibility, which implies 1) to prioritize *on-the-job* activities and 2) make an effort to make the CSR program stand out from what competitors do.

To ensure that employees know about the firm's CSR initiatives is a prerequisite for employee engagement, and this study indicate that managers should prioritize to have a high level of personal communication when communicating the CSR work, to ensure employee awareness. The topic of CSR should be included into staff meetings, as this is an arena that seems to be a suited communication channel. Such an arena allows a high level of personal communication, and thereby the chance of succeeding with tailoring the information to the specific employees is high. Conversations that contain the topic of CSR seem to be a tool that works, and hence this should be actively used by managers. Managers should recognize that written information channels, such as intranet and emails, to a great extent target employees who already are aware and engaged in the CSR program, and the rest are likely to ignore CSR information spread through such information channels.

Managers must be aware of their role in fronting the CSR work. Top-management needs to be visible in fronting the CSR work, and think carefully about their own role in the work with CSR. By fronting the CSR work within the organization, towards employees, they illustrate to employees that they perceive the work as important for the firm. If managers show in practice that CSR is important for the firm, more employees are also likely to think of CSR as important. The middle management also has an important key role that should be taken into careful consideration, as they often are the link between the decisions that are made by top-management, and employees on lower levels of the hierarchical structure, something which make them important information channels.

Managers must prioritize to regularly assess the employees' perception of the CSR work that is implemented. Managers should develop extensive tools that monitor the effects the CSR program has on the employees, in terms of job satisfaction, motivation, pride and commitment. When employees are considered to be a large and important part of the CSR work it is important that the firms invest adequate resources into fully understand how their employees view their CSR work, and what they think could be improved.

This study shows that an important configuration in facilitating employee engagement in CSR programs is that management must make sure that CSR work is paid engagement. This implies that employees must be equally rewarded for participating in CSR activities as they are for their normal work tasks. If employees are not equally paid for their engagement in CSR, this will be a considerable obstacle for employee engagement in CSR programs.

5.3.1 A proposed implementation framework for managers

Based on the implications for management given in section 5.3, the authors of this study have proposed an implementation framework for CSR which is based on the results of this study, which is presented in figure 3 below. The figure tries to explain how managers can best facilitate employee engagement in CSR programs, and shows which steps managers should go through in order to be able to most likely succeed with engaging employees in their CSR program. The specific steps will be explained below, after presenting figure 3.

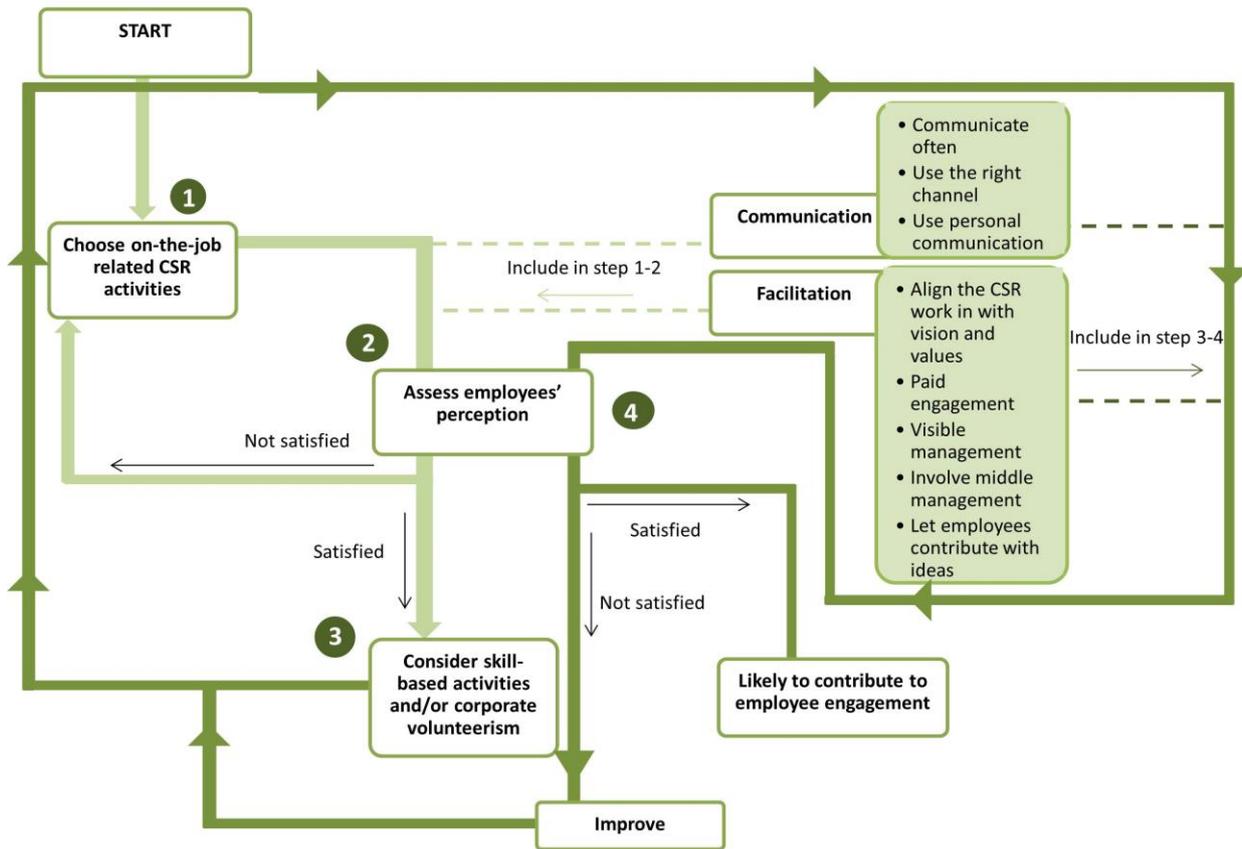


Figure 3 - CSR implementation process

Step 1. The first thing a firm should consider within their CSR strategy is which *on-the-job* activities they want to engage in. If a firm implement *on-the-job* activities before engaging in external CSR activities (*skill-based* activities and *corporate volunteerism*), the CSR program is more likely to be perceived as credible by employees.

Step 1-2. Between step 1 and 2, there are two aspects that managers should make sure to include when implementing CSR activities, which involves making sure to have an optimal facilitation of employee engagement in CSR and to communicate the work in a proper manner in order to ensure employee awareness of the CSR involvement. These two aspects involve a range of things to take into account, which is listed in the figure.

Step 2. The employees' perception of the CSR work must be assessed. As the goal is to engage the employees, the managers must understand the effects CSR has on their employees, and thereby tailor their CSR strategy to the needs and wants of the employees. If the employees are satisfied, the management can move to step 3. If not,

they must take the employees' perception into consideration and go back to step 1 for improvements.

Step 3. As the employees at this point seem to be satisfied with how the firm has handled their internal issues through *on-the-job* activities, managers can consider entering external CSR activities, as *corporate volunteerism* or *skill-based* engagement.

Step 3-4. This is merely a repetition of step 1-2, which involves proper facilitation of employee engagement in CSR and suitable communication of the CSR work.

Step 4. If external CSR activities are initiated, managers must again assess the employees' perception of the CSR work, as described in step 2. If the employees are not satisfied, they must take the employees' perception into account and improve their CSR work until the employees are satisfied. If the employees are satisfied with the internal CSR activities (*on-the-job* activities) as well as the external CSR activities (*skill-based* activities and *corporate volunteerism*), the firm is most likely to succeed with engaging employees in their CSR program.

6 Limitations of the study and further research

The first section of this chapter, section 6.1, is dedicated to explain the limitations of this study. Those limitations should be considered when conducting further research within the same area, as minimizing these limitations will provide more complete research. In section 6.2, ideas and inspiration for further research will be presented and discussed.

6.1 Limitations of the study

The results of a case study are not necessarily intended to be generalized to every firm in the world, but they can offer complementary evidence to other research (Yin, 2009). Each case study might be a unique case, but it will anyhow represent one example of a wide range of similar cases (Denscombe, 1998). The generalizability of a case study will therefore depend upon how similar the case is to others of its type. Since this is merely a case study of two Norwegian firms where both firms are a part of a global firm, the results of this study can therefore not said to be true for all firms in the world. Due to few social challenges in Norway compared to many other countries, it is likely that the perception employees have of CSR programs is different in other countries that have more social challenges. However, the goal has neither been to generalize the findings, but to provide a valuable and general insight into how firms can best facilitate CSR engagement, and to investigate whether CSR can be used to motivate employees. Therefore, we recognize that the findings may not be scientifically generalizable, but we hope that the study will create learning and understanding about the phenomenon CSR and the link to employees, and that it will inspire future research within the same area.

As discussed in section 3.6, we informed the informants that their statements would be anonymous in this study in order to make them talk freely. However, as the employees know which managers we interviewed, and the managers know which employees that were interviewed, it can be assumed that the employees are afraid that something they say can be recognized by the managers in the firm that will read this study. Thereby, the employees may have been cautious and reluctant when answering some questions, and this might have provided some results in this study that does not show the true picture of how the employees perceive their firm's CSR program. However, the authors of this study have the perception that the employees to a great extent gave honest answers during the interviews.

Firm 2 is a large firm consisting of different business areas, as described in section 4.1.2.1. However, we only interviewed employees from one of the business areas at one level in the firm, and their answers might not be representative for employees within

all business areas and all levels within the firm. In order to obtain results from the entire employee base in firm 2, more employees should have been interviewed, and also more employees from the different levels of the hierarchical structure within one business unit.

6.2 Further research

This study is carried out using two Norwegian firms as case firms. A wider basis of informants, both with respect to firms, managers and employees, will give a more holistic picture of the research questions in this study. In order to draw more generalizable conclusions, further research should be done within more firms, as a larger sample of firms and employees can more likely contribute to generalizable conclusions.

It would have been interesting to perform this study on firms in other countries outside Scandinavia. Our research shows that *corporate volunteerism* is the activity that has the least potential to engage employees and to make them take pride in their company. It can be assumed, that in other countries which have more social challenges than what is present in Norway, such activities would have a greater potential to engage employees and to even be a *motivational factor* to them in their job. Especially in developing countries which have a completely different cultural context than Norway, employees may have a closer relationship to the challenges that exist in their communities and hence they might get much more personally attached to their firm's engagement in *corporate volunteerism*. It is therefore suggested to research how the cultural context might affect the pride and motivation employees get from *corporate volunteerism*, and also the CSR program in general.

Further research should consider a quantitative study in order to gather information from more employees within a firm, which is also discussed in section 3.9. A quantitative study may easily include more informants, and thereby involves a broader study that enhances the possibility for generalizable and solid results. Through the use of a quantitative study, we would have been more likely to obtain a holistic view of the general perception of CSR among the employees. Future research should therefore consider approaching similar research with a combination of the qualitative interview and a quantitative survey.

It is intuitive that CSR is not a "thing", but rather a concept that differs between industries, businesses, people and societies. Even though the two firms studied are both a type of service firm, they do not offer services within the same area and can

therefore not be said to be firms within the same business area. We can to some extent claim that CSR has a greater effect on the employees in firm 2 than on the employees in firm 1, and this can be a result of the fact that the firms are operating within different business areas and hence that the firm consists of employees with different levels of education. We therefore propose that further research should investigate how CSR can be adapted to different professions and different people with different levels of educations, and what effect the CSR work will then generate in terms of satisfaction, pride and motivation.

The results from this study show that *on-the-job* activities, namely CSR activities that are integrated closely with the firm's business activities, are the activities that employees seem to be most fond. Such activities are the ones employees want their employer to prioritize before handling CSR activities more distant to the business operations of the firm. However, as these are observations from merely two firms, further research should be conducted to provide evidence for this finding. The result that employees expect their firm to engage in *on-the-job* activities before engaging in activities of a more external character is expected to be even more prominent in firms operating in other industries than the service industry. Other industries, such as manufacturing industries and oil and gas industries have more issues connecting to their business operations, and hence even more issues to handle within *on-the-job* activities. Therefore, it is expected that the employees will perceive it as even more important for their firm to engage in *on-the-job* activities in such industries, and hence this is recommended to investigate further in order to see if this is actually the case.

Last, through this study we have shown a whole range of recommendations of how managers can best facilitate employee engagement in CSR. It would have been very interesting to take the recommendations from this study further, and try to implement a CSR strategy into a firm that does not currently engage in CSR. This CSR work should be executed as suggested in figure 3 in section 5.3.1, and the results in terms of engagement and motivation of the employees should then be assessed. A study like that could actually explore if the results obtained from this study are applicable and feasible for a firm, and it would be interesting to see if such a CSR strategy could contribute to more motivation than what is observed among the employees in this study.

7 Conclusion

RQ: How can managers best facilitate employee engagement in CSR?

Managers should prioritize *on-the-job* activities before considering implementing *skill-based* activities and *corporate volunteerism*. Employees evaluate the CSR program as more credible when the firm handles its own issues first before handling issues of a more external character. Also, this study shows that direct participation of employees in CSR work is one of the success factors to get employees involved and engaged in the firm's CSR program. As *corporate volunteerism* demands limited direct involvement from employees, this is also the activity that has the least effect on employee engagement.

Written communication channels, such as emails and intranet, mainly target employees that are already engaged and above average interested in the CSR program. If the firm intends to reach out to a larger group of employees with the information, they should limit the use of written information channels and rather prioritize a high level of personal communication, as personal communication create more awareness of CSR. Top and middle management are important ambassadors of the firm's CSR work; top management in fronting the CSR work as something that is important to the firm, and middle management as they are the link that connects CSR decisions made on the top with employees on lower levels in the firm.

An absolute prerequisite to ensure employee engagement in CSR is that the employees' perception of the CSR work is regularly assessed. Firms should put considerable effort into fully understand both what the employees think of the firm's CSR engagement and to understand the effects the CSR program has on employees in terms of job satisfaction, motivation and the pride they take in the company as a result of the initiatives.

In designing CSR programs, it is important to carefully consider the personal characteristics of the group of people who are employed in the firm, as this is a factor that influence the degree to which employees are likely to be affected by CSR initiatives. This study shows evidence that the level of education seems to affect how the employees perceive the credibility of the firm's CSR program and the pride they take in the company as a result of the CSR initiatives. Presumably, also other personal characteristics, such as cultural context, would play a role in deciding the outcome in terms of employee motivation and pride. In order to maximize the potential for employee engagement in CSR programs, such personal characteristics must be taken into

account, so that the CSR program are designed after the needs and wants of the employees

SQ: Can CSR be used to motivate employees?

Employees do not seem to be motivated from CSR programs; they are not aiming for greater success at work as a result of CSR programs. This study clearly shows that employees rather view CSR programs as a *hygiene factor* than as a motivation factor; it has to be in place, or else it will create dissatisfaction. Even though employees do not get motivated from CSR programs, they do get some satisfaction and take a certain pride in their company as a result of some CSR activities. However, it must be recognized that personal characteristics, such as cultural context and the employees' level of education, affect the degree to which employees take pride in their firm as a result of CSR initiatives.

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