Impact of Public Policies and Initiatives on Corporate Social Responsibility of Healthcare Institutions

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to examines the impact of public policies and initiatives on corporate social responsibility of the healthcare institutions working in the Northern Border Regions of Saudi Arabia. The study used descriptive and analytical methodology. The questionnaire was designed, and distributed to the random sample of 300 members of the staff chosen from the healthcare institutions including public hospitals, private hospitals and health centers. The descriptive statistics results showed that all variables of the study are characterized by a mean value higher than 3. Moreover, results showed that all the variables of the public policies and initiatives have a statistically significant effect on the environment indicators of corporate social responsibility. On the hand, the legal framework and the capacity building have positive effect on the CSR however, integrating activities impact the environment indicators of social responsibility negatively.

Keywords: Public Policies, Corporate Social Responsibility, governance, initiatives, integrating activities.

1.Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a notion states that organizations should voluntarily improve their social and environmental practices. During the last decades, governments have become corporate social responsibility (CSR) drivers through designing public policies to promote and encourage businesses to behave in a responsible and sustain way (Albareda etal., 2007; Zappal, 2003). This means governments have engaged in a new political relationship with businesses and stakeholders to promote responsible and sustainable business practices (Albareda etal., 2006). One of the most important social challenge facing various governments is to provide a response to the new role of companies in the fields of economic development, social and environmental sustainability. The role of governments and public administrations in this process is both fundamental and unique because government policies can contribute to greater clarity on how to sustain social responsibility practices of the corporate sector (Aaronson and Reeves, 2002). Although CSR is voluntary, the role of governments in promoting and developing CSR in different countries is important to ensure effective well-being for all stakeholders (Wirba, 2023). The World Bank Group (2004) recognizes that the contemporary corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda is evidence that businesses are part of society and contribute positively to societal goals and aspirations. Organizations have received greater attentions

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on their corporate social responsibility (CSR) with the growing public concerns on environmental and social issues in the last decade. Thus, how CSR could facilitate sustainable development has become one of critical subjects. However, several studies suggest that the mechanisms through which organizations being committed by CSR practices in developing countries might be different from those in advanced countries because in advanced countries, CSR is automatically adopted by businesses to meet market, on the contrary, CSR in developing is adopted as response to government pressures on businesses towards social and environmental issues so as to gain government support(Ji and Zhongzhen, 2020). Public policy is formulated and issued by government to address specific issue being economic, social, environmental and in this sense public policy is directed to firms in order to support CSR practices. The public policy of the government takes the form of assistance such as favorable policies, incentives, and programs from the government and its administrative bureaus. Enterprises' CSR and public policy development are collaborative. As market regulator, the government holds the responsibility of making market more competitive and to regulate and adjust the behaviors of enterprises according to economic role for government to play in a market economy. In terms of establishment of regulations and laws referred to as public policy, the government plays a directing role in promoting the implementation of CSR (Tang etal., 2018). Social responsibility practices in the health sector are significant and this why they have begun to receive attention and consideration during the last years. Healthcare institutions such as hospital, clinics and health centers have a social mission to serve patients and visitors. In hospitals' administration, SR activities for stakeholders are considered as key practices to form the perceptions of clients/patients and to generate outcomes (Creixans-Tenas etal; 2020).

The significance of this study lies in its relevance to ongoing policy discussions on corporates reforms that aimed at fostering inclusive growth and sustainable development in Saudi Arabia. By empirically analyzing the impact policy on social responsibility corporates of healthcare care institutions, this study contributes substantially as robust evidence on policy formulation and strategic interventions that promoting the role of health organization towards social responsibility.

Overall, this study aims to provide a fresh perspective and shedding light on the impact of public policy and social responsibility of the Northern Border Region healthcare institutions, thus encouraging sustainable socio-economic advancement in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government is one of the leading countries among the Arab Gulf Countries which has encouraged the CSR. Hence, the role of government in promoting CSR through the formulation and controlling of public policy is essential and it should be encouraged and developed further. Accordingly, the statement of the problem of the study focuses on a main question which is impact of public policies and initiatives on corporate social responsibility of healthcare institutions in the Northern Border Region of Saudi Arabia?

2. Literature review

The empirical literature that investigates the impact of public policies and initiatives on corporate social responsibility of healthcare institutions in Saudi Arabia

remains scant and under the process of emerging. However, diverse studies have been identified as literature. Wirba (2023) revealed that government's role is critical in promoting CSR activities as CSR is voluntary without obligatory legislation.. The results of the study demonstrated the need to share CSR's best practices and build human institutions capable of enhancing CSR agendas by creating awareness, soft laws, partnering, and mandating business enterprises to be transparent in solving society's problems wherever they operate. e CSR definition encompasses five dimensions, which are the stakeholder dimension, the social dimension, the economic dimension, the voluntariness dimension, and the environmental dimension. Ghardallou and Alessa (2022) defined CSR based on its multiple dimensions accordingly CSR encompasses five dimensions, which are the stakeholder dimension, the social dimension, the economic dimension, the voluntariness dimension, and the environmental dimension. The environmental dimension focuses on environmental concerns such as a clean environment. The social dimension is concerned with corporations engaging with social aspects to contribute to better societies. The economic dimension focuses on financial aspects and economic development. The stakeholder dimension emphasizes how corporations engage with their stakeholders such as customers, employees, suppliers, and communities. The voluntariness dimension engages with CSR voluntarily driven by ethical and moral values. Finally, other studies have defined CSR as engaging in environmental, social, and governance activities. Moreover, Huynh (2020); and Tang et al. (2020) found that the government can force organizations to adopt a corporate governance mechanism, that is if applied would motivate corporates to provide more services to the community. Therefore, it is evident that the government plays a significant role in strengthening the social responsibility of the firms.

3. Hypothesis and model

Although the relationship corporate social responsibility and public policy shown in the literature review, CSR further study is needed; in order to identify the appropriate public policy that government will use to success social and environment roles' companies. The study has the novelty to discuss the impact of public policy on CSR in KSA. Public Policies and Initiatives (PPI) influence CSR and this may be explained as follows:
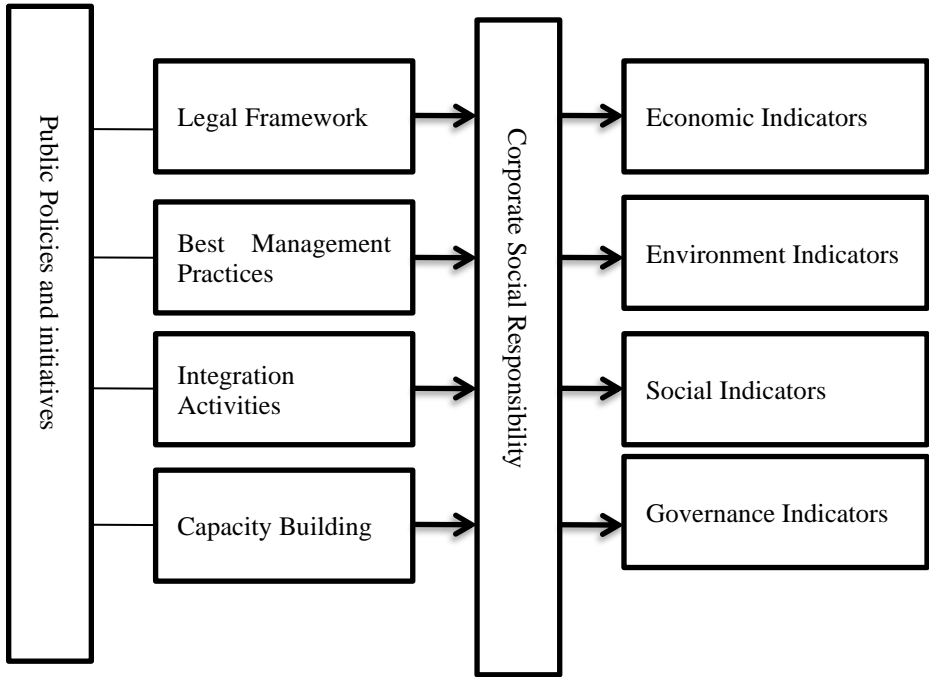
Figure 1: Impact of public policies and initiatives on CSR.

This study assumed that there are significant relationships between PPI and CSR. Hypothesis statements could be presented as follows. H1: the legal framework has a significant and positive impact on CSR. H2: the best management practices have a significant and positive impact on CSR. H3: integrations activities have a significant and positive impact on CSR. H4: capacity building has a significant and positive impact on CSR. To test the preceding hypotheses, we suggest determining the relationship between PPI and CSR using the following equations:

$$ECO_i = \beta_{10} + \beta_{11}LF_i + \beta_{12}BMP_i + \beta_{13}IA_i + \beta_{14}CB_i + \varepsilon_{1i} ; \quad i = 1, \dots, n.$$
$$ENV_i = \beta_{20} + \beta_{21}LF_i + \beta_{22}BMP_i + \beta_{23}IA_i + \beta_{24}CB_i + \varepsilon_{2i} ; \quad i = 1, \dots, n.$$
$$SOC_i = \beta_{30} + \beta_{31}LF_i + \beta_{32}BMP_i + \beta_{33}IA_i + \beta_{34}CB_i + \varepsilon_{3i} ; \quad i = 1, \dots, n.$$
$$GOV_i = \beta_{40} + \beta_{41}LF_i + \beta_{42}BMP_i + \beta_{43}IA_i + \beta_{44}CB_i + \varepsilon_{4i} ; \quad i = 1, \dots, n.$$

Where ECO designates economic indicators; LF designates legal framework; BMF represents best management practices; IA denotes integrations activities; CB designates capacity building; ENV designates environment indicators ; SOC designates social indicators ; GOV designates governance indicators. β_{jk} ($j = 1, \dots, 4$; $k = 1, \dots, 4$) indicate the impact of each independent variable$i$ on the dependent variable$j$. ε_{ki}; $k = 1, \dots, 4$, is a random variable express the residual term of the regression which is supposed normally distributed.

4. Data and sampling
4.1. The sample of the study

This study aims to investigate the effect of public policies and initiatives on social responsibility. To achieve the objectives of the study, a questionnaire was prepared, consisting of two parts. The first contains basic information for the respondents. The second part consists of two axes: the public policies and initiatives and the second interest to social responsibility. Four variables determine each part. The first (independent variable) consists of legal framework, best management practices, integrating activities, capacity building. The second includes the economic, environmental, social, and governance indicators of social responsibility.

The population concerned by this study includes the employees in the health service in the northern border region of Saudi Arabia. Due to the difficulty in reaching all the population members, a random sample of 300members of the staff was chosen, distributed among all regional hearth institutions (Hospitals, health centers, ...). Only 224 responses were retained due to their complete information and do not contain mistakes in the responses. The data are analyzed and tested through the SPSS statistical packet program, version 24using factor analysis, and regression analyses.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on the Independent Variables

	N. of items	Mean	Std.Dev	Cronbach Alpha
Independent variables				
Legal framework	5	4.12	1.06	0.896
Best Management Practices	5	3.66	1.25	0.944
Integrating Activities	5	3.62	1.19	0.885
Capacity Building	5	3.77	1.14	0.945
Dependent variables				
Economic Indicators	3	4.00	1.09	0.739
Environment Indicators	3	3.95	1.06	0.881
Social Indicators	3	3.85	1.13	0.853
Governance Indicators	3	3.92	1.16	0.893
General				
All independent variables	20	3.79	1.16	0.972
All dependent variables	12	3.93	1.11	0.946
All variables	32	3.86	1.13	0.978

4.2. Preliminary analysis

Table 1 contains the descriptive statistics expressed by the mean and standard deviation. These indicator shows preliminary that all variables are characterized by a mean value higher than 3 (the central value of the adopted Likert scale for which the respondent's opinion is neutral about an item). This result implies that the respondents generally agree about the role of public policies in determining social responsibility. Moreover, for the independent variables of the study (public policies and initiatives), the respondents are more agree about the legal framework provided by hospitals with a mean value of 4.12. For the dependent variables, we observe that the highest mean value is associated with the economic indicators of social responsibility.

Our analysis also conducts a readability analysis based on the Cronbach Alpha (Table 1). This indicator presents high values ranging between 0.739 to 0.945 for the different variables of the study. It reaches a value of 0.978 for the whole of the questionnaire, indicating the reliability of scales used in this study.

Table 2: PCA results

Variable name	KMO	Bartlett's Test			PCA results		
		Chi-square	p-value		Nmbr of PCs	Eigenvalues > 1	Variance Explained (%)
Independent variables							
Legal framework	0.813	795.6	0.000		1	3.601	72.015%
Best Management Practices	0.862	1111.7	0.000		1	4.138	82.761%
Integrating Activities	0.737	877.1	0.000		1	3.474	69.470%
Capacity Building	0.863	1181.9	0.000		1	4.110	82.195%
Dependent variables							
Economic Indicators	0.688	145.9	0.000		1	1.976	65.869%
Environment Indicators		374.0	0.000		1	2.429	80.953%
Social Indicators	0.694	337.8	0.000		1	2.344	78.136%
Governance Indicators	0.742	408.4	0.000		1	2.486	82.874%

5. Results and discussions
5.1. Factorial analysis results

The first step of our empirical analysis applies a factorial analysis based on the principal component analysis (PCA) to reduce the number of items in each dependent and independent variable before proceeding by the regression analysis. In this context, the PCA allows for dimension reduction of the different variables of the study. The main idea behind PCA is that a high dimensional item of a given variable can be reduced to a reasonable and smaller number of dimensions by exploiting correlations between the initial items.

To implement this analysis, we firstly determine the possibility and the convenience of the PCA. To this end, we use Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO). The results are provided in Table 2. All values of the KMO values range between 0.688 and 0.862, indicating that the sampling is adequate. Moreover, we find very strong values of Bartlett's test statistics ranging between 1241.008 and 2151.784 and characterized by null significance probabilities for all dimensions. These results indicate that the null hypothesis of the non-sphericity of the correlation matrix is rejected for all considered variables. Then, principal components analysis was performed and become appropriate for the data.

After applying the PCA (Table 2), this analysis conducts to retain only one principal factor for each independent variable (public policy indicators) dimension by winning variance explained higher than 70% for the majority of the variables. Therefore, for the different variables of the study, each set of items could be represented by one

component or dimension that summarizes an important percentage of variance (information).

5.2. Correlation analysis

After extracting the different independent variable (public policies and initiatives) and dependent variable (social responsibility) and before proceeding by regression analysis, it is important to examine the correlation analysis between the different variables of the study. To this end, we assessed the Pearson's correlation coefficient between the different variables of the study. The correlation matrix is presented in Table 3. In lines of the results of this table, we observe high correlations between the dependent and the independent variables ranging between 0.6and 0.8, meaning a high association between the independent and dependent variables, which justify the robustness and the pertinence of studying the impact of the public policies and initiatives on the social responsibility. Additionally, the correlation analysis provides low correlations between the different independent variables, verifying the absence of multicollinearity between each pair of these variables, indicating the pertinence of the regression analysis again.

Table 3: Correlations between constructed variables

	Legal fram	Best M Pract	Integr Activ	Capa Build	Econ Indic	Envi Indic	Social Indic	Gov Indic
Legal framework (LF)	.0000							
Best Mana Practices (BMP)	.3561	.0000						
Integrating Activities (IA)	.4934	.2268	.0000					
Capacity Building (CB)	.2378	.4289	.3458	.0000				
Economic Indicators (ECO)	.6796	.6818	.6889	.8004	.0000			
Environment Indicators (ENV)	.7448	.7385	.6107	.6467	.6503	.0000		
Social Indicators (SOC)	.6859	.6912	.6401	.6546	.6444	.8512	.0000	
Governance Indicators (GOV)	.6867	.7308	.6698	.7518	.7169	.8160	.8483	.0000

After analyzing the correlation analysis and verifying the pertinence and the possibility of regressions analysis, we estimate the following regression models:

$$ECO_i = \beta_{10} + \beta_{11}LF_i + \beta_{12}BMP_i + \beta_{13}IA_i + \beta_{14}CB_i + \varepsilon_{1i} \ ; \quad i = 1, \dots, 224.$$
$$ENV_i = \beta_{20} + \beta_{21}LF_i + \beta_{22}BMP_i + \beta_{23}IA_i + \beta_{24}CB_i + \varepsilon_{2i} \ ; \quad i = 1, \dots, 224.$$
$$SOC_i = \beta_{30} + \beta_{31}LF_i + \beta_{32}BMP_i + \beta_{33}IA_i + \beta_{34}CB_i + \varepsilon_{3i} \ ; \quad i = 1, \dots, 224.$$
$$GOV_i = \beta_{40} + \beta_{41}LF_i + \beta_{42}BMP_i + \beta_{43}IA_i + \beta_{44}CB_i + \varepsilon_{4i} \ ; \quad i = 1, \dots, 224.$$

Where: LF, BMP, IA, and CB denote the legal framework, best management practices, integrating activities, capacity building, respectively. The variables ECO, ENV, SOC, and GOV indicate the economic, environmental, social, and governmental indicators, respectively. $\beta_{jk}; j = 1, \dots, 4; k = 1, \dots, 4$ indicate the impact of each independent variable i on the dependent variable j. financial resources. $\varepsilon_{ki}; k = 1, \dots, 4$, is a random variable express the residual term of the regression which is supposed normally distributed.

Table 4: Regression parameters estimation results

	Coefficient	s.e	Student-t	p-value	Goodness of fit	
Economic Indicators						
Legal framework	0.3017***	0.0795	3.7961	0.0002	R-squared	0.6640
Best Management Practices	-0.1481	0.0933	-1.5870	0.1140	F-Stat	108.173
Integrating Activities	-0.0722	0.0845	-0.8546	0.3937	p-value	0.0000
Capacity Building	0.7616***	0.0816	9.3374	0.0000		
Environment Indicators						
Legal framework	0.4724***	0.0862	5.4800	0.0000	R-squared	0.6047
Best Management Practices	0.3655***	0.1012	3.6111	0.0004		83.7405
Integrating Activities	-0.2185**	0.0916	-2.3849	0.0179	F-Stat p-value	0.0000
Capacity Building	0.1800**	0.0885	2.0348	0.0431		
Social Indicators						
Legal framework	0.3240***	0.0942	3.4389	0.0007	R-squared	0.7276
Best Management Practices	0.2151*	0.1106	1.9440	0.0532		61.1555
Integrating Activities	0.0158	0.1002	0.1581	0.8745	F-Stat p-value	0.0000
Capacity Building	0.2239**	0.0967	2.3151	0.0215		
Governance Indicators						
Legal framework	0.2089**	0.0853	2.4497	0.0151	R-squared	0.6132
Best Management Practices	0.2222**	0.1001	2.2193	0.0275		86.7783
Integrating Activities	-0.1031	0.0906	-1.1373	0.2566	F-Stat p-value	0.0000
Capacity Building	0.5007***	0.0875	5.7207	0.0000		

The parameters estimation of the regression model is given in Table 6. From this table, results emphasize that the R-squared, expressing the goodness of fit, is high with values more than 0.6, meaning that public policies and initiatives explain more than 6% of the information about the social responsibility. Additionally, the F-statistics, which inform about the global model significance, is high with null p-values for all estimated models, indicating that these models are globally significant and the considered regression are pertinent.

We now expect the impact of each variable of public policies and initiatives on the four considered variables of social responsibility separately. Starting with the social responsibility based on economic indicators, results emphasizes that only the legal framework and the capacity building are significant at 1% significance levels. Besides these two variables exert a positive effect on the social responsibility. Moreover, the capacity building has a more pronounced effect on the social responsibility regarding economic indicator.

Based on the environment indicators of social responsibility, we find that all the variables of public policies and initiatives have a statistically significant effect. In fact, all the estimated T-statistics are higher than the critical values and the p-values are all less than 5% (the significance level). In addition, the results show that all variables have significant positive effect, except the integrating activities, that impacts the environment indicators of social responsibility negatively.

Regarding the effect of the public policies and initiatives on the social indictor, we observe that all independent variables have a significant positive effect, except the integrating activities, which has no effect.

Finally, same results are observed for the fourth social responsibility indicator (governance indicator).

6. Discussion

The study examines the impact of public policies on corporate social responsibility CSR practices in healthcare institutions in Saudi Arabia's Northern Border Region. Based on the study findings Saudi Arabia is a country abiding to the Islamic social care system, which is interconnected with unique Islamic, cultural, national, and social values. These factors are shaping the government policies and the private sector's perspective towards a unique Saudi CSR characteristics that comprise (1) Islamic Philanthropy, (2) Social Obligation, (3) National Development Obligation (5) Corporate Citizenship (6) National Economic Developments (7) National Competitiveness, (8)Stakeholder's Expectation and (9) Environmental and Global Expectation and (10) Corporate Governance(Saeidi, 2019)..Accordingly, CSR in SA influenced by their national and cultural context and this perspective is in line with Visser and Tolhurst (2017) who also confirmed that the concepts and practices of CSR must be defined by their national and cultural context. Similarly (Le Pelley, 2017) argued that the Saudi Arabia CSR practices are influenced by the national, social, cultural obligations and distinctive pragmatic principles Such as corporate philanthropy, citizenship, profit sharing, sustainability, and social and cultural care.   public policies were represented by four dimensions that are considered as independent variables: legal framework, best management practices, integrating activities and capacity building. Considering the positive effects of public policies and initiatives on the economic, environment, society and management, four CSR indicators have been specified: economic, environment, social and governance. Based on the study finding extracted from the statistical analysis there is positive impacts of public policies on CSR and this result reflects the views of the respondents in this study mainly the healthcare employees responses. However, the findings of the this study might vary if it is conducted in another different cultural context. Despite the cultural variation which

govern the respondents perception several studies showed also a positive impacts of public policies on CSR such as the study of Knudsen and Moon, (2022) which pointed out that public policy can inform and stimulate corporate social responsibility. Also, Rome (2005) has stated that every country's approach to CSR include a series of components: political and institutional structure; political style and processes; social structure; emphasis on voluntary approach or acceptance of state guidelines and control. The authors recognize the significance of the external factors such as economic conditions, political stability, and global health trends that could influence CSR practices and the enhance effectiveness of public policies. Thus these external factors are noted for future research and   are considered as part of research limitation.

7. Conclusion

The study addressed the impact of public policies on CSR at the Northern Border Region in the KSA. The public policies were represented by four dimensions that are considered as independent variables: legal framework, best management practices, integrating activities and capacity building. Considering the positive effects of public policies and initiatives on the economic, environment, society and management, four CSR indicators have been specified: economic, environment, social and governance.
Empirical results emphasize that the legal framework and the capacity building are more significant. These two variables have a positive effect on the CSR. The capacity building has a more pronounced effect on the CSR regarding economic indicators. Results show also that all the variables of public policies and initiatives have a statistically significant effect on environment indicators of corporate social responsibility. In addition, the results show the integrating activities impacts the environment indicators of social responsibility negatively.
This study makes a significant contribution to the CSR issue. It contributes to understanding the relationship between CSR and public policies. Based on the findings of the study that provided an empirical framework the study strongly recommends the collaboration between healthcare institutions and government is required to promote CSR. However, the authors recognize that due to the time factor and difficulty to access all other respondents the authors focused on the healthcare employees including hospital administrators however in the future research the authors would investigate the patients, government officials and community members views in the future research.. The study recommends the healthcare policy makers, public and private healthcare institutions and community members to contribute positively in the CSR not for the purpose of maximization of profits but in order to achieve social responsibility and preserve the environment and quality of life.
Moreover, it is reasonable for the government to develop policies and legislation that enhance social responsibility practices in Saudi Arabia.

Acknowledgments

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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