

## UNDERSTANDING CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AS IMPLEMENTED BY SMES IN TANZANIA: THE CASE OF THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

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### ABSTRACT

*Since Tanzania embarked on private sector reforms that started in mid 1990s, the country experienced a growth of entrepreneurs in the hotel and hospitality industry. While entrepreneurs in the hotel industry form a major part of the booming tourism industry and contribute significantly to economic growth, their potential is being undermined by an unorthodox business practices such as overpricing and provision of substandard services. However, this does not mean they are not participating in corporate social responsibility such as providing food to the needy and supporting people faced with natural calamities such as floods. Despite the growing interest in corporate social responsibility (CSR) and initiatives of entrepreneurs, little attention has been paid to these small scale entrepreneurs in developing countries such as Tanzania. The purpose of this paper is to understand corporate social responsibility (CSR) implemented by entrepreneurs in the hotel industry in Tanzania. This paper is intended to fill the gaps in the literature of the CSR implemented by entrepreneurs in developing countries. The data were collected in Morogoro and Dar-es-Salaam from October 2011 to January 2012. Samples of 156 respondents were recruited for the study and included managers, owners and managing directors of these hotels. Quantitative approach was employed and a questionnaire was used for data collection. A 37-item, five point Likert scaled questionnaire was administered to 156 respondents. SPSS window 16.0 was employed for data analysis. Cronbach  $\alpha$  was used to measure scale reliability and communalities to test the suitability of the elements used. The findings reveal six strong factors: supporting sport, supporting community, environmental concern, cultural events, supporting elder people, and fund raising. The study shows that entrepreneurs in hotel industry in Tanzania paid attention to CSR as capital assets to win the confidence of communities in their business operations.*

**Key words:** Corporate Social Responsibility, entrepreneurs

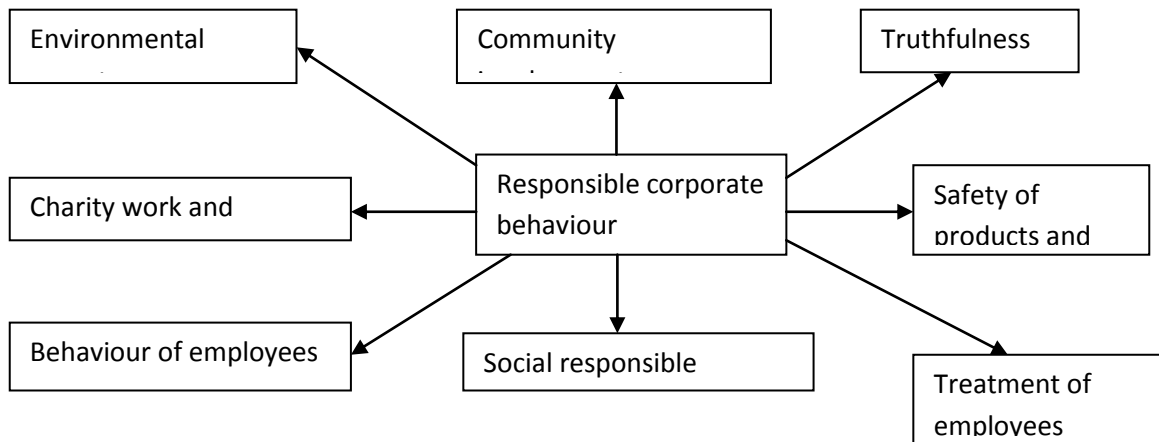
### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since 1990, corporate social responsibility started to be a preferred business concept in the Western countries (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000). Theories governing CSR explain the benefits to corporate reputations and marketing performance. Traditionally, the concept of CSR focused on corporate organisations and little attention was paid to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (Jenkins, 2006; Azmat & Saramatunge, 2009; Russo & Tencati, 2009). The emergence of SMEs as strong economic players in employment and economy, through tax payment raised interest of scholars on CSR and SMEs (Fuller, 2003 & UNIDO, 2002). However, though the performance of SMEs was highly researched in Western countries, little attention was paid to the performance of SMEs in developing countries. The purpose of this study is to explore CSR is implemented by SMEs in the hotel industry in Tanzania.

Corporate social responsibility in Tanzania is at a nascent stage (Bekefi, 2006) and it is not known to what extent an organisation participates in CSR (Mapesa & Matekere, 2008). Currently, CSR initiatives taking place in the country are through the efforts of donors and international organisations like UNDP and UNIDO (Bekefi, 2006). These initiatives are highly focused on the large companies help local SMEs in Tanzania. These companies include Geita Gold Mining, Coca-Cola, banking and mobile phone companies and other multinational companies operating in the country (Bekefi, 2006). Activities carried out by these organisations include: donation of school books, desks, constructions of water wells and provision of social support services. Entrepreneurs SMEs in most cases were side lined from these initiatives. The basic CSR aspects include good working conditions, fair distribution of wealth with community and environmental protection. However, SMEs regard CSR as restricted to global companies, even though they understand the basic issues under the term (Jenkins, 2006). In most cases, SMEs are regarded as poor performers in relation to such basic responsibilities (Bacon, *et al.*, 1999; Gibb, 2000; Hillary, 2000).

There is a general consensus among scholars (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000) that CSR is very important for the company's image and reputation. With the growing business malpractices such as overpricing, selling substandard commodities/products, counterfeit trade, child labour, environmental degradation, corporate had to save their face to community. CSR is among the factors that promote/boost scales of commodities (Dolnicar & Pomeroy, 2009; Ruso & Tencati, 2009; Forte & Lamonte, 1998). The expectation of consumer is that business entity would play a leading role in a number of aspects, as shown in figure 1.

CSR is not only adhering to the laws of the country with regards to business performance but also goes beyond the compliance. For, when Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) are far from their home countries, they have to comply with not only the law of the host country but also the laws and regulations of their home country governing business practices. This is a major problem MNCs from Western countries face when they are in developing countries.



**Figure 1: Elements of responsible behaviour**

Source: Boulstridge and Carrigan ( 2000).

### **SMEs in the Hotel Industry in Tanzania**

For the purpose of this study, definition of SMEs is based on the Tanzania SMEs policy of 2002, (<http://www.tanzania.go.tz/pdf/smepolicy.pdf>), whereby employment used as the criterion for the study instead of financial performance due to its sensitivity. The policy shows that firm employees of 1-4 categorised as micro, 5-49 employees as small and 50-99 as medium enterprises. There is no exact figure on the number of SMEs in Tanzania (The Guardian, 2010), although official statistics estimate that more than 3 million people have been employed by SMEs (2002). Tanzania is estimated to have more than 5000 hotels, lodges and camps, all of which are estimated to have more than 10650 rooms (URT, 2002).

Hotel industry in Tanzania is faced with many challenges such as lack of qualified staff and fund to support fixed investment (Sharma & Upneja, 2005, URT 2002). Other factors include room price charges and power rationing that constrains the sector's performance. According to Comin (2012), the prices of hotel rooms in Tanzania Safaris are more expensive compared with hotels in neighbouring countries. Overpriced of services is another major problem. Statistics show that 70 per cent of European visitors to Tanzania experienced this problem (URT, 2002).

### **Research Problem**

According to the study of Bjerkas and Kagirwa (1994), some of the common unethical behaviour existing in Tanzania business practices includes overpricing of goods and services, insufficient weights and measures, inadequate packaging, misleading advertisements, unethical language to customers and breach of laws. According to the World Bank report (2006), about 17 per cent of firms surveyed in Tanzania identified corruption as the major constraint. In order for firms to survive in business, they bribe tax officers. This is unethical behaviour in the business arena.

The recent floods occurred in Dar-Es-Salaam and claimed more than 40 lives. Some of the local news carried stories and photos of some SMEs in Hotel industry donating foods and consumer goods to the flood victims residing in the camps. This calls for the need to understand what SMEs are actually doing as part of their CSR activities.

According to Azmat and Coghill (2005), small entrepreneurs in developing countries are not aware of the importance of developing a trusted long relationship with customers. This failure is due to the fact that SMEs are driven by economic benefits. Vives (2006), Murilo and Lozano (2006) and Tencati and Russo (2009) found out that medium-sized entrepreneurs tend to be more involved in CSR activities than smaller ones. These findings were based on Western studies, as few studies have been done in developing countries. Entrepreneurs in developing countries are working in different business environments characterised with bureaucracy, corruption, poor legal framework, lack of education on CSR and cultural issues (Azmat & Saramatunge, 2009). This further calls for the need for studies to understand CSR implemented by SMEs in Tanzania.

The goal of this study therefore is to explore CSR activities implemented by SMEs in the hotel industry in Tanzania.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditionally, CSR has been observed as role which is supposed to be played by large companies. In Africa, following the policy of privatization and liberalization, MNCs coming to Africa, due to the pressure from their own countries started implementing the concept of CSR. However, the influence of SMEs on the emerging economies raised the need for understanding critically, how ethically these 'small companies' operate. In Tanzania SMEs are estimated to control 82 per cent of the business entities in the country (NBS, 2006); however, how they operate is not well known. The concept of CSR is that business has to take the role played by the public sector (Curran *et al.*, 2000) and fulfil the expectation of the community that some of the profits is used to support immediate community of the enterprise. While there is a global concern about the ethical status of the operations of SMEs, there is invisible CSR impact on the SMEs brand and reputation (Jenkins, 2004). However, scholars argue whether to the concept of CSR to SMEs or not. Williamson *et al.*, (2006) argue that the concept of CSR cannot be applied by SMEs as they are heterogeneous, having qualities pertaining to size, resources, management style and personal relationships that make it difficult for them to adopt large firm practices. Some scholars suggest the expression 'responsibility entrepreneurs' to be used instead of 'corporate social responsibility' (Azmat& Saramatunge, 2009; Murillo & Lozano, 2006; Chapple & Moon, 2007). But if we agree with the Chapple and Moon (2007) that responsible entrepreneurs are those who make a significant contribution to the society while doing well for themselves, then SMEs in developing countries are implementing CSR in an informal way.

Among the features of SMEs is that they are reluctant to bow to institutional pressures (Dex & Scheibt, 2001); and in Tanzania in particular, SMEs normally get into conflicts with government agencies when the former are called upon to comply with the rules and regulations of the country. For instance, hotel owners in Morogoro are in legal wrangle with the regional government following the increase in hotel levy to 100,000 shillings which is considered to be illegal (Mwananchi, 2012). Also, Hotel Associations of Tanzania (HAT) and Tourism Confederation of Tanzania (TCT) obtained a court injunction to bar TANAPA from raising concession fee from US \$ 10 to 60 (the East African, 2012).

SMEs have no good working conditions; workers have no working tools, they produce without having Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) marks, they are not registered with Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA), they have no business licences, and they are not paying taxes. This shows how SMEs operate unethically in Tanzania.

SMEs are regarded as flexible, depending on the environmental change (Goffee & Scase, 1995). But this change in most cases is on part of meeting demand which can be referred to as profit-making and not complying with the country's law and community expectations. In some cases, SMEs carry out some CSR even though they are not in a position to consider that what they are doing is CSR (Jenkins, 2006). SMEs donate for various natural disasters that occur in the country, donate for funeral ceremonies, are involved in constructions of schools and join hands with the government to support communities.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

#### Questionnaires Development

The questionnaire used for data collection were divided into two major parts; part one for general information while part two focused on SMEs attitude to CSR activities in Tanzania. The study modified questionnaire used by Ruso and Tencati (2009) and adopted some concepts from Mapesa and Matekere (2008). Some of the items used in the questionnaire were from the study conducted by Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000). From the literature, 37 items were developed and a 5-point agreement scale was used for the study (1= strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree). These numbers were assigned to the statements and the format was relatively easy for the respondents to interpret. The questionnaire was pretested and some of the original elements were modified to suit Tanzania business environment and easiness of respondents to understand.

#### Data Collection

Respondents for the study were recruited from Morogoro and Dar-Es-Salaam, and hotel managers or owners were involved in the study. The reason for selecting Morogoro and Dar-Es-Salaam is the fact that the two regions were easily accessible to the researcher.

Questionnaires were dropped at the respondent's premises and collected after three weeks. About 230 questionnaires were administered for the study. Kiswahili and English languages were used in the collection of data. Translation was done for the questionnaire that used Kiswahili in order to have similar meaning with English versions. The Kiswahili instrument was then translated into English. This exercise was performed by Senior Researchers with experience in social research survey. To explore CSR implemented by SMEs in the Tanzania hotel industry, a graphic non-comparative rating scale was used. Since number scales can easily be understood, the respondents were encouraged to participate.

Convenience sampling procedure (non-probability sampling) was also employed to get people who were most conveniently available. The procedure was to obtain a large number of completed questionnaires quickly and economically (Zikmund, 2000). Besides the collection of data using questionnaire, other techniques, such as interviews to explore the willingness of respondents before dropping the questionnaire were used. Of the total questionnaires distributed, 156 were collected for analysis.

#### Data Analysis

Analysis was done using SPSS version 16.00. Factor analysis was applied to explore CSR implemented by entrepreneurs in Tanzania. The analysis employed principal components with Varimax rotation, and extraction criterion analysis was used to derive factors with Eigen value greater than unity. Goodness of fit was evaluated using total variance explained and communalities. The minimum acceptable value for communalities was set at 0.5 (Anderson *et al.*, 2006). According to Anderson *et al.*, (2006), the cut-off point for the inclusion of factor loadings consistent with a sample size of 156 was set as 0.5.

#### Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a multivariate technique that is used to summarise information contained in a large number of variables into a smaller number of subsets or factors (Foxall & Hackett, 1995, and Kim & Mueller, 1978). Principal components and Varimax rotational procedures were used throughout this study to identify measures for the sample taken. These procedures are highly accepted and most

universally used. The component analysis model is appropriate when the primary concern is predication or where the minimum number of factors is needed (Field, 2006)

There is a debate among scholars on the best cut-off point of the factors number. Again there are various techniques to be used in order to reach a good number for a common construct, such as scree plots and Eigen values. Kaiser (1960) recommends retaining all the factors with Eigen values greater than one. However, Jolliffe (1972, 1986) reports that Kaiser's criterion is too conservative and suggests a third option of the retaining all factors with Eigen values more than 0.7.

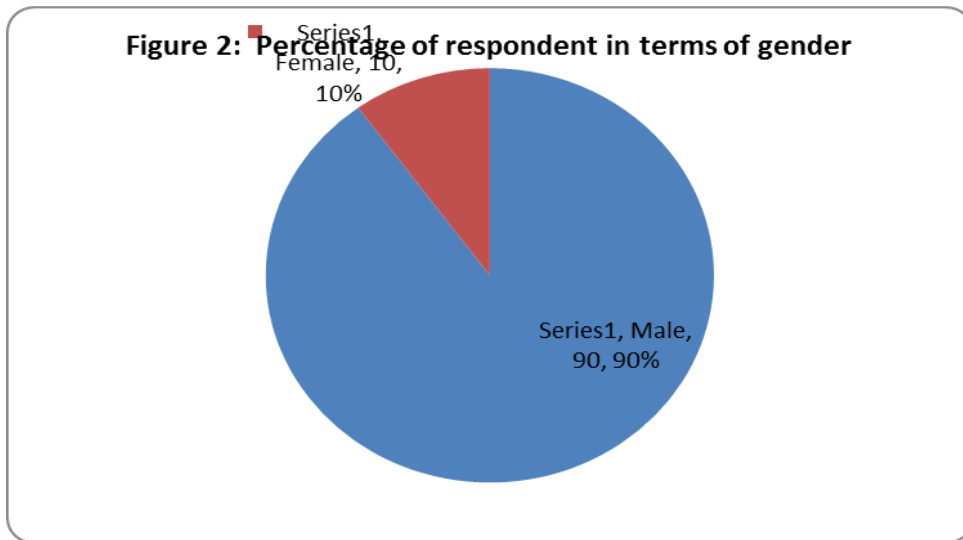
Although scree plots are useful for selection of factors, research should not be based on this criterion alone (Field, 2006). Simply, Field suggests the combining of scree plot with Eigen values technique for verifications. This study used both of them for factor extraction. This criterion is based on the idea that the Eigen values represent the amount of variation explained by a factor and that an Eigen value of 1 represents a substantial amount of variation (Field, 2006).

Empirical studies have shown that Kaiser' criterion is accurate when the number of variables are less than 30 and the resulting communalities (after extraction) are all greater than 0.7 (Field, 2006). Furthermore, Field (2006) recommends that by reflecting the number of respondents, by identifying that if the study has more than 250 respondents, Kaiser Criterion is correct (pp. 631). In this study, factors with more than 1 Eigen value were used and those below that were dropped. The reason is that this criterion is generally accepted and respected in social science as the basis for excluding or including factors (Kaiser, 1960; Anderson *et al.*, 1998).

#### **Characteristics of the Sample**

The sample size of respondents involved in the study comprised 30 per cent of respondents with ages ranging from 25-35, 23 per cent of the respondents were of ages ranging from 34-46, and 45 per cent of ages ranging from 47 and above. Only 10 per cent of the respondents recruited in the study were female, the remaining 90 per cent being male, as shown in figure 2.

The classification of SME entrepreneurs doing business in hotel industry was based on the number of employees. 12 per cent of the respondents represent micro enterprise with 1-4 employees, 64 per cent of the managers who participated in the study represented small enterprises and 24 per cent managers from medium enterprises.



### Scale Reliability

Scale reliability for the study was evaluated using Cronbach's  $\alpha$ -coefficient, which is a measure of how well a set of manifest indicators measure the scale (De Vellis, 2003). There is no universal convention with respect to threshold value. Nunnally (1978) suggests alpha value for 0.7, while Robinson *et al.* (1991) suggested that value of 0.6 as acceptable for exploratory research. However, De Vellis (2003) notes that it is unusual for researchers to use scales with lower reliability coefficient. The alpha coefficient for the scale is 0.883; this is respected in social science.

## 4.0 FINDINGS

### CSR implemented by entrepreneurs

The analysis was applied to 23 items five-point scale dealing with CSR implemented by entrepreneurs in the hotel industry in Tanzania. Table 1 shows that 95 per cent of the total variance is explained by the six factors. The communalities are generally respected.

*Factor one*, defined as 'supporting sport', the following factors loaded significantly; customer identification card (.930), suppliers licence (.872), supporting sport (.821), means of production (.798) and traceability (.718)

*Factor two*, defined as 'community support', the factors loaded significantly are supporting health to child and mother (.835), sewerage system (.829), supporting orphans (.717), energy reductions (.708), volunteer (.695) and tuition fees (.635).

*Factor three*, named as 'environmental concern,' the elements loaded significantly were packaging recycle (.977), noise reduction (.903) and water reduction (.711).

*Factor four*, defined as 'cultural events,' the following elements loaded significantly are cultural events (.918), traceability (.803), alternative energy (.795) and disadvantaged persons (.695).

*Factor five*, defined as ‘supporting elder people’, dealt with the following elements loaded significantly: supporting people with HIV (.911), supporting older people (.899) and combating corruption (.547).

*Factor six*, defined as ‘fundraising,’ dealt with the following elements loaded significantly: beauty contest (.755) and fundraising.

**Table 1: Rotated component matrix: CSR implemented by SMEs in hotel industry in Tanzania**

Components	Factor numbers						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	h <sup>2</sup>
Noise reduction	.190	.153	<b>.903</b>	-.072	.014	-.184	.914
Packaging recycle	.009	-.069	<b>-.977</b>	.023	-.053	.063	.968
Supporting sport	<b>.821</b>	-.317	-.154	.056	-.054	.182	.838
Cultural event	-.102	-.129	-.035	<b>.918</b>	.180	-.084	.910
Beauty contest	-.231	.057	-.334	.482	.174	<b>.755</b>	.915
Suppliers licence	<b>.872</b>	.065	.339	-.235	.118	.029	.949
Subsidies	-.083	.319	-.144	<b>.803</b>	.020	.343	.893
Traceability	<b>.718</b>	.079	.511	-.266	.241	-.192	.949
Fundraising	.513	.034	.049	-.254	.482	<b>.660</b>	.998
Combating corruption	.469	.468	.153	-.195	<b>-.547</b>	-.473	.989
Water reduction	-.476	.070	<b>-.711</b>	-.135	-.058	-.473	.982
sewerage system	-.264	<b>.829</b>	-.369	.227	-.056	-.023	.948
volunteer	.689	<b>.695</b>	.041	-.075	.161	-.091	.996
Health to child and mother	.005	<b>.835</b>	.306	-.092	-.357	.250	.990
Supporting people with HIV	.289	-.065	.146	.053	<b>.911</b>	.198	.982
Supporting Older people	.128	-.153	.010	.326	<b>.899</b>	.030	.955
Support orphan	.197	<b>.717</b>	.399	-.112	-.181	-.434	.947



Energy reduction	.440	<b>.708</b>	.055	.305	-.394	-.061	.949
Customers id	<b>.930</b>	.180	.064	.100	.275	.051	.989
Disadvantaged person	.437	-.172	.145	<b>.695</b>	.236	.414	.951
Alternative energy	-.257	.523	-.015	<b>.795</b>	.059	-.098	.985
Tuition fees	.241	<b>.635</b>	.339	.368	.337	.122	.940
Means of production	<b>.798</b>	.358	.373	-.097	-.019	-.250	.976
Eigenvalue	7.184	4.942	4.471	2.232	1.413	1.360	
Variance	32.527	21.488	19.437	9.706	6.143	5.913	
Cumulative variance	32.527	54.015	73.452	83.158	89.301	95.214	

## 5.0 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This finding of this study offers some interesting insight into the knowledge gap in CSR-SME implemented in developing countries like Tanzania. The study revealed that SMEs focus much on community support; supporting people with special needs especially those affected with natural calamities. For example in the recent event whereby some part of the city of Dar-Es-Salaam were flooded, local newspapers captured events at which owners of hotels were donating goods to victims (The Guardian, 9<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2012; The Citizen, 1<sup>st</sup> Jan, 2012).

Also, hotel owners implemented other CSR activities like supporting sport events and beauty contests like Miss Tanzania pageant. Among the event supporters was Giraffe hotel located in Dar-Es-Salaam. For instance, in 2011 the Giraffe Hotel supported a camp of 30 Miss Tanzania contestants for three weeks (The Guardian, 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2011). Issues of environment are also of concern to SMEs in the hotel industry; their concern is in reducing noise, waste disposal and use of alternative energy. The use of alternative energy was accelerated by the power blackout in the country. Accordingly, installation of solar power and the use of liquid petroleum gas (LPG) for cooking were initiated as strategic areas of business by hotel owners.

SMEs influence community and in most cases employ people from the surrounding communities. However, SMEs have failed to attract highly skilled human recourse (Russo & Tencati, 2009). To minimise the impact of low man power, SMEs in hotel industry support workers by providing shelter and food. This helps SMEs to build strong relationship with employees. Consequently, some workers do not wish to quit due to the benefits they get. During research survey for this current study, researcher found houses built by hotel owners near the hotel premises for workers to live in. These staff retention strategies help SMES in minimising labour turnover which SMEs normally face due to low payment and poor working conditions.

### **Conclusions**

The objective of this study was to explore the implemented of CSR by SMEs in Tanzanian hotel industry. The result shows that SMEs in the hotel industry focus on community support, alternative energy, providing subsidies to workers, environmental concerns, supporting people with special needs, sponsoring sports and fund raising to support people with special needs.

Though the finding shows that investors in the hotel industry comply with the environmental laws, the compliance with these laws and policies in the country seems to be hard for the investors in the hotel industry. Recently, two tourist hotels, the Giraffe Ocean View and Double Tree Hotel, both in Dar-Es-Salaam were banned to provide services for some days (Daily News, 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec, 2012). The Double Tree Hotel was also ordered to pay penalty of Tshs 36 million for them to resume operations. On the other hand, this business crisis seemed to have occurred because owners are not aware with the countries environmental protection laws and policies. We argue that the government, through National Environment Management Council (NEMC), has to provide education on the policies and laws of the country.

Community support is part of African cultural way of life. An interesting finding is that SMEs are doing these informally and it is not included in their strategic plan. This is due to the fact that most of them are faced with financial constraints and lack of awareness on how they can influence consumer behaviour through CSR.

The finding of the study is in line with the study conducted by Russo and Tencati (2009) in Italy, which focused on SMEs in the manufacturing sector. The study, in general, identified five factors related to Corporate Social Responsibility implemented by SMEs namely environment, employment, supply chain, supporting local communities and community volunteering. However, there are differences between the two studies; for, while in the current study the findings have revealed five factors which emerged to be strong CSR activities in Tanzania, these did not feature in Russo and Tencati (2009) which featured the following features; sponsoring sports, cultural events and fund raising.

### **Managerial Implications**

According to Tencati and Ruso (2009) if well-defined management system does not exist, decisions are usually made informally. To change this working habit in the small organisation during their early days of existence, external pressure has to be introduced (St. John, 1980). The study shows that SMEs in Tanzania are implementing CSR more informally. Thus, failure of external pressure will make them (SMEs) go informal.

Therefore, the findings of this study suggest that SME owners and managers in-charge of decisions-making should consider the advantages of CSR strategies when dealing with relevant stakeholders. For instance, the SMEs can make their hotels attractive to foreign tourists by publicizing how they support communities, the aged, and cultural events by using their websites (internet), and print media.

Often, SMEs fail to attract high quality human resources because of competition with large firms. Therefore, well-structured, transparent and clearly communicated CSR strategies like provision of accommodation for employees that is practised by SMEs in hotel industry in Tanzania might generate competitive advantage for small business.

On the other hand, government agencies that deal with SMEs the development of SMEs in the country have to help them on how integrate the importance of CSRs into their business and how they can benefit with them. CSR has to be interpreted more informally and introduced to the organisation so that all actors understand what the organisation is doing.

The study reveals that SMEs in Tanzania are implementing CSR activities informally without integrating them in their strategic plan. Future research is needed to better define the differences and similarities among firms of different sizes with a focus on how innovative they are in issues of CSR. Innovation in protecting the environment and how they (SMEs) pressurise actors in value chain to observe issues of CSR is essential. Also future research can be conducted with a focus on understanding how consumer behaviour has been influenced with the CSR activities implemented by SMEs in Tanzania.

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