

Chapter 3

Socially Responsible Practices in Hotels: A Gender Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to analyze the influence of institutional pressures (normative, coercive and mimetic) according to gender in the implementation of social responsibility in hotels. The object of this study is three, four and five-star hotels located in the Euro region (Galicia and North of Portugal). To achieve these objectives a quantitative study is carried out. The proposed model of research; the Technical Partial Least Square (PLS), methodology based on Structural Equations Models (SEM) using the software Visual-PLS has been applied. A questionnaire consisting of existing validated scales was drawn up and used for the collation of data.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, the institutional influence under the gender perspective is investigated. The aim is to find out which of the institutional pressures identified by (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991) exerts greater influence on the organizations under study. In addition we intend to verify if the isomorphism phenomenon is present in relation to gender. This phenomenon raises interest since the impact of the gender environment on institutional context in the working environment with reference to social responsibility has not been studied to date in the most prominent academic literature. In this case, we want to contribute new evidence within Institutional Theory in this perspective.

Institutional Theory is deemed valid in the investigation of the application of socially responsible practices through the collation of information from managers of hotels. The postulates classified in Insti-

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tutional Theory have been studied and verified by different authors in different types of organizations, public administrations (Llamas-Sanchez, García-Morales & Martín-Tapia, 2013); Colombian companies and their internationalization (Restrepo & Rosero, 2002); the financial sector in Colombia (Murillo, González & Rodríguez, 2010), the oil industry in Jaén (Moyano-Fuentes, 2001), non-profit making human services organisations (Mellinger, 2014) and golf courses in Andalucía (Vargas-Sánchez & Riquel-Ligero, 2015), among others. Yet, there is little literature that focuses on the approach of Institutional Theory in the investigation of companies in the private sector, this means that we are contributing to the progress under this theory.

The tourism sector is one of Spain and Portugal's main economic engines. Official statistics and authors such as Álvarez, Vila, Fraiz and Río (2013) and Lopes (2010) recognize the huge economic weight of this sector in both countries. In this paper the subsector Hotel considering the three dimensions of corporate social responsibility (environmental, economic and social) within the tourism sector is analyzed. In order to give uniformity to the investigation three, four and five star hotels located in the Euro-region of Galicia and Northern Portugal were selected as a unit of study.

The main objective of this investigation is to determine if there is a trend towards isomorphism in the development of corporate social responsibility practices from a gender perspective. The aim of this study is to analyze how institutional pressures influence male and female directors and if these pressures exert the same influence, regardless of the gender of the directors when adopting social responsible practices. This investigation will also determine whether the main reason for implementing this type of practice is the legitimacy.

As previously explained, we believe that institutional theory is valid for our investigation because it tries to explain isomorphic behaviour in organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 1995).

This chapter is divided into seven sections. In the first section we carry out the literature review in which institutional theory, the relationship between institutional theory, isomorphism, legitimacy, corporate social responsibility and its relationship with gender is addressed. It is then followed by the main focus of the chapter with issues, controversies and problems. In the third section, the recommendations and solutions are put forward followed by future research directions. The conclusions are then presented followed by bibliographical references and the key terms and definitions.

BACKGROUND

This section examines institutional theory, corporate social responsibility, the relationship between institutional theory, isomorphism and legitimacy and the relationship between gender and social responsibility.

1. Institutional Theory and Corporate Social Responsibility

Institutional theory is based on three main pillars according to Scott (1995); coercive, normative, and mimetic that leads to coercive, normative and mimetic institutional pressures identified by DiMaggio and Powell (1991). This theory has legitimacy as its main base. Companies that operate taking into account legal requirements rely on the coercive pillar. Companies that acquire legitimacy through moral obligation follow the normative pillar and the organizations that acquire legitimacy adapting to the rules and generalized trends, i.e., those that adopt a similar behaviour to other companies rely on the cognitive pillar.

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