


Chapter 7

Humanity as a Corporate Value: An International Analysis of Nasdaq Companies

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ABSTRACT

There are hints that humanity, understood as people's quality and not as a human race reference, could be becoming important in organizations. This study is developed with this inquiry, whose objective is reviewing the presence of humanity as a corporate value in the public business information provided by the 70 companies making up the 2022 RepTrak Nasdaq 100 ESG. A systematized review of public corporate information is applied as a research technique, with both a quantitative and qualitative approach. The study results show that "humanity", according to the aforementioned meaning, only has a reduced presence in ethical codes (12 mentions in 9 companies) and a somewhat more significant presence in sustainability reports (47 mentions in 159 companies). This last figure may especially prove that humanity is perhaps an emerging issue in business environment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.- Study Motivation

The economic world is currently facing many challenges. A positive integration of new information and communication technologies (ITCs) is one of them, in an interconnected environment. Technologies used, among other aspects, related to the growing use of screens as communication channel in the private sphere as well as in the professional one. The worldwide average time spent on the Internet is 6 hours and 40 minutes per day (Kemp, 2024). The effects of the prominent role of screens might evidence the risk associated with the rapid technological and digital transformation experienced by a large part of humanity in recent times. In this sense, literature reviews already point out that the ability to communicate interpersonally and without screens is atrophying in digital natives (Díaz Chica & Herrero Martín, 2021). They also point out specific negative aspects derived from this technology use, such as affective distancing and listening skills loss (Arab & Díaz, 2015).

Among other possible damages associated with new technology use is humanity loss, understood as a desirable characteristic in human beings and not as a reference to gender comprising the collectivity of people. Would it be possible that business organizations, aware of this, are highlighting humanity as a corporate value or as an encouraged trait in staff or in other stakeholders? Would the increasing hiring of humanities experts by technology companies be behind the detection of humanity loss in people? Some news somewhat in tune with this assumption suggest that this might be the case. Artificial intelligence application is stated in informative channels to require experts in user experience, as this depends on their web perception subjectivity, the emotions generated, the aroused motivation and the learning process associated with it (Velasco, 2020). Others point out that the hiring of philosophers by companies such as IBM or Microsoft is due to the possible ethical implications of technological development outcome (Clemente, 2017). It is also reported, with ethical undertones, that companies like Google are concerned about experiential diversity because algorithms discriminate the content displayed according to the user (Hurtado, 2023). We are undoubtedly going through a historic moment of change, when technology and human beings are mingling, without knowing yet if this would enhance people's humanity or would lead to their dehumanization instead.

1.2.-Study Contribution

Firstly, the use of stock market indexes is a common practice in economic research within international trade studies. The economic consequence of index constituent adjustments has received massive attention from both academics and

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