Chapter 14
Corporate Social Responsibility and AI and Their Impact on Smart Cities

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ABSTRACT

Due to increasing urbanization, smart cities have developed rapidly, and they focus on technology driven infrastructure and sustainable development. With cities becoming more digital, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are key issues in determining the urban habitat of the future. This work investigates the relationship between CSR, AI and smart cities, and their implications for urban development. Aiming from the perspective of the role of AI in smart city making and the responsibility of corporations in enhancing sustainable city environment, this chapter discusses the opportunities and difficulties in combining CSR and AI in building more liveable, efficient, and sustainable cities. More specifically, this study aims to help extend understanding of entanglement between corporate responsibility, technological innovation, and urban sustainability to guide the development of more resilient and just cities of the future.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-9894-4.ch014

INTRODUCTION

City living has changed dramatically in recent years and is predicted to change even more in the future with the UN predicting that over 2 billion people will be living in urban areas by 2050 (United Nations, 2021). The UN considers development in urban or city environments to directly link to eight of their sustainability goals. These urban centres are increasingly being referred to as smart cities (De Falco, 2019). There are many definitions as to what constitutes a smart city. A definition from Ranchordás (2020, p261) is perhaps one of the most useful to this discussion; "Smart cities are defined as urban centers where local institutions implement smart technologies (IoT, big data, AI or ML, blockchain, virtual reality) to advance the innovative character of the city and improve the inclusion, participation, and well-being of citizens." This rise in urbanization presents challenges for city planners and citizens (Tan and Taeihagh, 2020), with cities around the world harnessing technological capabilities in the urban sphere to deal with the trend toward greater 'smartness' in cities, with AI being at the forefront of this endeavour (Okai, Feng and Sant, 2019).

The constituent building blocks of smart cities are defined by Giffinger *et al.* (2007) into six domains, these are smart economy, smart people, smart governance, smart mobility, smart environment and smart living. These domains are widely agreed on by scholars (Bifulco *et al.*, 2016; Nieto, Yelpo and Guzmán, 2021) as the building blocks of smart cities and while they were established almost two decades ago, they are still relevant today. As illustrated in Table 1 the smart city construct details much of what will be discussed in this chapter. Smart cities are built on many of the aspects recognized in CSR, such as responsible use of resources, sustainability and community. While ethics are not explicitly detailed here an ethical approach is implied throughout the domains (Chang, 2021; Ziosi *et al.*, 2024), nor is AI explicitly detailed here, this is perhaps unsurprising given that developments in this area leapfrogged in the last ten years, smart cites are very much built around ICT and its potential. Developments in digital technology have driven smart urbanization (Bunders and Varró, 2019; Han and Kim, 2021). The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has very much taken hold (Luusua *et al.*, 2023), providing scope for greater efficiency and additional city services.