The Influence of Corporate Social Responsibility on Employee's Organizational Identification: A Review of Models

Abstract
This paper reviews the notion of corporate social responsibility in association with the concept of employee's organizational identification. In doing so, it highlights the most prominent contributions to date and underlines future research prospects about the phenomenon at issue. For this purpose, the study conducts a semi-systematic literature review of 87 studies. The results confirm the validation of such connection and the proliferation of the topic within the individual-level organizational behavior body of knowledge. Complementarily, the seven most representative and influential contributions are schematized and explained in the light of the correlations, mediations, and moderations confirmed to date.
Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, employee's organizational identification, organizational behavior, sustainability management, semi-systematic literature review.

Introduction

Given credit to the premise that economic development comes to light depending on the way resources are allocated, accessed, and used (Penrose, 2009; Schumpeter, 1934) , it is acceptable to come up with some inducted ideas about it. One of them is that due to the capacities organizations have developed to attract and create any kind of resource (like people and knowledge for example) makes them the main facilitators of development and progress in society. In the same line, it is clear that these two concepts: development and progress, which, although several variations and implications have nowadays a convergent target that can be summarized in one single term: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The latter idea implies that CSR can be seen as a "conducting cable" for development and that any effect generated by this mechanism to any organizational resource, deserves to be understood.

However, despite many roles that have been assigned to it, for pursuing the purpose of this research, CSR (at the organizational level) is studied as a factor that can activate individual attitudes and behaviors into the organizational environment (at the individual level). This particular academic area has mainly been analyzed into the literature and has received the name of "Micro CSR" (Glavas, 2016) . Precisely for this review, the construct of CSR will be related to the concept of Employee's Organizational Identification (OID), which in turn can be considered a predictor of employee engagement, organizational commitment, and ultimately organizational performance (See figure 1).

Figure 1. Overall Assumption Model

Source: The author

Some scholars argue that this perspective is fascinating. They considered that if a causal link between these two elements is fully established and understood (i.e., an improvement in OID measurements can take place because of an improvement of CSR measurements), there will be realistic expectations of better organizational results. This idea can even represent a new approach of the Chernev & Blair's (2015) "Benevolent Halo," which shows how much the concept of CSR can positively impact certain variables linked with external stakeholders, in which management is typically interested. In a sense, the present work aims to build on the determination of the scholarship level that somehow involves an equivalent and specific "halo," conformed by employees, acting as internal stakeholders and their sense of belongings as a variable to affect. At the same time, this work is a way to support the claim of authors like He & Brown (2013), who argue that there is still too much to produce in this line and encourage new scholars to develop a new research agenda on the mentioned topic.

In sum, the main objective of this study is to introduce a semi-systematic literature review that answers the question: what knowledge do scholars have been produced in the relationship between CSR and OID to date. The findings are focused on general issues, such as the evolution of the topic, the nature of the studies developed, the most representative journals and authors that give importance to the mentioned relationship, and the context where empirical studies have been conducted. Moreover, according to these results, there are highlighted some future research opportunities that integrate these two constructs in different and appealing ways.

The outline of the paper is as follows. In the next section, a conceptual background is presented in order to understand terminology and focus. Later, the methodological approach is explained, followed by the description of findings obtained. Finally, there is a discussion, when the results interpretation, implications, and future research agenda items are addressed.

Conceptual Background

Since decision-makers understood that ultimate organizational goals were not exclusively financial but also social and environmental (Elkington, 1998), the concept of CSR has been remarkably attached to the efforts of searching those kinds of results in organizations. In other words, Sustainable Development has been earning an essential space in management (both, in practice and theory); and the spawn of CSR, as a very relevant topic, has done it (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams, & Ganapathi, 2007). Sustainable development is universally defined as "the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Keeble, 1988). Accordingly, the influence of this concept in the management body of knowledge has been tangible. Therefore this notion has been cataloged as the new dominant paradigm in terms of assessing organizational and personal performance (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005).

In a recent review concerning the psychology of CSR among company members, professors Jones & Rupp (2017) state that CSR can also be defined as feelings, expressions, and actions performed by an entity (namely an organization) and for which that entity is held responsible. Therefore, "CSR is often conceptualized, described, and managed as an organization's portfolio of socially-oriented practices, policies, and initiatives" (Jones & Rupp, 2017). At the same time, it is worth it to highlight that CSR has an active link with stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), which in turn focuses on actions taken with consideration of benefiting those who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives. Furthermore, since employees are undoubtedly a group of constituencies that can affect AND are affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives, they should be considered stakeholders (i.e., internal stakeholders).

This logic indicates that there is a new space to address employees' role in CSR literature. They can act as promoters or as receptors of CSR. In the latter case, scholars have coined the names "Internal CSR" and "Micro CSR." Internal CSR represents the CSR efforts directed towards employees (Cornelius, Todres, Janjuha-Jivraj, Woods, & Wallace, 2008), and micro CSR describes the psychological study of how CSR affects employees (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Rupp & Mallory, 2015). While for the former concept, there is a compelling body of knowledge, the main focus of this study will be on the latter one. Their associations and causalities, especially what is concerned with studies made on the individual level (micro CSR), has not been well developed yet (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Delmas & Pekovic, 2013; W. Randy Evans & Davis, 2014; E. Lamm, Tosti-Kharas, & King, 2015). This latter understanding is a justification for expanding knowledge in the field.

Notably, this phenomenon is analyzed according to the construct of OID, which has been explicitly introduced by Herbert Simon since 1947 (Simon, 1947), and primarily mentioned by many other scholars since then. OID is a construct that comes directly from the field of Organizational

Behavior. It can be defined as a specific form of social identification, where an individual's identity is derived from his/her classification into social categories, or social groups (Mael & Ashforth, 1992), or as Jones & Volpe (2011) put it, OID can be simply understood as "the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization." In other words, OID is what defines an individual in regard to his/her perception of the organization he/she joins. This concept is considered necessary because (among other arguments more focused in humanistic domains) through the literature it has been stated that higher levels of OID can be a trigger of other positive organizational attitudes, like employee commitment (Riketta, 2005), job satisfaction (Van Dick et al., 2004) and lower turnover intention (Cole & Bruch, 2006; Wan-Huggins, Riordan, & Griffeth, 1998)

Lately, the concept of OID has been attached to the field of Organizational Theory, concretely in the arena of Micro-OB (Micro Organizational Behavior) as it is a construct related to the individual (micro) level (O'Reilly III, 1991). Presumably, this association was consumed after Allen & Meyer (1990) distinguished between three forms of organizational commitment: affective commitment which denotes "an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization"; continuance commitment which denotes "the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization"; and normative commitment "which reflects a perceived obligation to remain in the organization." In this way, OID became officially a work attitude, which sometimes is overlooked or mixed up with the construct of affective commitment.

In parallel and afterward, this evolution, a decent amount of studies concerning the concept of OID, emerged in the literature. However, only a few of them were related to the substance of what implies the CSR. As a way of antecedent description, a couple of attractive works in the line of the link CSR-OID would help to explain this interaction:

In a previous essay, Greil & Rudy (1984) argued that the central dynamic underlying OID had been tied to the presence of socialization and community-building initiatives that support the individuals' views of themselves and the organization. This notion became in the root for future studies about the influence of CSR actions on individual identification.

A couple of years later, O'Reilly III & Chatman (1986) developed and released a "what can be called" the first empirical attempt of linking CSR with some employee attitudes. Mainly from their study, they argued that OID was positively related to pro-social behaviors, suggesting that the former could be a factor that fosters the latter.

Conversely, Scott & Lane (2000) created a theoretical model that integrates organizational identity and organizational identification theories. They propose that the identity of any organization is a form of negotiated cognitive images of itself. It implies that different outcomes, both positive and negative, can be obtained depending on how stakeholders respond to the image they believe others

hold of the organization at issue. Specifically, employees and their perception of others' perception generate an impact over their sense of belongingness to their organization.

Finally, as a part of a very rigorous study, Bartel (2001) examined employees' perceptions of the company's volunteerism programs. She found that participation in those programs provided employees with opportunities to make favorable social comparisons, which enhanced collective self-esteem and improve their OID. This idea, in turn, was positively associated with supervisors' subsequent ratings of program participants' work effort, willingness to assist fellow employees, and attempts to maintain or improve positive work relationships. Supervisors also mentioned in qualitative interviews that they believed that their experiences energized some employees who participated in the program.

Methodology

After the application of some elements of a systematic process by the use of a searching equation and followed by the action of technological tools like VantagePoint®, a semi-systematic literature review was finally conducted (as in Mäntylä, Adams, Khomh, Engström, & Petersen, 2015; Welsh, 2018).

First, a selective and exhaustive searching process that included 632 manuscripts was performed. Their abstracts were analyzed and filtered. Finally, 87 papers were chosen, intensely scrutinized, and classified into the study. Inclusion criteria for the process were established in terms of quality, relevance, and specific mention of the concepts involved.

1.1. *Quality:* This work selected only manuscripts published in journals indexed either by Thomson Reuter's ISI Web of Knowledge or Elsevier's SCOPUS.

1.2. *Relevance:* Only manuscripts that have been cited (at least once), according to the GOOGLE Scholar platform (exception of this rule is applied to manuscripts reported during 2019). Date of search: January 1, 2020.

1.3. *Specific Mention of Concepts:* Only manuscripts that have involved both concepts, CSR (or its equivalent terms, such as Social Responsibility, Sustainability, and Corporate Citizenship) and OID (or its equivalent terms) in either partial or total way into each specific study.

Afterward, the classification process was manually developed, and a great framework was constructed on a conventional spreadsheet. Manuscripts were organized, and nine categories were defined as follows: (i) Year of publication; (ii) Author's surname; (iii) Nature of the manuscript; (iv) Journal's name; (v) number of citations; (vi) Main contributions; and for the case of empirical studies: (vii) Type of methodology; (viii) Size of the sample; and (ix) Context. The chosen timeframe for the data collection and analysis corresponded to the period between 2003 and 2019.

Results and Discussion

Once every manuscript was analyzed, and in order to appreciate the evolution of the studied topic, some relevant descriptive data will be presented, which can help to analyze comprehensively, the results obtained. Later, a brief chronology of the most relevant contributions is listed and explained below.

A relevant fact is that the production of research projects related to the mentioned topic has been increasing during the studied time window. However, after Bartel's (2001) study, only one study was reported in 2003: Cullen, Parboteeah, & Victor (2003), while not a single study was reported for years 2004, 2005, and 2006, meaning an immediate disinterest on the topic. Interestingly, during 2007, there was a peak (5 manuscripts released), and from 2010 the increasing trend was better defined, showing at the end 14 manuscripts produced in 2018 and 18 in what has been reported during 2019. Figure 2 accounts for this phenomenon.

**Figure 2.** Publications per year
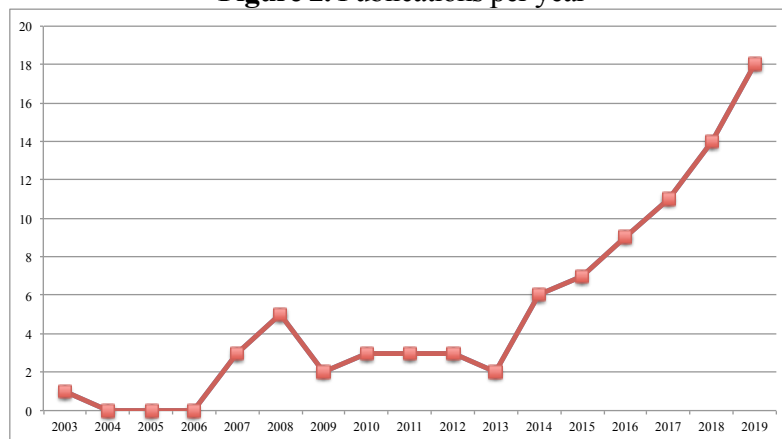
Source: Own

In terms of the journals where the topic has been mostly accepted, there is no doubt that the Journal of Business Ethics is the most approachable to the topic (19 papers). By its part, Frontiers in Psychology, together with Research in Organizational Behavior and the International Journal of Human Resource, has shown some decent interest in these kinds of studies (9, 8, and 6 papers, respectively) during the period studied. The rest of the contributions have been disseminated in 16 more journals, and other documents (chapters or special paper series), which accounts for 11 manuscripts. See figure 3.

It is worth mentioning that journals addressed in the present review (20) belong to different fields of study: 6 journals are part of the field of management; 4 journals of the field of psychology; 3 journals of the field of human resource management and organizational behavior; 3 journals are part

of the body of knowledge of CSR and ethics; 3 journals of the field of marketing and reputation; and finally one journal of the field of international business. This fact indicates the diversity of perspectives that the analyzed topic is yet to be exploited, and it represents a sign of the existed opportunities to contribute and expand the literature.

**Figure 3.** Journals in which the topic has been published
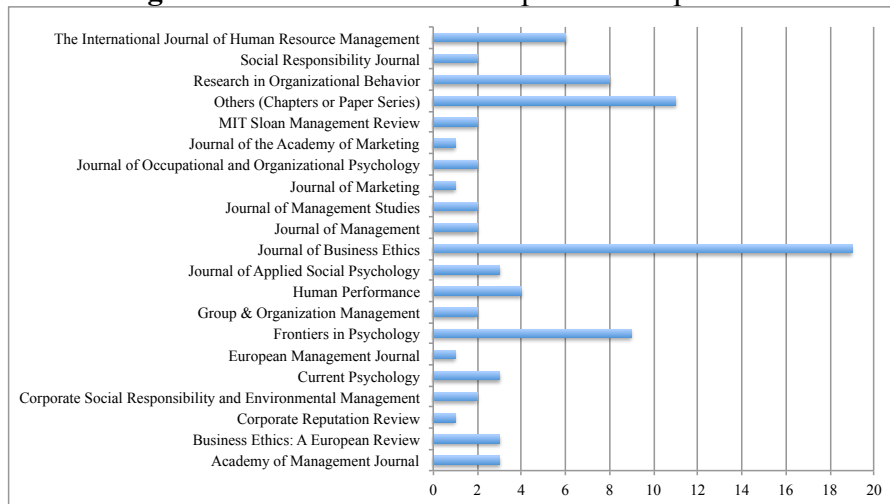
Source: Own

As it can be seen in figure 4, most of the works that addressed the CSR-OID association, are empirical. While 67 of them are empirical, 16 are theoretical (including two literature reviews), and only three practitioners-oriented (two of which were published in MIT Sloan Management Journal). Now, when focusing only on empirical manuscripts, it can be found that most of them are purely quantitative (58 out of 67), leaving practically aside the qualitative and mixed-methods techniques (with 5 and 4 exponents respectively). See figure 5.

Figure 4. Nature of published manuscripts
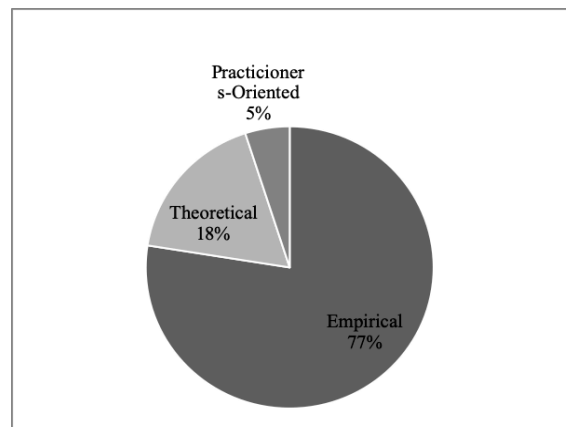
Source: Own

**Figure 5.** Methodology Type of Empirical Works
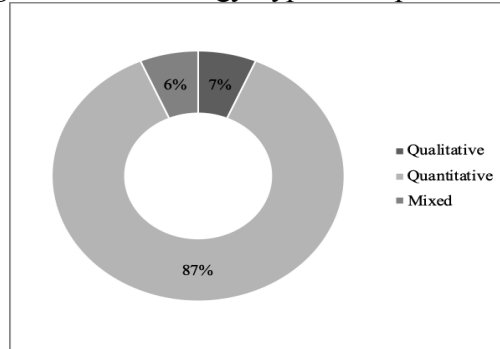
Source: Own

Now, in terms of more in-depth analysis, we found that probably the first contribution in line with the phenomenon at issue was the study conducted by Victor & Cullen (1988). Although the precise constructs of CSR and OID were not explicitly mentioned, they put forward some evidence supporting that a principle-based climate of an organization will tend to trigger employee's organizational commitment.

Years later, Carmeli, Gilat, & Waldman (2007) founded that perceived CSR by employees influences OID in a positive way, which, in turn, also influences their adjustment as organizational members. Furthermore, they remarkably concluded that this same interaction generates a stronger effect on adjustment than the one generated by employee perceptions of financial performance. See figure 6.

Figure 6. Model 1
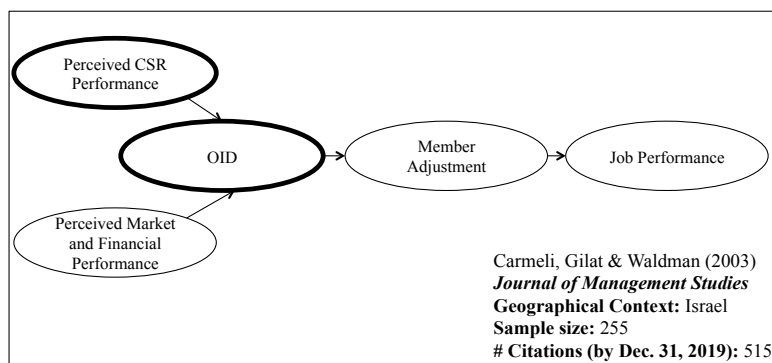
Source: Carmeli et al. (2007)

Thereupon, the work of Kim, Lee, Lee, & Kim (2010) represented a very narrowed approach to the CSR-OID association. Its objective was to understand how CSR initiatives could affect OID, and influence other variables like employee's commitment. Their conclusions were in line with the

assumption that a better performance in CSR initiatives of a company can lead to a way to maintain a positive relationship with their employees and to increased employee commitment. See figure 7.

Figure 7. Model 2
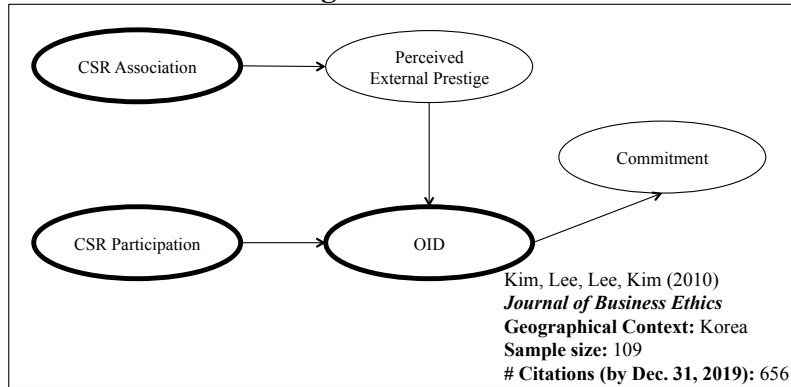
Source: Kim et al. (2010)

In his study, Jones (2010) found that CSR influences several organizational attitudes, like retention, in-role performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Mainly, CSR initiatives (such as social voluntarism) are positively related to OID. Presumably, this work represented a cornerstone for future studies in the field of micro CSR, given the novelty of constructs involved in the model and the number of relevant contributions. See figure 8.

Figure 8. Model 3
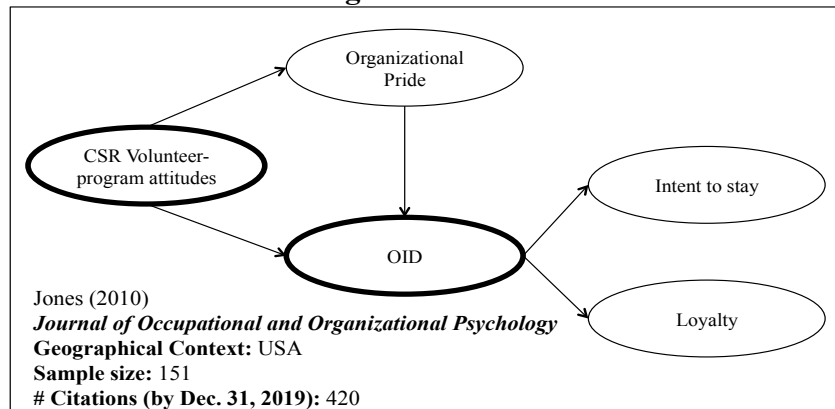
Source: Jones (2010)

In 2014, Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence (2014) came up with new insights about the link between CSR and Affective Commitment. First, they ratified the mediation role of both organizational trust and OID in the mentioned relationship. Furthermore, trough a very sophisticated quantitative analysis, they identify three different categories of employees, depending on their reactions to CSR initiatives. See figure 9.
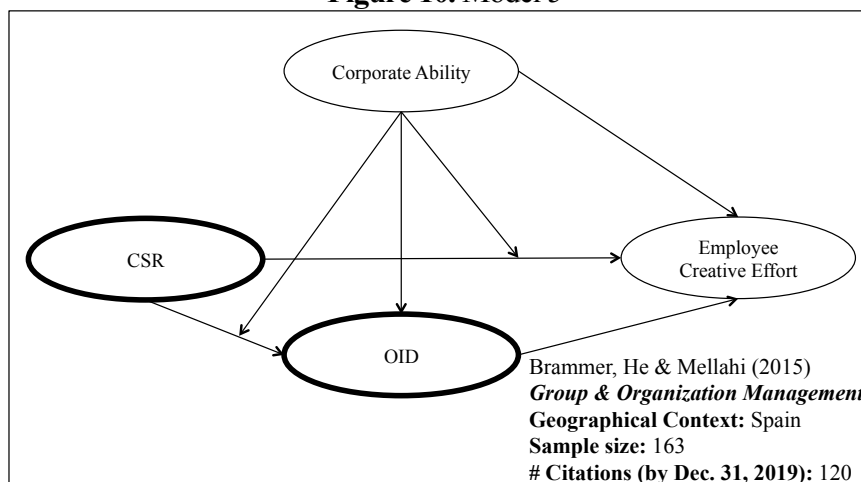
Figure 9. Model 4
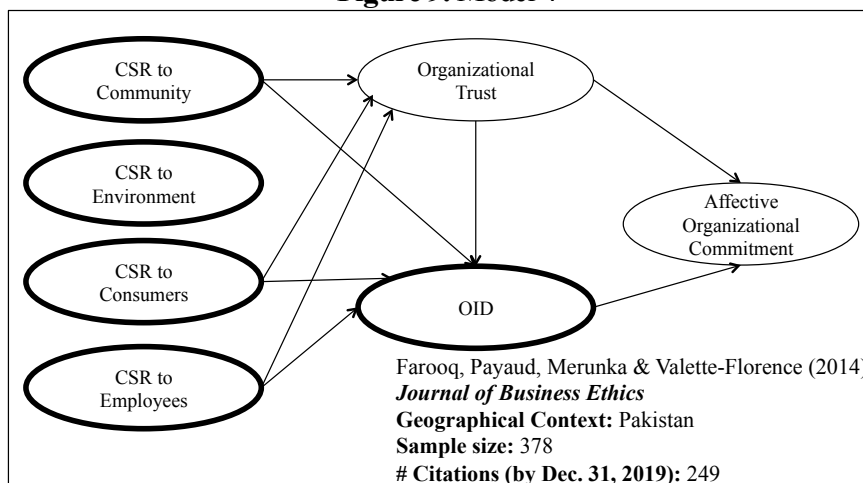
Source: (Farooq et al., 2014)

Although their primary focus was the influence of CSR on employees' creativity, Brammer, He, & Mellahi's (2015) study also demonstrates that the impact of CSR on employee behaviors and attitudes (specially OID) depends on authentic organizational beliefs and capabilities. This study is one of the few contributions that imply that some organizational outcomes at the individual level can be affected by greenwashing organizational behavior. See figure 10.
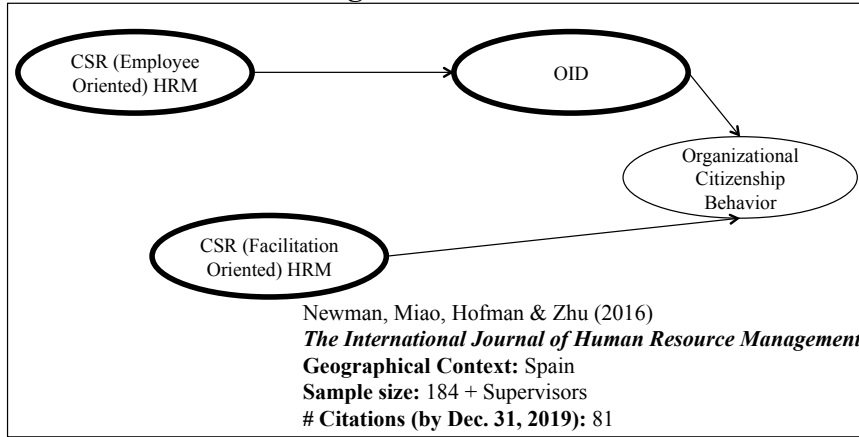
In the study conducted by Newman, Miao, Hofman, & Zhu (2016), the findings indicate that OID is a mediator in the influence of an employee-oriented HRM Policy on Organizational Citizenship Behavior. However, the latter can be obtained through a General Facilitation HRM policy, without the interference of OID. See figure 11.

Figure 10. Model 5
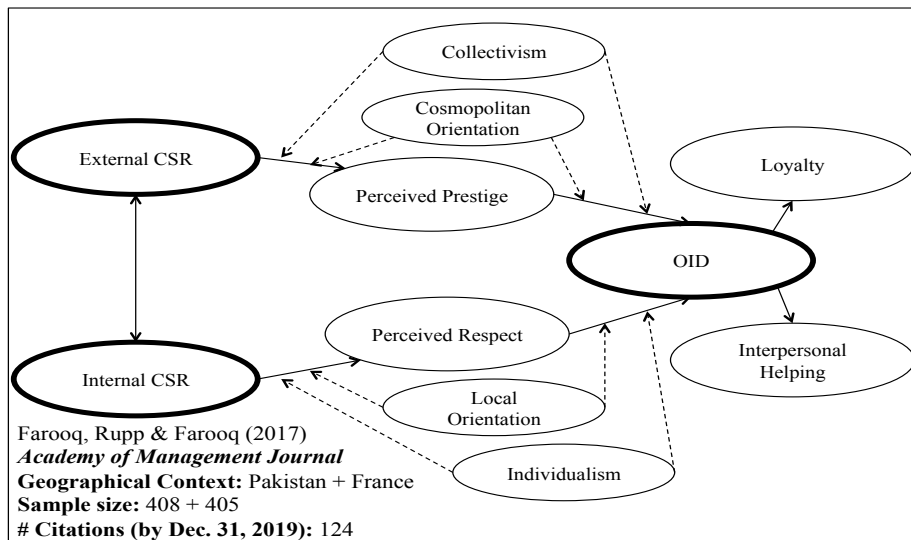

Source: Brammer et al. (2015)

Figure 11. Model 6

Newman, Miao, Hofman & Zhu (2016)
The International Journal of Human Resource Management
Geographical Context: Spain
Sample size: 184 + Supervisors
 # Citations (by Dec. 31, 2019): 81

Source: Newman et al. (2016)

More recently, the Academy of Management Journal's paper written by Farooq, Rupp, & Farooq (2017) posited that External CSR (i.e., CSR practices focusing on external stakeholders) heighten perceived prestige. In contrast, Internal CSR (i.e., CSR actions focusing on employee welfare) enhances perceived respect. They both impact employee' OID, but which differentially affect several forms of employee citizenship. See figure 12.

Figure 12. Model 7

Farooq, Rupp & Farooq (2017)
Academy of Management Journal
Geographical Context: Pakistan + France
Sample size: 408 + 405
 # Citations (by Dec. 31, 2019): 124

Source: Farooq et al. (2017)

Discussion

During these last years, companies as important actors of society have been pushed for a change in their ways of doing business. They appeal to the integration of sustainable principles in their everyday practices and the disclosure of their impacts and contributions to sustainable development. Inductively, CSR has been one of the mechanisms that guide that change, for it is a concept with

implications to every organizational constituency (Aguilera et al., 2007). In this same line, CSR and its effects over those constituencies have become a very relevant object of study that has come to some valuable contributions. Specifically, in fields like psychology, human resources management, organizational behavior, ethics, environmental management, and marketing, a considerable body of knowledge has been developed in order to understand the effects of CSR on employees.

However, despite many of the constructs belonging to these fields that can be related to CSR, it can be seen that the specific concept of OID has captivated some scholar's attention, taking into account its capability of assuming different roles in different circumstances. In this way, OID can be analyzed either as a consequence or simply treated as a behavior. It can be examined from both the managerial and the theoretical perspective. And it can even be studied inductively and deductively at the same time. A brief description of contributions that integrate the mentioned concepts (CSR and OID) are described and analyzed in the present work. In that order of ideas, organizational literature has become something axiomatic the fact that employees develop positive OID when their organization is perceived as being socially responsible.

More precisely, this study intends to collect previous ideas, which have been integrated into the body of knowledge of the concept of CSR and its link with the way that employees identify themselves as part of their own companies (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Even though many projects have tackled this particular issue, this endeavor has been assumed because no specific work has the objective of compiling ideas, assumptions, methods, and conclusions of what has been done to date. Therefore, this work pretends to address future research opportunities, given the gaps that remained unexplored.

One of the evident findings of this study is that there have been several studies in the micro-CSR literature that have tested OID as an outcome or as a mediating mechanism of CSR-employee outcome relationships. In this sense, it is worth it to highlight the impression generated by Carmeli et al. (2007), Grant, Dutton, & Rosso (2008), Jones (2010), Kim et al. (2010), and Rodrigo & Arenas (2008). Undoubtedly, they were the ones who prepared the ground for future contributions that have extended even more the literature on the topic.

In general terms, the literature on the topic reveals very coincident findings among the different contributions, which validates a causal association between the two constructs in mention. That is, the different forms of operationalizing the concept of CSR at the firm level do affect OID at the individual level. And while for the latter, there is, almost exclusively, a measurement very well defined (i.e., Mael & Ashforth (1992), different concepts can act as a proxy of the former. Some examples are: (i.) perceptions of CSR (Stephen Brammer, Millington, & Rayton, 2007; Carmeli et al., 2007); (ii) perceived internal and/or external CSR (De Roeck & Delobbe, 2012; De Roeck, Marique,

Stinglhamber, & Swaen, 2013; Glavas & Godwin, 2013; Hameed, Riaz, Arain, & Farooq, 2016); (iii) CSR activities (Farooq, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2013; Grant et al., 2008; Jones, 2010; Peloza & Papania, 2008); (iv) CSR associations and/or participation (Kim et al., 2010; Mozes, Josman, & Yaniv, 2011); (v) perception of corporate citizenship (Evans, Davis, & Frink, 2011); (vi) socially responsible HRM system (Jie Shen & Benson, 2016; Jie Shen & Zhu, 2011); (vii) authentic and/or inauthentic CSR programs (McShane & Cunningham, 2012); (viii) corporate stakeholder responsibility (CStR) (El Akremi, Gond, Swaen, De Roeck, & Igalens, 2018); (ix) perceived organizational support toward the environment (POS-E) (Lamm, Tosti-Kharas, & King, 2015; Shen, Dumont, Deng, & Deng, 2016); and substantive/symbolic notion of CSR (Contreras-Pacheco, Talero-Sarmiento, & Camacho-Pinto, 2019; Donia, Ronen, Tretault-Sirsly, & Bonaccio, 2017; Donia, Tetrault Sirsly, & Ronen, 2017; Donia & Tretault-Sirsly, 2016)

It is correct to mention that theoretical saturation (Bowen, 2008) has been, in part, reached in some specific aspects that intervene in this topic. Some examples of that assumption are the direct association between CSR initiatives and OID, the notorious differences in employee perceptions between internal and external CSR and their influence over OID, and the influence of organizational reputation (or legitimacy) as a conditioning factor in the mentioned link. Nevertheless, as said before, knowledge about this link can be still expanded in many directions (He & Brown, 2013), In consequence, results obtained in this work can show that there are still attractive gaps, which can illuminate future research approaches:

- Since most of the context in which the studies were conducted belongs to field-works performed in developed countries, it is easily observable the lack of studies conducted in developing countries. Unusual deviant cases and particularities can be obtained from them (Horwitz & Budhwar, 2015). Their background is different, so is it the way they can perceive concepts like CSR and OID. Besides, the collective vision urges them to be very conscious about building up strong foundations in terms of their participation in the sustainable future of the world, due to both their populations (regarding the social issues) and also due to their environmental wealth. However, in this same line, it is needed to highlight the work carried out by professor Omer Farooq, who has been behind five studies conducted in Pakistan (Farooq, Farooq, & Jasimuddin, 2014; Farooq et al., 2013, 2014, 2017; Hameed et al., 2016).

- From the previous comment, it is evident that there are also exciting opportunities for performing inter-cultural comparisons that can reveal differences in perceptions due to cultural backgrounds and believes. The only attempt in this arena has been revealed in the work of Farooq et al. (2017), which implies a comparison between France and Pakistan.

- Concerning the methods carried out in empirical studies, it is visible that there is enough room for performing either qualitative or mixed-methods research in future projects. While for the former, the representation is done by the works of McShane & Cunningham (2012) and Rodrigo & Arenas (2008), for the latter, only the works of Grant et al. (2008), and Shen & Zhu (2011) can be mentioned as such. The important thing is that, even though there has been an interesting path road in the topic, many research questions can be addressed by the use of novel methodological approaches.

- In the same line, and leaving aside the work of Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun (2008), it is claimed that no work has been carried out for feeding practitioner-oriented records. And despite this phenomenon seems to be omnipresent in many fields of academia (perhaps due to the continuous pressure of publishing in well-ranked research-oriented journals), practitioners also need to be impacted by such insights to improve conditions of both employees and society in general.

- Even though, several works (Collier & Esteban, 2007; Contreras-Pacheco et al., 2019; Donia, Ronen, et al., 2017; Donia, Tetrault Sirsly, et al., 2017; Donia & Tretault-Sirsly, 2016; Glavas & Godwin, 2013; McShane & Cunningham, 2012) contemplates the tension between CSR discourse and CSR behavior, the inclusion of Greenwashing (or its conceptual root: Decoupling) is still a missing point into the literature reviewed. This tension can influence employees' self-definition (and identification), so a proper measurement tool has yet to be developed and operationalized to make it part of future theoretical models.

- Several comparisons in terms of gender, educational levels, job status, and even salary can be included in a future research agenda that bring up new insights about the real conditions of the mentioned link.

As a practical implication, this work can act as a resource for an adequate decision-making process, given the causality relationships that are defined and explained. Somehow, since OID can also be defined as a factor of several organizational outcomes (e.g., Cole & Bruch, 2006; Riketta, 2005; Van Dick et al., 2004), this compilation shows alternative explanations to the simplistic transactional logic of punishments and rewards on employees. At the same time, this review will provide a better comprehension of how employees can be managed in terms of the factors that are present in their self-definition.

Even though there are still some misunderstanding in defining the concepts of CSR and Corporate Sustainability (CS), both concepts are undoubtedly different (Van Marrewijk, 2003). A good definition for CS is given by Lo (2010), who stated that CS is "the integration of financial

benefit, environmental protection, and social responsibility into business operations and management." However, with the only exception of Lamm, Tosti-Kharas & King (2015), it is noted that despite the contributions addressed by this review, the concept and the meaning of CS have remained practically neglected in the literature. This fact can be appreciated, mainly when it is oriented as an individual-level analysis, and even more, unpenetrated when it is studied from the perspective of the tension between the organizational discourse and reality. The latter idea, together with the measurement of the CSR-OID interaction in an unexplored context, creates a truly and unique research opportunity, which can materialize an essential contribution to the field.

It is inevitable not noting that the main point in this discussion, is that in order to contribute to the literature through an identification–focused CSR-employee study, authors must be sure to demonstrate how their work uniquely contributes beyond those existing studies. Some insights have been given bellow. However, the door is open to innovate and, by "standing on giant's shoulders," to come up with new valuable and usable knowledge.

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