

Personal Values as A Catalyst for Corporate Social Entrepreneurship

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ABSTRACT. The literature acknowledges a distinction between immoral, amoral and moral management. This paper makes a case for the employee (at any level) as a moral agent, even though the paper begins by highlighting a body of evidence which suggests that individual moral agency is sacrificed at work and is compromised in deference to other pressures. This leads to a discussion about the notion of discretion and an examination of a separate, contrary body of literature which indicates that *some* individuals in corporations may use their discretion to behave in a socially entrepreneurial manner. My underlying assumption is that CSR isn't *solely* driven by economics and that it may also be championed as a result of a personal morality, inspired by employees' own socially oriented personal values. A conceptual framework is put forward and it is suggested that individuals may be categorized as Active or Frustrated Corporate Social Entrepreneurs; Conformists or Apathetics, distinguished by their individualistic or collectivist personal values. In a discussion of the nature of values, this paper highlights how values may act as drivers of our behavior and pays particular attention to the values of the entrepreneur, thereby linking the existing debate on moral agency with the field of corporate social responsibility.

KEY WORDS: Champions, discretion, entrepreneurship, corporate social entrepreneur (CSE), corporate social responsibility (CSR), moral agency, personal values, policy entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, social responsibility.

Corporate social irresponsibility

It seems that almost weekly, the media reports yet another example of corporate misdemeanor. Recent newsworthy examples are Microsoft, which was fined 497 million euros for anti-competitive practices (Anonymous, 2004) and recent bad publicity surrounding The Shell Oil company: firstly, for overstating their oil reserves (Hoyos, 2004) and secondly, regarding the suspected link between toxic emissions from their Motiva refinery in Port Arthur, Texas and the above average levels of respiratory disease in the surrounding population (BBC, 2004). The so-called 'Fat Cat' scandals continue, with the CEO of the U.K.'s supermarket chain Sainsbury's walking away with a bonus of £2.5 million, after being sacked for the company's poor performance (Parkin, 2005). These are topical examples of big business being seen to be acting irresponsibly, and, against a background of growing corporate power (Held, 2002; Hertz, 2001, Achbar et al., 2004).

It is events such as these that have led to calls for corporations to take their social responsibilities as seriously as they pursue their economic objectives (Carroll, 1979; Goodpaster, 1991; Klein, 2000; Stormer, 2003). Other scholars subscribe to the theory of the firm, whereby *all* activity has to be directed towards delivering shareholder value. In this regard, corporate social responsibility (CSR) may not be conceptualized as an efficient way to run a business, or, it may be handled via a public relations approach. Here, the focus of CSR is to manage stakeholder perceptions and the aim is for the corporation to be *seen* to be taking its social responsibilities seriously (Brown and Dacin, 1997; McWilliams and Siegel, 2001), regardless of whether this is actually occurring in practice. This latter view takes an instrumental,

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'means to an end' approach to CSR, where the emphasis is on corporate image management with stakeholders, purely for competitive advantage (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Jones, 1995). This differs from the former, multi-fiduciary approach to business ethics and CSR (Goodpaster, 1991), where the firm is regarded as having ethical responsibilities "...to do what's right and avoid harm...going beyond legal requirements..." (Trevino and Nelson, 2004, p. 32) which may be regarded as a different approach to capitalism. This approach emphasizes a discourse with all the firm's stakeholders, regarding what might constitute ethically correct corporate behavior, because it is regarded as the morally right thing to treat all stakeholders equally and not simply to include them for tactical reasons, due to a potential impact on the firm's commercial achievements. However, whilst the multi-fiduciary approach to CSR is the emphasis of this paper, it is clearly much more difficult for corporations than the tactical approach, as it involves engaging time and resources to "walk the talk", as opposed to engaging with CSR purely as a public relations tool. Furthermore, this higher level of commitment to CSR requires that *all employees* elect to take some personal moral responsibility for their contribution to all their firm's activities: in terms of their impact on people both within and outside of the corporation; directly and indirectly over and above their contribution to their firm's economic success. This difficulty is reflected in the management literature and is, arguably, compounded by the view that some managers may be amoral (Crane, 2000; Harris and Crane, 2002; Lovell, 2002a).

Indeed, one can't fail to sense a feeling of hopelessness, for example, at Archie Carroll's claim that "...the vast majority of managers are amoral" (Carroll, 1987, p. 12). Carroll made the distinction between the immoral, amoral and moral manager and argued for the development of a moral conscience and a "sense of moral obligation" amongst managers (Carroll, 1987, p. 14). So how might the decision-makers in a corporation who wish to embrace CSR in the normative, multi-fiduciary sense, begin this task? I would suggest that in order for this process to be effective, all employees are included and not just managers. Therefore, how would the members of a corporation, who wish to have social responsibility permeating their organizational activity, start such a process? A

starting point might be to consider the circumstances which may contribute to a climate of unethical behavior and social malpractice.

The myth of individual moral agency?

An amoral person may be morally mute. This is said to occur when an employee decides to keep quiet and not speak out in situations where they may disagree with circumstances at work that produce an ethical dilemma and when their ability to act as a moral agent is severely compromised, through fear of marginalization at work, or more serious consequences (Bird and Waters, 1989; Harris and Crane, 2002; Lovell, 2002a). Moral muteness was famously illustrated by social psychologists in the Stamford Prison Experiment, where the 'good' guards didn't report their more brutal colleagues to the researchers in charge of the experiment, their silence making them complicit in the unnecessarily bad treatment of the poor students who had been randomly selected as prisoners (Zimbardo et al., 2000) and has also been linked with group-think (Janis, 1982; MacLagan, 1998, p. 117). This desire to be seen to be "fitting in" with a prevailing amoral organizational culture has been evidenced by management researchers, who have identified the perceived "futility" of attempting to influence top management to operate in a socially responsible manner (Collins and Ganotis, 1973; Lincoln, et al., 1982; Lovell, 2002a), or, who have found that ethical arguments and moral discourse are "re-framed" into the more commonly accepted commercial language of business organizations (Catusus, et al., 1997; Crane, 2000; Crane, 2001; Desmond and Crane, 2004; Gabriel et al., 2000, chapter 5; Lovell, 2002b). It should come as no surprise to us, then, that the headline-grabbing examples of corporate misdeemeanor continue to emerge, if indeed corporations are largely populated by amoralized managers (Carroll, 1987) in a modern business world that "...places business needs above individual morality..." (Hendry, 2004, p. 181).

Moreover, this has been a criticism leveled at bureaucracy, accused of de-humanizing the workplace with an "...unhappy separation of reason and emotion, pleasure and duty...deemed to be inimical to individual liberty, personal responsibility and other 'enterprising' virtues..." (Du Gay, 2000, p. 66), which

has led the contemporary management theorists to their mantras of flexibility, team-working and empowerment. Hendry (2004) refers to Dalton's studies (1959) of American manufacturing firms in the 1940s and 1950s where the inefficiencies of bureaucratic structures frustrated managers to the extent that they had to resort to breaking the rules and being dishonest in order to get the job done. However, other managers began "...to advance their own interests against those of the organization" (Hendry, 2004, p. 64). This brings me to a basic assumption of this paper, that employees (management or otherwise) do not always act rationally in the interests of the shareholders of the company (Berle and Means, 1932; Boddy and Paton, 1998, p. 118; Eisenhardt, 1989). MacLagan cites Child "...who highlighted the arbitrary nature of managerial decisions and organizational strategy" (MacLagan, 1998, p.146): "...not only was organizational and strategic choice seldom determined by absolute commercial imperatives, but that it was arbitrary, perhaps reflecting the personal interests and whims of individual managers..." (MacLagan, 1998, p. 154). Now, the deployment of organizational politics at work to further one's career, or perceived status, is well documented (Bailey, 1977; Hickson 1990; Mayes and Allen, 1977). The difficulty, though, is in establishing whether those engaged in pursuing a personal agenda are acting solely to increase their own level of perceived power, or whether they actually believe that achieving their desired ends will be in the best interests of the organization (Martin, 2001, p. 871).

Indeed, in Eisenhardt's discussion of the conflict between shareholders and top executives, she concludes: "...much of organizational life, whether we like it or not, is based on self-interest" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 64). This supports Silverman's assertion that "There is a basic conflict between the needs of individuals and the goals of organizations" (Silverman, 1970, p. 77). Therefore if this is the case, then Hendry's view of a "bi-moral society", where "...we have two conflicting sets of guidelines for living..." Firstly, a "...traditional morality' of obligation and [secondly] a 'market morality' of self-interest..." (Hendry, 2004, p. 2) sounds plausible, implying that some people are driven by a sense of duty (whether to the firm, or to a wider society), whilst others may be driven by self-interest.

This may explain the existence of the 'whistle-blower', assuming that he/she is driven by a sense of

moral outrage and integrity (although there is also the possibility that the whistle blowing has been wholly or partly prompted by a desire for revenge due to personal disappointment). Another example is provided by those managers who championed (for example) green initiatives, without feeling the need to use commercial rhetoric (Crane, 2000). They may also be seen to be demonstrating a sense of duty and obligation to society, thereby indicating that moral muteness may not be wholly generalizable in every organizational context. I am drawing a distinction, here, between those who are motivated to "do the right thing": whether this means pursuing an economic; macro political (governmental); micro political (personal advancement) or social agenda. Therefore, the notion of employees not always conforming to the requirements of the firm and the application of *entrepreneurial discretion*, is not only important in an analysis of corporate wrongdoing (Kuratko and Goldsby, 2004), it is also relevant to the study of CSR (Hemingway and MacLagan, 2004).

[Managerial] moral discretion

The literature acknowledges that some managers may exercise moral discretion in the course of carrying out their work (Carroll, 1979; Child, 1973; Drumwright, 1994; MacLagan, 1991; Swanson, 1995):

Managers engage in discretionary decision-making behavior affecting the lives and well-being of others. Thus, they are involved in ethical decision-making. Their decisions and acts can produce tremendous social consequences, particularly in the realms of health, safety, and welfare of consumers, employees, and the community (Trevino, 1986, p. 601).

Citing Carroll (1979), Wood (1991) argued that managerial discretion is one of three key principles of CSR and referred to managers as "moral actors" within the organization. Furthermore, the concept of the moral actor was supported empirically by Drumwright, who identified managers, across a variety of business functions, who were initiating and championing environmentally motivated buying decisions (Drumwright, 1994). Or, the CSR change agents, who selected an initiative based on their "...personal interest and sphere of influence..." (Cramer, et al., 2004, p. 218). Even if they were

found to be minority players within the organizational arena (Crane, 2000; Harris and Crane, 2002), the activities of environmental champions has been well documented in the green literature (Dillon and Fischer, 1992; Elkington and Burke, 1989; Fineman and Clarke, 1996; Walley, 2000; Walley and Stubbs, 1999). My argument, though, is that such champions are likely to operate at a *variety of levels* within the organization: from manual workers or clerical staff to junior management through to directors. They may not *necessarily* be the most senior executives at the top of the organizational hierarchy setting the moral tone of the corporation. Indeed, a study of German managers observed a higher “social orientation” amongst lower level managers than middle managers (Marz, et al., 2003, p. 7).¹ Furthermore, these champions may not even have a high profile within the firm, unlike Drumwright’s ‘Policy Entrepreneurs’, working “...to put issues on the corporate agenda” (Drumwright, 1994, p. 4). Therefore, employees like these might be expected to operate either overtly or covertly as *corporate social entrepreneurs* (CSE) within the business context. This notion of a CSE, who identifies and progresses opportunity within a corporation for socially responsible activity, does not appear to have been considered in the entrepreneurial literature, although there have been calls for research to identify different types of entrepreneur (Ucbasaran, et al., 2001, p. 70). In the following section, the CSE is defined and placed in context and differentiated from the ‘regular’ entrepreneur; the intrapreneur; the policy entrepreneur and the public or social entrepreneur.

The corporate social entrepreneur

Entrepreneurial activity was defined by Low and MacMillan (1988) as “...the creation of new enterprise” (cited in Davidsson and Wiklund, 2001, p. 81) and is synonymous with “...the relentless pursuit... [and exploitation]...of opportunity” (Anonymous, 2001; Chapman, 2000, p. 98 and Ucbasaran, et al., 2001). The ‘regular’ entrepreneur has been most commonly associated with SME’s with regard to new business start ups and management buy-outs or buy-ins and, less flatteringly, since the high incidence of “dot.com” failures in the 1990’s, the term entrepreneur has, sometimes, been implicated with the high

rate of new business failure, due to the founders’ poor management skills, attributed to lack of business qualifications or business experience (Lussier, 1995; McCarthy, 2003; Pannell, et al., 1997; Perry, 2001).

Entrepreneurs were typically considered as business leaders until the 1980’s, when the term ‘Intrapreneur’ was coined (Lessem, 1986; Pinchot, 1985) and a wealth of literature on corporate entrepreneurship emerged (Burgelman, 1983; Copulsky and McNulty, 1974). The term intrapreneur and corporate entrepreneur are used synonymously and generally refer to corporate managers who exhibit entrepreneurial spirit in terms of idea generation, creativity and drive in the course of carrying out their work: marshalling resources and influencing and championing “...new ideas from development to complete profitable reality...” (Kuratko et al., 1990, p. 50). Intrapreneurship is associated with either new product development (Anonymous, 1988; Kolchin and Hyclak, 1987, p. 15) or “...the creation of semi-autonomous units within the existing organization...” (Kuratko et al., 1990, p. 50). This relatively new term reflected calls in the late 1970’s and 1980’s for managers to develop and support initiatives supported by a perceived need for flatter organizational structures and less bureaucracy within large organizations, in order to foster a corporate culture of innovation against a background of fierce competition from the Japanese and the so-called ‘Asian Tigers’ (Dent, 1999; Drucker, 1985; Kanter, 1985; Kotler and Fahey, 1982; Peters, 1980). The emergence of corporate entrepreneurship in the U.K. paralleled the growth of marketing, with the product or brand manager acting as a product advocate or product champion (Kotler, 1984, p. 722; Peters and Waterman, 1982, p. 9) and “...get[ting]...things done by influencing others” (Kotler, 1984, p. 740). However, neither the term entrepreneur nor intrapreneur tends to denote a social orientation (Cornwall and Naughton, 2003), unlike the terms social entrepreneur or public entrepreneur.

The social entrepreneur is regarded to have the vision and drive associated with the ‘regular’ entrepreneur. There appear to be two forms of social entrepreneurship:

“...the provision of public services in new and innovative ways and generally takes place under the aus-

pices of established social services, the second is a broader activity within which individuals set up new approaches to specific problems, within the social economy" (Hibbert, et al., 2002, p. 289).

The former refers to public entrepreneurship: "Through entrepreneurial risk-taking, public entrepreneurs generate creative policy solutions, redesign governmental programs and implement new management approaches to revitalize the public sector" (King and Roberts, 1992, p. 173). The latter form refers to 'social enterprise', that is, an evolutionary mode of social entrepreneurship which has traditionally been associated with the voluntary sector (Thompson, 2002) and more recently refers to "caring capitalism ... it relies on market forces to generate profits, which can then be directed to specific social issues" (Hibbert, et al., 2002, p. 289). Hence social entrepreneurship has developed to include for-profit in addition to not-for-profit enterprise (Social Enterprise Magazine Online, 2003), such as schemes to help the unemployed into work. However, the term social entrepreneurship has not generally been applied to those individuals who drive social responsibility within the private sector firm, even though Thompson acknowledged that "...social entrepreneurship is in evidence in many profit-seeking businesses..." (Thompson, 2002, p. 413) and corporate philanthropy has existed since the industrial revolution (Murray-Rust, 1995). Moreover, it is worth noting that due to the increasingly higher levels of corporate interest in CSR, the potential for a blurring of the boundaries between a social enterprise and a firm that has embraced CSR in the multi-fiduciary way as described in the introduction to this paper, becomes ever greater. How much investment is required to differentiate the social enterprise from the socially responsible corporation? How much profit is "enough"?

Moreover, it is confusing that public entrepreneurship and/or social enterprise is often referred to synonymously with policy entrepreneurship. For example, in her European study on health provision, De Leeuw identified that "...policy change is dependent on the presence and actions of social entrepreneurs" (De Leeuw, 1999, p. 268). Therefore, whilst "Policy is the expressed intention of an institution (government, corporation, volunteer group, etc.) to act strategically towards the attain-

ment of specified goals" (De Leeuw, 1999, p. 264), policy entrepreneurship involves a formalized agenda for the pursuit of social initiative, such as health care reform (Newhouse, 1995) or income support reform (Howard, 2001).

It may be that the difference between social and policy entrepreneurship may be an issue of the levels of power held between these two types of entrepreneur. The social entrepreneur is likely to be the driving force that follows through, once the policy has been agreed: such as the youth workers involved in increasing the participation of 13–19 year olds in education and training as a result of the U.K. government's White Paper, in 1999 (Ainley, et al., 2002, p. 381). Conversely, King and Roberts (1992) differentiated the policy entrepreneur (from the public entrepreneur) as someone who "worked outside the formal boundaries of the governmental system" (p. 173). However, they also found power as a differentiator between the two types of entrepreneur, although not in terms of the levels of power, but with regard to how that power was expressed. The policy entrepreneur "...consistently actualized their power in a collaborative manner, working *with* others rather than employing coercive tactics to overpower them" (King and Roberts, 1992, p. 185).

Furthermore, policy entrepreneurship may apply in any sphere, i.e., the public; private; or voluntary sectors. For example, Drumwright's policy entrepreneurs, who were almost evangelical in their pursuit of socially responsible buying, were described as "working to put issues on the corporate agenda" (Drumwright, 1994, p. 4). However, the corporate social entrepreneur, or CSE, is differentiated from the policy entrepreneur in that they may operate *regardless* of an organizational culture that is perceived by the organization's employees to be predisposed towards CSR and may even be acting almost subversively (Hemingway and MacLagan, 2004). More specifically, whilst it is "...personality characteristics and abilities" (Huefner and Hunt, 1994, p. 63) that differentiate any type of entrepreneur from a manager, administrator or bureaucrat: my argument is that it is the personal values of the individual that may make the difference between the private or public sector entrepreneur and the social entrepreneur (King and Roberts, 1992; Meyerson, 2001).

My proposition is that the championing of CSR depends upon a salient sense of personal responsi-

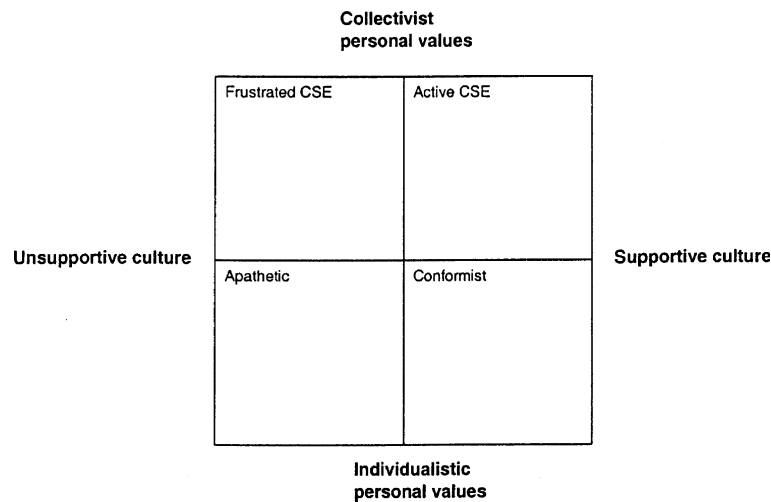


Figure 1. A typology of predispositions towards CSR.

bility or *collectivistic* sense of duty to society that is *valued* by the individual, as opposed to an *individualistic* orientation (England, 1978; Rokeach, 1979; Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987). This may also apply to social and policy entrepreneurs. Indeed, a strong sense of responsibility and need for control is noted later in this paper as a characteristic of 'regular' business entrepreneurs (see section on *entrepreneurial values*, below) and so I have coined the term Corporate Social Entrepreneur, to identify the individual who operates within the corporation in a socially entrepreneurial manner and is motivated by a social, as opposed to other agenda.

In Figure 1 two dimensions of the matrix plot the individual according to whether their values are individualistic or collectivistic (vertical axis: see section on personal values, for an explanation of this distinction between values) and whether the individual perceives that she or he is working in an environment that is either supportive or not supportive of CSR (horizontal axis). Thus, Figure 1 categorizes these employees as 'Active' or 'Frustrated' Corporate Social Entrepreneurs (CSE's) and 'Conformists' or 'Apathetics' (who are not CSE's). It is my assumption that it is the collectivist or group-oriented values that characterize the Corporate Social Entrepreneur.

The 'Active' Corporate Social Entrepreneur may be in a very senior position in the company, a leader, who is able to inspire a socially responsible culture: (Agle et al., 1999, p. 507; Lincoln et al., 1982; Posner

and Schmidt, 1992, p. 86) "...the management specifies the nature of the relationships which prevail and, thus, the norms which are applied" (Iribarne, 2003, p. 1300). Or, they will pursue a CSR agenda in an organizational culture that is predisposed towards CSR, regardless of their formally appointed role. For example, the environmental champions who operated either as formally appointed environmental managers, or as self-appointed change agents (Walley, 2000; Walley and Stubbs, 1999). This is supported in the literature which shows that the many domains of CSR (assuming a stakeholder approach) can be the result of championing by a few managers, due to their personal values and beliefs, despite the risks (in terms of commercial and subsequent personal outcomes) associated with this (Drumwright, 1994; Fineman and Clarke, 1996; Menon and Menon 1997; Swanson, 1995; Wood, 1991).

However, as stated above, socially responsible acts are not confined to management, for example, Corrin Rymer (not her real name), a secretary who worked in the operations department of a £1.2 bn turnover U.K. health products company and who was given a new role as Employee Relations Advisor, on the basis of her participative fundraising skills within the firm, which had raised £33.7 k for charity over a four year period (C.A. Hemingway, on-going empirical research). One might speculate whether Ed Strelley, a manager from Watson's (1994) ethnography of ZTC Ryland, a British telecommunications firm, who equated his managerial values with his Christian val-

ues, was a Corporate Social Entrepreneur. As Watson's research wasn't specifically concerned with CSR, one may only guess as to whether Strelley was involved in CSR and if so, whether or not he could be classed as either 'Active' or 'Frustrated', assuming, of course, his religious beliefs were a source of motivation towards social responsibility, on his part (see Angelidis and Ibrahim, 2004; Cornwall and Naughton, 2003; Lovell, 2002a, for examples of this).

The 'Frustrated' CSE is likely to be morally motivated, but due to the prevailing culture of the organization, has to place emphasis on the rational economic benefits of CSR to the firm. Examples were provided by the policy entrepreneurs identified in a large U.K. retail chain (Crane, 2000), or perhaps those managers who indicated in surveys that they would like to see their companies involved in socially responsible activity (Collins and Ganotis, 1973, p. 83; Lincoln et al., 1982, p. 484). Corporate social entrepreneurs in this category express a desire to be involved in CSR and may either remain morally mute and do nothing; develop opportunities for CSR but re-frame them into more commercially acceptable terms (Bird and Waters, 1989; Catusus, et al., 1997; Gabriel et al., 2000; Lovell, 2002); or, operate covertly "under the radar." In this latter case, the 'Frustrated' CSE is likely to be a non-conformist in the organizational context, acting subversively. They may perceive their activities as win-win: good for the corporation as well as the CSR cause; like the 'tempered radicals' who worked as change agents within their companies on issues such as race or gender, for example (Meyerson, 2001), or, they may enjoy "getting one over" on the corporation. Again, it is important to point out that the 'Frustrated' CSE is as likely to be a senior manager or director, as they are to be a shop floor worker. Regardless of their formal job role, the 'Frustrated' CSE may eventually become a whistleblower.²

In contrast, the 'Conformist' is likely to be a morally apathetic employee, with no innate inclination to use their discretion for socially responsible ends, regardless of a pro-CSR climate. The 'Conformist' may also be a fatalist, complying with requests to co-operate with CSR initiatives, only if they have been formally sanctioned by top management. Examples of 'Conformists' might include the lower level managers in Crane's social mission

companies (Crane 2000). The 'Conformist' may even be formally appointed to a socially responsible role, such as the pragmatic environmental managers who claimed that they would not be in their role if they were "idealists" (Catusus, et al., 1997, p. 202). However, 'Conformists' may not be classed as corporate social entrepreneurs, because their personal values have not driven them to initiate CSR of their own volition.

Finally, the 'Apathetic' is also not a CSE (along with the 'Conformist'); is unlikely to be interested in CSR and dismisses its value. As in the Harris and Crane (2002) study, this type of individual might perceive their company to be antagonistic towards CSR, or could be hostile themselves and may even attempt to block CSR initiatives, due to their perceived non-economic focus (Harris and Crane, 2002, p. 220). Even though the motivation for amorality is not the focus of this paper, I acknowledge that saboteurs of CSR could also emerge in a supportive culture. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the capacity for individuals to change their attitudes and behavior (see for example, Drumwright's "converts" and the culture change literature (Drumwright, 1994, p. 6; Lieberman, 1956): one might argue that the potential exists for *everyone* to become social entrepreneurs. Central to my argument, then, is a proposal for some empirical research, in order to determine the conditions under which this might be possible.

So what is the motivation of the Corporate Social Entrepreneur? The organizational behavior literature identifies that people are driven by a variety of needs at work: such as a sense of belonging (Mayo, 1949); the need for responsibility (McGregor, 1966); the need to achieve (McClelland et al., 1953) and so on. Clearly, whilst it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss motivation theory, the concept of self-actualization may be relevant in seeking an understanding of the CSE and it is worth noting that parallels have already been drawn between an individual's need for self-actualization and their level of moral development (MacLagan, 1998; Rokeach, 1979). In Kohlberg's terms, the CSE may be operating at either the 'conventional' level of morality, i.e., living up to what they see as society's expectations, or, they may have moved beyond this, to the more independently minded 'principled' stage of moral development (Kohlberg, 1969). But whilst

such a conceptualization using cognitive theory is clearly helpful in explaining how individuals might think about ethical dilemmas in their work, Kohlberg's cognitive theory of moral development still requires augmenting, in terms of establishing personality characteristics, such as ego strength (Trevino, 1986) or levels of assertiveness (MacLagan, 1998, p. 22) and it is these additional characteristics which need further investigation, if we are to understand what it is that distinguishes the CSE from other people. So whilst it has been noted elsewhere that decision-making in organizations may be influenced by a personal morality in addition to the official corporate objectives (Harris and Crane, 2002; Hemingway and MacLagan, 2004; Wood, 1991) and whilst Fritzche was more specific, claiming: "There appears to be agreement amongst most business ethics scholars that *personal values* [my italics] play a role in the ethical dimension of decision making" (Fritzche, 1995, p. 910), my argument is that insufficient attention has been given to the role of personal values in the application of entrepreneurial discretion, with regard to CSR.

Personal values

The following section reviews the literature from philosophy, psychology and management in order to define values and to determine their function. A central theme to emerge from the literature is that values operate at different levels and that personal values act as drivers of our behavior. However, uncertainty with regard to how our values are structured and the predominance of quantitative research into the study of personal values, leads me to conclude that a qualitative study would be helpful in gaining insight as to how personal values may be driving CSR and how they may impact on the process of CSR.

To say that a person has a value is to say that he has an enduring prescriptive or proscriptive belief that a specific mode of behavior or end-state of existence is preferred to an opposite mode of behavior or end-state. This belief transcends attitudes toward objects and toward situations; it is a standard that guides and determines action, attitudes toward objects and situations, ideology, presentations of self to others, evaluations, judgments, justifications, comparisons of self with others, and attempts to influence others. Values

serve as adjustive, ego-defensive, knowledge, and self-actualizing functions (Rokeach, 1973, p. 25).

The study of values has traditionally had its roots in philosophy as the study of axiology and can be traced back to the teachings of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in the form of virtue ethics (Hosmer, 2003; Jackson, 1996; O'Hear, 2000; Raz, 2003). Values have been described as "...things of the mind that are to do with the vision people have of 'the good life' for themselves and their fellows..." (Rescher, 1969, p. 5). Thus, Wright linked the concept of value with moral ideology, which he said was concerned with "...beliefs about what is wrong and the values that define the positive goals in life" (Wright, 1971, p. 201). This, then, introduces values as "standards of conduct" (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998, p. 356), formed as a result of reward, punishment, or deprivation; primarily from our parents (Williams, 1979; Wright, 1971), which may be modified or re-ordered as a result of our experience (Jacob et al., 1962; Rokeach, 1973). Their function, in motivating the individual to "...achieve satisfactions and avoid dissatisfactions..." (Rescher, 1969, p. 9) appears to be two-fold. Firstly, in defining our sense of self and ultimately, as an aid to our survival.

Human beings are said to be driven to re-inforce their sense of identity (Humphreys and Brown, 2002; Milton, 2004) and values function in this process of defining and re-defining our sense of self and enhancing our self-esteem (Milton, 2004; Rokeach, 1973; Watson, 1994; Wright, 1971). Moreover, this function involves our need to *validate* or confirm our values. Meglino and Ravlin cited the work of Kluckhohn (1951): "...any actions that are inconsistent with these values will result in feelings of guilt, shame, or self-depreciation...Thus; individuals will exhibit value-related behavior in private in order to avoid negative internal feelings" (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998, p. 356). This is not to suggest that we are necessarily consciously 'in touch' with what our values actually are. Indeed, it has been suggested that managers are unlikely to have articulated them (Sull and Houldner, 2005).

If we think about actions which are inconsistent with our values and the ensuing feelings of guilt, this ties in with Frankfurt's description of a 'Type B situation', whereby a second-order volition may produce pangs of conscience, even though it was not

powerful enough to override the first-order desire to act. However, our personal values are not to be confused with our desires. Our desires may be overruled by our behavior, for example, in a 'Type A situation', where we would blame our external circumstances for our behavior and feel that we had no choice but to act (Frankfurt, 1988, p. 48). Personal values are more deeply rooted and provide the *reason* for the first-order desire, i.e., the act, or, the reason for the second-order volition (our sense of "better judgment"). A desire, or want, is instrumental to our behavior and reflects our values in the same way as an attitude is also value expressive and is instrumental to an act, or the intention to act (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, p. 15). But it is the value which is the ultimate driver (Mele, 1995, chapter 9, pp. 144–176).

In addition to reinforcing our self image, the moral nature of values causes them to function "in the interests of society" (Rokeach, 1973, p. 9). This view was shared by Schwarz and Bilsky, who concluded that: "Values are cognitive representations of three types of universal human requirements: biologically based needs of the organism, social interactional requirements for interpersonal coordination, and social institutional demands for group welfare and survival..." (Schwarz and Bilsky, 1987, p. 551.) And so, it is this dual purpose to the function of values: that of enhancing the sense of self and also for the welfare of society; that is reflected in what ostensibly appears to be a dichotomy of personal values: a categorization which may be described as individualistic or collectivist.

England referred to values as being "individualistic" or "group oriented" (England, 1973, p. 84) and also "hard" (for example, aggressiveness, achievement, or competition) and "soft" values (for example, tolerance or compassion). This was supported by Rokeach, who described values as having either a "personal focus" or a "social focus" and also as "self-centred" or "society-centred" (Rokeach, 1973, p. 9). Meglino and Ravlin referred to "people with high concern for others" (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998, p. 375), i.e., a collectivistic orientation. Indeed, Schwartz and Bilsky draw upon the work of Hofstede in their discussion of individualistic and collectivist values, explaining how values such as *ambition*, or *pleasure*, could be described as serving an individualistic

interest, whereas *responsibility* or *helpfulness* may be seen as serving the collectivist interest. Other values may serve both types of interest, such as *wisdom* (Schwarz and Bilsky, 1987, p. 551). This is relevant to a discussion of the Corporate Social Entrepreneur, who might be expected to subscribe (at least in part) to some collectivist values that have driven him or her to champion social responsibility within the firm. Of course it is a matter of debate as to whether those with a collectivist orientation are driven by a genuine concern for others, or, whether the altruistic drive is purely a function of self-interest. However, altruism is a complex area and space does not permit its detailed discussion in this paper (see Baier, 1993; Wright, 1971, chapter 6). Nevertheless, it is apparent from the discussion above that not only do our values operate at different levels, in terms of individualist and collectivist interests, but they are also considered to be drivers of our behavior. Therefore an investigation of personal values is particularly relevant with regard to the study of entrepreneurship.

Values as drivers of behavior

Personal values have been acknowledged as components in the process of human perception (England 1967; Postman et al., 1948), due to their connection with social norms and emotions (Jacob et al., 1962). This highlights the importance of values as an integral facet of human decision-making. Indeed, there has been substantial empirical support to show the pivotal role of values in attitude formation and our subsequent behavior (Agle and Caldwell, 1999; Allport et al., 1960; England, 1967; Fritzsche, 1995; Lusk and Oliver, 1974; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Oliver, 1999; Rokeach, 1968, 1973; Wright, 1971). Moreover, Williams argued that "...values have cognitive, affective, or directional aspects... [which when]... fully conceptualized... become criteria for judgment, preference and choice" (Williams, 1979, p. 16), indicating that our personal values function as a heuristic device or decision-making shortcut: "People edit out, or rationalize into significance, that information which inhibits the application of their preferred values" (Fisher and Lovell, 2003, p. 113). Therefore senior

managers were observed to be mediating green stakeholder influence by applying their “interpretive frames” (Fineman and Clarke, 1996, p. 727) and also personal values were seen to operate as important determinants for top management in their choice of corporate strategy (Corman et al., 1988; Guth and Tagiuri, 1965; Olson and Currie, 1992).

This function of values as a catalyst for our behavior has also been observed via studies of the personal choices of respondents with regard to a wide variety of activities: such as choice of occupation, or the propensity to cheat. Empirical research has shown how some union leaders had different values to managers, whilst common sets of values were found amongst different groups of people: such as church attendees; students who cheated in examinations and anti-Semites (Rokeach 1973; Williams, 1979). Furthermore, predictions regarding both managers’ success at work and also their ethical behavior at work were found to be reliable (England, 1973).³ However, it is important to take a critical perspective and researchers have cautioned against overemphasizing the predictive nature of values and ignoring the influence of other determinants of behavior, such as environmental influences (England, 1967; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Williams 1979, p. 28). This implies that there are inherent epistemological; ontological and therefore methodological problems associated with the study of values. Furthermore, the scope for error may also be compounded if values operate at different levels.

Different levels of personal values

Agle and Caldwell critiqued much of the research into values in business that had been published between 1989 and 1999 and identified what they saw as confusion, as a result of the authors failing to distinguish between values that operate at different levels. Their framework identified these levels as individual, organizational, institutional, societal and global values (Agle and Caldwell, 1999). Of course the empirical work proposed in this paper will operate at the individual, or personal level. However, it is interesting, at this point, to draw a parallel between the confusion between the macro levels of values identified by Agle and Caldwell and also the potential for confusion already identified above, in

terms of values that operate within the micro or individual level, with regard to the identification of collectivist or individualist values and the possibility of a cross-over between these two categories of personal values. A third potential source of confusion may arise in distinguishing between the values expressed by the individual and those that actually drive behavior, i.e., “espoused” versus “in-use” values (Argyris and Schon, 1978).

For example, England’s (1978) ‘Value Framework’ differentiated between “conceived” or “expressed” values and “non-relevant” or “weak” values. Non-relevant or weak values “...would have little or no impact on behavior”, whilst conceived values “...may be translated from the intentional state into behavior”. Conceived values were further categorized into operative (high probability of being translated into actual behavior); intended (moderate probability) and adoptive values. Adoptive values were described as “...less a part of the personality structure of the individual and affect behavior largely because of situational factors” and so we might expect the ‘Conformist’ (from Figure 1) complying with CSR described above, to be acting as a result of his or her adoptive values. According to England’s model, all personal values are “potential values” (England, 1978, p. 36). Therefore, if “some values clearly dominate over others” (Guth and Tagiuri, 1965, p. 125) then this implies a hierarchy of values (Mele, 1995, p. 145) or “metaorder” (Williams, 1979, p. 25), with “dominant” values (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Wright, 1971) occupying a central or “core” space in the individual’s psyche (MacLagan, 1998, p. 97; Williams, 1979, p. 33). And so the challenge for the researcher of values is to establish which are the dominant values that drive behavior: which values act as a catalyst for the corporate social entrepreneur? As noted above, this implies considerable methodological difficulties.

The structure of values and implications for methodological approach

Meglino and Ravlin (1998) highlighted two major differences in the understanding of how values are structured. Firstly, the belief that values are hierarchically organized and traded off against each other (Rokeach, 1973, 1979; Schwarz and Bilsky, 1987)

and secondly an understanding that they exist independently and function as "...equal in their intensity" (England, 1967; Lusk and Oliver, 1974). This disparity is reflected in contrasting choices of research design, for example, when respondents are asked to either rate or rank lists of values (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998, p. 358).

The idea of a systematic ordering, or prioritizing of our values is reflected in the notion of a values system, which, according to some scholars, is comprised of two related sets of values. Whilst Rescher discussed our fundamental, "intrinsic" values (Rescher, 1969, p. 18), Rokeach called these "terminal values", or our ultimate, desired "end state of existence" values (Rokeach, 1968, p. 551), for example, *health*.⁴ The second set of values refers to what Rokeach called the "modes of conduct" values, i.e., the "instrumental values" (also concurring with the term used by Rescher) and these are the techniques that we use to achieve our long term, terminal goals (values), such as being *self-controlled*, or *responsible*. Whilst we possess thousands of attitudes, Rokeach estimated that we possess approximately eighteen terminal values and sixty to seventy instrumental values (Rokeach, 1973, p. 11). Clearly, this indicates an ontological position on the part of researchers in the values field to date: that values are a fixed entity, whereby "...reality exists independently of the observer, and hence the job of the scientist is merely to identify...this pre-existing reality" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002: 34). Therefore the dominance of quantitative methodological approaches in the study of personal values reflects a positivist epistemology, whereby "is possible to obtain hard, secure objective knowledge" (Carson et al., 2001, p. 6). Yet, this approach to the study of values denies the possibility of the value as socially constructed, thereby producing implications for the study of the personal values of the CSE, particularly, when it has already been noted that the positivist approach in the study of business ethics "...fails to get to grips fully with the issues of moral meaning..." (Crane, 2000, p. 32). Moreover, as I have already pointed out, due to the highly personal nature of values in terms of their centrality to our sense of identity, it may be argued that the traditional quantitative approach used in the study of personal values, lacks the required sensitivity needed to establish the nuances of respondents' meaning. As

has been observed already: "...it is very difficult to get down to the level of basic life values" (Guerrier and MacMillan, 1981, p. 32). If, as Guth and Tagiuri (1965) suggest, managers may be *interpreting* company strategy and matching company resources and opportunities according to their own values, then this emphasis on interpretation and meaning should surely be reflected in a qualitative approach to the research of personal values, which "...focuses on the ways that people make sense of the world especially through sharing their experiences with others via the medium of language" (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2002, p. 29). Therefore, it appears timely to supplement the traditional quantitative studies of personal values that have provided the framework for our understanding of the role of personal values to date, with some in-depth qualitative inquiry, which may highlight some similarities and differences between the values of the 'regular' entrepreneur and those of the CSE.

Entrepreneurial values

A review of research into the personality characteristics and values of the entrepreneur finds them to be "vastly different" from the personal values of ordinary managers (Fagenson, 1993) and has revealed some debate as to whether the personal values of male and female entrepreneurs are different (Fagenson, 1993; Olsen and Currie, 1992). However, some common themes emerge.

Entrepreneurs are characterized as creative and imaginative people, who are high in social competence (Baron, 2000) with a prevailing need for autonomy; freedom and independence in order to escape from "...organizational constraints limiting their potential" (Chapman, 2000, p. 99; Corman, et al., 1988; Fagenson, 1993; Longenecker et al., 1988 and Olson and Currie, 1992). Moreover, in my discussion of the corporate social entrepreneur above, I have already inferred that the CSE shares the regular entrepreneurs' drive to be in control and also surmised that they may possess a similar dominant sense of responsibility (Anonymous, 2001; Chapman, 2000; Corman et al., 1988 and Olson and Currie, 1992). It may also be seen from the literature, that entrepreneurs seek constant challenges, which may explain their well-known tendency towards opportunism (Anonymous, 2001;

Chapman, 2000 and Fagenson, 1993). However, their drive to accomplish appears to be linked to a need for personal fulfillment with regard to intellectual and professional goals, which, if achieved, gives the entrepreneur a sense of self-respect (Chapman, 2000; Fagenson, 1993 and Olson and Currie, 1992) and may be valued by her or him as more important than making money (Corman et al., 1988, Guerrier and MacMillan, 1981, p.26). Indeed, in the discussion above, I have already suggested a connection between the CSE and a need for self-actualization and so it is currently a matter for conjecture, whether an investigation into the personal values of the CSE would find any differences from the dominant values of the regular entrepreneur, such as more socially oriented and less egoistic values. Therefore, the interface between the values of the entrepreneur and the extent to which individuals may be categorized according to the typology in Figure 1, needs to be considered empirically in further research.

Conclusions

In this paper, I have been drawing from the literature to introduce the notion of a corporate social entrepreneur (CSE), who may identify opportunities for and/or champion socially responsible activity within the corporation, regardless of an organizational culture that is perceived to be pre-disposed towards CSR. Thus the CSE was differentiated from the business entrepreneur; the intrapreneur; the policy entrepreneur and the public or social entrepreneur. In addition, the importance of the role of personal values in decision-making and subsequent behavior was noted and so a framework for the analysis of pre-dispositions towards CSR was proposed, whereby individuals may be categorized as Active, Frustrated, Conformist or Apathetic (see Figure 1). Thus it was argued that a gap in the literature exists for a comparison of the personal values of the CSE with those of the regular entrepreneur. However, due to prevalence of research into personal values per se and also the insufficient attention given to the role that personal values play in the application of entrepreneurial discretion in the context of CSR, an argument was put forward for a qualitative approach to this problem and I argued that a qualitative approach

more fully addresses issues of construct validity, by attempting to uncover respondents' meaning and gain contextual insight.

Therefore, this paper represents a prelude to an on-going empirical research project which has been designed to investigate how personal values may or may not impact on the socially responsible activity demonstrated by corporate employees. The study comprises an in-depth case study of a leading U.K.-based multinational, identified as one of the world's top 100 most sustainable companies (Corporate Knights Inc. and Innovest Strategic Value Advisors Inc., 2005). Data gathering has already begun to address the questions: Why does CSR happen? How much of it is driven by a personal agenda and values? What are the main facilitators and barriers to particular CSR activities? Specific findings are likely to focus on the ways in which values impact upon managerial discretion in the exercise of CSR and the conditions under which these impacts might or might not be attempted and realised. Consequently, whilst it has been acknowledged, above, that our values are not a fixed entity and that they are re-ordered in different contexts (Jacob et al., 1962; Rokeach, 1973), we would not expect the respondents of this study to be consistently classified in one quadrant of the model in Figure 1, as a result of their expressed values: "We are dealing with empirical phenomena, and the world has an uncomfortable way of not permitting itself to be fitted into clean classifications" (March and Simon, 1958, p. 1). Hence the typology of pre-dispositions to CSR has not been constructed in order to test it as a "...true or false report on reality" (Silverman, 2001, p. 112). Instead, this research project takes a constructionist approach, whereby we would expect to access the "repertoire of narratives" (Gilbert and Mulkay, 1983) from within this particular context. Broader aims of the study will focus on enabling corporations to develop a more responsible organizational culture.

It may be noted that a consideration of the existence of the 'Frustrated' CSE is dissonant with the idea of a subordination of personal goals to those of the organization (Harrison, 1975, p. 130; Lincoln et al., 1982, p. 476) and makes one question whether (what may appear to be) the rather extreme notion of 'organization socialization', whereby organizations can modify the values of their members (Agle and Caldwell, 1999, p. 355), is generalizable in *every*

context.⁵ Therefore, whilst we may be uncomfortable with the idea of managers progressing a personal agenda concurrently with the organization's agenda, or even at times, replacing it: it may also be argued from the literature that this is inevitable. This may be compounded in countries where the psychological contract at work has changed so dramatically over the last thirty years, as a result of retrenchment and 'downsizing' (Littler and Innes, 2004); the requirement for longer working hours and the demise of the 'job for life', that notions of managerial loyalty and complete commitment to the firm, may, in some cases be out of date (Boddy and Paton, 1998, p. 218). In instances where individuals' levels of trust in their employer has been eroded, this may increase managers' propensity to do what they believe is "the right thing" by taking personal responsibility and pursuing a social agenda at work, or conversely, by looking after their own share options.

This is not to deny the existence of moral muteness, which was discussed at the beginning of this paper. What I am suggesting is that where it does take place or, even worse, where individuals are involved in corporate misdemeanor: that an investigation of the dominant personal values of those managers may contribute towards our understanding of a socially responsible corporate culture, although the inherent methodological difficulties in gathering data concerned with morality from managers was noted.

Notes

¹ For a contrasting view which argues that the adoption of a moral corporate culture has to be embraced by top management in order to be effective, see also Robin and Reidenbach, 1987; Agle et al., 1999.

² It should be noted that the notion of non-conformity when applied to the CSE refers to a tendency to disregard organizational constraints, as opposed to non-conformity to societal norms. As whistleblowers are protected by laws, such as the U.K.'s Public Interest Disclosure Act, this indicates that the whistleblower is a conformist with regard to societal norms.

³ In England's study (1973), nineteen out of twenty five predictions about how managers with certain values could be expected to behave at work, were supported by the data.

⁴ In Rokeach's Form D version of his Value survey (1973), the terminal value *happiness* was later replaced

by *health* in the form G version. Similarly, the instrumental value *cheerful* was replaced by *loyal*.

⁵ Indeed, organization socialization was not found to have taken place in a U.K. college of Higher Education, when its senior management attempted to change the status of the college to that of university status (Humphreys and Brown, 2002).

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