Working Paper Series

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
Models and Theories in Stakeholder Dialogue

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Working Paper No 06/45

November 2006
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Acknowledgement
This paper was originally prepared for the Corporate Responsibility Research Conference, 4-5 September 2006, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. We would like to thank the participants present at the conference for their helpful suggestions and comments.

ABSTRACT
The pharmaceutical sector, an industry already facing stiff challenges in the form of intensified competition and strategic consolidation, has increasingly become subject to a variety of other pressures. Significantly, in common with other large-scale businesses, pharmaceutical firms find themselves ‘invited’ to respond positively to the corporate ‘social’ responsibility (CSR) expectations of their stakeholders. Clearly, individual managers working within the pharmaceutical industry face significant dilemmas in relation to CSR in the form of closely connected questions relating to patient access to health treatment, patent protection and affordability. Part of the burden of addressing the demands of CSR is the need to engage effectively with a range of stakeholders. Individual managers in pharmaceutical companies have to confront the complicated task of choosing which stakeholder dialogue practices to adopt and why. This real-world management predicament runs parallel to an academic interest in CSR stakeholder dialogue theory and models. Accordingly, this paper contributes primarily to the academic debate by reviewing past attempts to research and theorise CSR and stakeholder dialogue, identifying gaps and weaknesses in the literature, and proposing a new analytical framework. However, ultimately the intention is to offer guidance to business managers. The model proposed here contains those factors considered most relevant for describing, analysing, and explaining CSR stakeholder dialogue practices prevalent among pharmaceutical companies. The longer term plan is to conduct comparative international research. It is envisaged that the model outlined here can be employed in future empirical research concerning stakeholder dialogue practices amongst UK and German pharmaceutical firms, with the additional application to other countries and industries in due course.
INTRODUCTION

Given the critical attention that ‘big business’ in general, and pharmaceutical companies in particular, have received from *inter alia* the media, Governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the pharmaceutical sector has increasingly come under pressure to respond to the challenge of corporate (social) responsibility (CSR). This trend is set against a background in which the industry is already under considerable strain arising from intensified competition and strategic consolidation. Clearly, CSR and the closely connected questions of access to health treatment, patent protection and affordability present major concerns for managers of pharmaceutical companies today. Part of the burden of addressing the demands of CSR is the need to engage effectively with a range of stakeholders. Individual managers in pharmaceutical companies have to confront the complicated task of choosing which stakeholder dialogue practices to adopt and why. This real-world management predicament runs parallel to an academic interest in CSR stakeholder dialogue theory and models.

To develop the points introduced above, it could be argued that the general public, whether rightly or wrongly, typically holds a negative perception of ‘big business’ (Acutt 2004:306; Clark 2000; Crane and Matten 2004:12; Deresky 2000:16; Greenfield 2004; Handy 2003:78; Hoertz Badaracco 1998; Kotler and Lee, 2005:221-2; Weiss 1998:4; Baker 2004a). One likely cause for the negative image associated with ‘big business’ is the repeated occurrence of certain high profile events, labelled by many as ‘scandals’. These events have involved some of the largest and, previously, most highly regarded organisations in the world including, for example, Enron, Arthur Andersen, Parmalat, Shell, Nestlé, Union Carbide and Nike (Ruggie 2003; O’Higgins 2005; Handy 2003). Their tainted image has often been fuelled by attention from the media and other stakeholders (Oxfam/VSO/Save the Children 2002; Clark 2000; Brammer and Pavelin 2004; Third World Network 2004; Weiss 1998:35; O’Riordan 2006). The pharmaceutical industry in particular has been criticised for a range of reasons including their allegedly excessive profit levels, use of patents, marketing expenditures, political lobbying, considerable investment requirement for new drug development, ‘creative accounting’, high price levels and price fixing, excessive executive salary levels, limited patient access to life saving/extending/enhancing drugs, animal testing, research methods and patient clinical trials, as well as environmental concerns (Haugh 2003; Quist-Arcton 2001; Get Ethical-Ethical Matters 2004; CSR Risk Mapping Initiative 2004; PriceWaterhouseCoopers 2006; Newsaic 2001).

Undoubtedly, for any business organisation business, how it is viewed and evaluated by stakeholders is likely to have a major impact on its interactions with them and is, therefore, a matter of significant managerial interest. However, for pharmaceutical companies in particular, who regularly face informed, critical, and active stakeholder attention from government, the media, from NGOs, and the public at large, the nature of their relationships and communications with stakeholders are especially important. Many of these stakeholder groups view, to varying degrees, health as a fundamental human right and the direct responsibility of a sector that makes high profits relative to other industries. At the same time, financial stakeholders and regulators continue to place more demands on financial performance and information requirements (O’Riordan 2006).

In summary, therefore, the pharmaceutical industry has been selected as the case study for this paper because it is deemed to be distinctive for a number of reasons. First, given the nature of its products (i.e. therapies for human consumption to enhance the quality of life, to cure illness and/or save lives) the industry operates in a highly regulated market place. Second, owing to the very high level of profits it makes and extreme concentration of power found in the industry, which has been described as having “reached staggering proportions” (Rifkin 2005:2). The third reason, as indicated above, is that the profits it makes are derived from what some have described as a basic human need: namely, human health (O’Riordan 2006).

In short, business in general, but the pharmaceutical industry in particular, has come under increasing pressure from its stakeholders to act responsibly and to engage effectively with stakeholders via various dialogue practices. ‘Stakeholder dialogue’ has come to be seen by some as part of the broader spectrum of socially responsible action and activities that should be undertaken by companies. Stakeholder theory (Freeman 1984) suggests the idea that investing time and other resources in addressing stakeholders’interests is a justifiable managerial activity. In this way stakeholder dialogue could be said to stand in stark contrast to the explicitly
profit-orientated focus held by businesses in the past, a view which invariably provided the basis for strategic planning and management approaches (Crane and Matten 2004:50). The task of developing effective CSR stakeholder dialogue strategies for individual business managers in general, but in particular in the pharmaceutical business, an industry that is often termed “sensitive”, is without doubt a major challenge (O’Riordan 2006).

Building on some initial exploratory empirical research conducted in 2005 (Fairbrass et al. 2005), this paper makes a timely contribution to the debate about CSR and stakeholder dialogue practices. The paper plays its part primarily by entering the academic debate but in also offering some practical guidance for business managers. To achieve these objectives, the paper reviews past attempts to research and theorise stakeholder dialogue, identifies gaps and weaknesses in previous literature, and proposes a diagram-type model as a refined prototype framework. The model proposed here contains those factors considered most relevant for describing, analysing, and explaining the CSR stakeholder dialogue practices of pharmaceutical companies, with the intention of conducting future comparative international research. It is envisaged that the model proposed here will be employed in carrying out empirical research concerning CSR and stakeholder dialogue practices amongst UK and German pharmaceutical firms. It is also intended to provide the foundations for further research encompassing a wider range of countries and industries.

The current paper aims to present a new framework that describes, refines, and explains CSR stakeholder dialogue within the context of the pharmaceutical industry. To achieve these aims, the paper selectively maps the literature encompassing key concepts, ideas, and theory, frameworks, and models relating to some purposively chosen areas specifically related to the topic. The aim is to survey contemporary debates and show the importance of the various factors relevant to the CSR stakeholder dialogue challenge. The paper is theoretical in design and based on desk research comprising a literature review and secondary empirical data. A ‘real world’ perspective concerning CSR stakeholder dialogue that is likely to underpin the decision making of company managers who actually work for pharmaceutical firms when they have to choose which CSR stakeholder dialogue policies and practices, also forms the basis for the academic debate presented here and leads to the formulation of refined theory and a new model CSR stakeholder dialogue (O’Riordan 2006).

The remainder of this paper is divided into three parts as follows. Section two serves to provide a rationale for a new model. Section three then explores those factors that are considered to be critical for explaining CSR stakeholder dialogue practices and thought to be essential to the new prototype model. Finally, section four concludes the paper.

CSR AND STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of the paper examines some of the key terms and concepts employed in the paper: namely, ‘corporate social responsibility’ (CSR) and ‘stakeholder dialogue’. We turn first to CSR.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Although it is not a new concept, CSR remains an emerging and elusive notion for academics and a contested issue for business managers and their stakeholders. Owing to the range of contrasting definitions, the concept of CSR has led to the emergence of a variety of practices (Freeman 1984; Crane and Matten 2004; Welford 2004; Habisch and Jonker 2005; Fairbrass et al 2005). In brief, the concept of CSR has evolved considerably since it first emerged in the 1950s (Carroll 1999; Freeman 1984:38; Carroll and Beiler 1977; Sturdivant 1977). Currently, there appears to be significant disagreement about what the term means, and how, or why it should be implemented (Welford 2004; Stigson 2002; O’Riordan 2006).

A number of specific factors may have been instrumental in generating the vast amount of CSR literature that has emerged over the last half a century. These include the topic’s relatively long research history during which many and varied theories, concepts, models, and themes have been developed (Carroll 1999; Welford 2004; Habisch and Jonker 2005; Fairbrass et al 2005). The ‘loaded nature’ of the topic has also given rise to considerable debate relating to two further issues. The first is a generally negative image concerning businesses and their actions in relation to society. Second, there appears to be some confusion relating to the questions about businesses in terms of their alleged responsibilities and/or obligations towards society (Freeman 1984; Crane and Matten 2004). In short, the range of definitions proffered for the term ‘CSR’ appears to
emerge out of the various perceptions held by individuals in relation to the question of business responsibility and obligation. These issues, in turn, arise out of a broader debate about the role of the business organisation in society (Deresky 2000; Stigson 2002; Woodward et al 2001; Maignan et al. 2002; Maignan and Ferrell 2003; Epstein and Roy 2001; Haugh 2003; Crane and Matten 2004:439). Finally, another factor that has generated so much discussion is the putative gap between rhetoric and reality concerning CSR policy and practice.

For the purposes of this paper we follow the lead of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and define CSR as an idea that includes the social (e.g., community programmes), the economic (e.g. employment) and the environmental (e.g. waste reduction) aspects of a businesses activities. Explicitly, the WBCSD defines CSR as a concept that embraces "...the integration of social and environmental values within a company's core business operations and [...] engagement with stakeholders to improve the well-being of society (WBCSD 2002)."

In fulfilling their CSR obligations, firms might be expected to engage with their stakeholders, an activity that may be labelled stakeholder dialogue, to determine what might be deemed appropriate business behaviour under each of the three headings (O’Riordan 2006). It is to the topic of "stakeholders" and "stakeholder dialogue" that the paper now turns.

Stakeholders and stakeholder dialogue
The term 'stakeholder(s)' is broad ranging in scope. It has been defined as meaning all those individuals and groups with a 'critical eye' on corporate actors (Bowmann-Larsen and Wiggen 2004). More neutrally, Freeman (1984:52) states that stakeholders are "groups and individuals who can affect or are affected by, the achievement of an organization's mission".

Stakeholders, acting either formally or informally, individually or collectively, are a key element in the firm's external environment that can positively or negatively affect the organisation (Murray and Vogel 1997:142). The diverse nature and range of actors inherently presents a problem for individual business managers who are searching for a clear working definition for stakeholder dialogue. The main challenge for businesses is the task of identifying to whom they are responsible, and how far that responsibility extends. Underpinning the difficulties of managing the relationship between a business and its stakeholders are the issues of:

- divergent and often conflicting expectations between stakeholders (Greenfield 2004; Deresky 2000; Bowmann-Larsen and Wiggen 2004; Murray and Vogel 1997; Stigson 2002; Castka et al 2004; Brammer and Pavelin 2004:706; Oxfam/VSO/Save the Children 2002; Baker 2004b; The Globalist 2004);
- contextual complexities (Daniels and Radebaugh 2001; Freeman 1984; Bowmann-Larsen and Wiggen 2004; CSR Risk Mapping Initiative 2004) that are further complicated by varying interpretations arising out of different geographical regions and cultures (Deresky 2000; Bowmann-Larsen and Wiggen 2004; Stigson 2002; Castka et al 2004; Woodward et al 2001; Maignan et al. 2002; Maignan and Ferrell 2003; Epstein and Roy 2001; Haugh 2003; Crane and Matten 2004:439; Baker 2004b);
- the challenge of identifying what might be considered to be ‘best practice’ with regard to CSR stakeholder dialogue strategy and then communicating this to stakeholders (Weiss 1998).

When attempting to manage these challenges, CSR stakeholder dialogue can be seen as a key vehicle for the "exchange" of CSR offerings between the firm and its stakeholders (Murray and Vogel 1997:142). This exchange is one in which the firm offers something of value (typically a social benefit or public service) to an important constituency and, in turn, anticipates receiving the approval and support of key individuals and/or socio-political groups in its environment (O’Riordan 2006).

The discussion immediately above indicates why it may be appropriate for managers to look to the firms’ constituencies and stakeholders when approaching strategic CSR planning activities (Murray and Vogel 1997:142), and how stakeholder dialogue plays a vital part in the development of CSR strategies.

Overview of Previous Relevant Analytical Frameworks
Having outlined in brief some of the basic issues arising from the terms and concepts used in this paper, we now turn to explore, in more detail,
some of the key contributions to the literature on CSR and stakeholder dialogue. Having conducted an extensive literature search and review, a number of key issues have been identified that are thought to be highly pertinent to the discussion of CSR and stakeholder dialogue practices. See Figure 1, which takes the form of a literature map that indicates the key factors identified. The factors that are seen to be highly significant in determining the stakeholder practices are a combination of context (the circumstances prevailing, the stakeholders themselves, and any specific events that might trigger a response), the obligations perceived to be important, and the response of the firm to the context and obligations identified.

To elaborate, ‘context’ is deemed to be a combination of circumstances (e.g. the size and power of a given firm) and the stakeholders (i.e. their power, types and relationships). The question of business responsibilities and obligations are seen to be a product of perceptions and challenges. Finally, the response element requires an examination of the actual CSR management practices.

To provide further detail, Figure 2 provides an overview of the literature reviewed and the frameworks, concepts, ideas, models, categorisations, and classifications that were encountered and considered to be useful for describing, analysing and explaining stakeholder dialogue behaviour. For clarification, the literature selected was deliberately purposive. The review was designed to elicit information about those models and frameworks that already exist, and how, where, when, and for what purpose they are deemed insufficient and weak or useful and beneficial to the research aims (O’Riordan 2006).

In summary, the frameworks identified in Figure 2 are deemed to be useful (to varying degrees) in so far as they serve a variety of purposes with regard to CSR and stakeholder dialogue practices. Drawing on the frameworks in Figure 2, five dimensions of corporate strategy in particular are thought to be critical to the success of the firm and useful in relating CSR policies, programmes and process to ‘value creation’. The dimensions include: centrality; specificity; reactivity; voluntarism; and visibility (Burke and Lodgson 1996:496-497). The approach suggested by Burke and Lodgson (1996:501) is comprehensive but the relationships between the elements could be better developed and the practices portrayed in more specific detail. In addition, Hofstede’s (1997) and Trompenaar’s (2004) work on culture is relevant. Ideas about people and events, theories about values, strategy alternatives, and response models are also deemed to be significant in the context of CSR and developing a model for stakeholder dialogue practices. Similarly, the new information on communication within CSR, as well as the wealth of literature on control indicators and managing goodwill, image and reputation, and clarification on the process of how to execute stakeholder analysis (Weiss 1998:33-44) are also valuable. However, each of these approaches is fragmented. None are sufficient in their own right in providing a comprehensive framework (O’Riordan 2006).

In short, we contend that the literature review reported above identifies not only gaps but also misconceptions. Further, it reveals a number of

**FIGURE 1: FACTORS INFLUENCING STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE PRACTICES**

**Factors Influencing SD Practices**

**CONTEXT**

- Circumstance
  - Pharmaceutical Industry
  - Size & power
  - Globalisation
  - Behaviour Record
- STEEPEL
  - Culture
  - Geography/Climate

**Stakeholders**

- Type
- Relationship
- Power

**Event**

- Crisis/Issue
- Type/Context & Timing

**OBLIGATION PERCEPTION**

- CSR
  - Perceptions on:
    - Responsibility
    - Obligation

**Challenges**

- Elusive Concept
- Varying & conflicting expectations

**RESPONSE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR SD Practices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices/Polices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image/Reputation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control/Measurement</td>
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Source: Authors
gaps in the existing research with regard to the pharmaceutical industry. Although critical media attention with regard to CSR and the pharmaceutical industry is widespread, and has increased recently, to date the academic research and literature is limited. It appears that data specifically showing how pharmaceutical companies engage in CSR stakeholder dialogue is largely absent in the literature. This paper begins to address some of the lacunae identified. New empirical and theoretical research using the new model proposed in this paper could potentially advance the existing debate.

More explicitly, gaps identified in the literature and previous research could be said to relate to the following issues:

- **Positioning in the external environment:** The literature suggests that a procedural context for managing the social environment has been largely ignored (Murray and Vogel 1997:142). Further, how pharmaceutical companies view their position in this greater external environment is not clear (Freeman 1984:40).

- **CSR practices:** The literature reveals that while there is much discussion about what companies should do, there is little data about or analysis of what companies are actually doing in practice (Business and Human Rights 2003; Blum-Kusterer and Hussain 2001:1).

- **Stakeholder prioritisation:** The different priorities demanded of pharmaceutical companies in the name of CSR by various stakeholders, and how decision-makers prioritise is not clearly discussed (Stigson 2002; Woodward et al 2001; Maignan et al. 2002; Maignan and Ferrell 2003; Clark 2000; Epstein and Roy 2001; Daniels and Radebaugh 2001:561; Crane and Matten 2004:439; Murray and Vogel 1997).

- **Stakeholder relationship type and issues:** Murray and Vogel (1997) state that the way the firm is viewed and evaluated by stakeholders underlies all subsequent interactions. Information is lacking on this topic for pharmaceutical companies.

- **Communication methods in stakeholder relationship:** The literature (Clark 2000:363...
and 372) reveals that effective communication methods are paramount but largely absent from the social responsibility literature.

Theoretical models are underdeveloped: The literature suggests that theoretical models are, as yet, underdeveloped. Further, the roles that corporate actors play in modern society is not fully understood (Cropanzano et al 2004:109; Saravanamuthu (2001:295). In particular, management models that address CSR activities and firm-stakeholder relationships are seen to be lacking (Murray and Vogel 1997:141).

Having conducted this critical literature review, and having identified the gaps and potential weaknesses in the literature, this paper now turns to propose an alternative model that might go some way to addressing the deficiencies identified above.

**ALTERNATIVE MODEL Review**

Calling in 1984 for a new conceptual framework, Freeman (1984:4-5) stated how local, national, and global issues and groups were having far-reaching impacts on organizations and causing turbulence (specifically increased levels and types of change) that the then available paradigms did not sufficiently address. Nearly twenty-five years later, such assertions are still relevant. The literature review section above suggested that managers require theory and practical help in engaging with the stakeholders, given that there are compelling reasons for taking external change into account when developing business strategy. The challenge for management remains to be able to separate the ‘real’ and ‘important’ changes from the ‘trivial’ in the external environment. Business managers also need to be able to analyse, prioritise, and engage with their stakeholders. Although much appears to have altered in business responses to the CSR challenge since the 1980’s, it might be argued that further modifications in how all stakeholders (including the company and individual managers) perceive the external and internal environment is required. In other words, the call for a new conceptual approach is still valid today. In summary, the review above highlighted the need for a more comprehensive model that could build on the many excellent frameworks reviewed but which might offer a more strategic, detailed, but inclusively broad-ranging framework (O’Riordan 2006).

Building on the literature review reported above, this paper now proceeds by presenting an alternative model concerning CSR/stakeholder dialogue practices. The purpose of the model is to identify those factors (and represent their linkages and relationships) that might be used to describe, analyse and explain stakeholder dialogue practices. The overall aim is to be able to identify and explain any differences that might emerge in the stakeholder dialogue practices of UK and German registered pharmaceutical companies (O’Riordan 2006).

**Model Description**

The proposed prototype ‘model’ is actually a series of three connected models. Each offers a theoretical approach based on a review of previous relevant literature. By developing this three-part framework, the aim is to satisfy two objectives. First, to offer a systematic description of the CSR landscape, including the associated processes and practices within it. Second, having carried out the survey above, to develop a framework for identifying and analysing the plausible explanatory circumstances or factors that influence the approach taken to CSR stakeholder dialogue in the pharmaceutical industry. The assumptions made build successively on each other. The three-part model (O’Riordan 2006) is based on the following assumptions, that:

1. The environment is made up of four interrelated but analytically distinct domains: Context; Events; Stakeholders; and Dialogue Practices (see Figure 3)
2. Each domain element can be analysed by alternative levels of perspective (Figure 4)
3. The process involves two phases and five distinct steps within them (Figure 5)

**The Model Explained**

The three separate models are designed to be seen as separate phases in the CSR stakeholder dialogue decision-making process. Firstly, the domains surrounding the business decision makers are portrayed in Figure 3. This serves as a checklist in order to highlight those factors that may be crucial in influencing CSR stakeholder dialogue practices. In summary, using an analogy from a strategic game of skill (namely, chess), Figure 3 represents the ‘chessboard’ and ‘chessmen’. Figure 4 represents the skill or the method for approaching which moves to make. Figure 5 represents the potential moves.
FIGURE 3: OVERVIEW OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL DOMAINS
Framework

Source: O’Riordan 2006

FIGURE 4: LEVELS OF PERSPECTIVE FOR ANALYSING THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL DOMAINS

Source: O’Riordan 2006

FIGURE 5: PHASES AND STEPS WITHIN THE CSR PROCESS

Source: O’Riordan 2006
The specific elements selected here were chosen for their merit in achieving a logical coverage of the broad-ranging breadth of topics that CSR and stakeholder dialogue decision-making encompass. Their selection is based on the two categories of influencing factors identified from the review of previous research that was described in detail in Figure 1. The element ‘stakeholder’ is a key focus of this paper. The element ‘management response’ incorporates the idea of strategic planning and action by management with regard to CSR stakeholder dialogue, as distinct from the role played by management as stakeholders; the element ‘context’ logically positions these two ‘players’ (i.e. stakeholders and management) within the environment or circumstances that they face. This dimension could include those factors highlighted in the literature review above, such as the political, historical, cultural, economic, and other environmental factors. More specifically the model could be used to incorporate the following detailed factors and their relationships that are considered relevant to stakeholder dialogue in CSR. For example, in Figure 6, the factors detailed in section a) relate to the ‘management response’ element box in Figure 3. Those in section b) relate to factors relevant at a sub-level to the ‘stakeholder’ element box in Figure 3. Those in section c) relate to the ‘context’ element box. For clarification, many of the model’s elements are often interdependent and not mutually exclusive.

As indicated above, Figure 3 consists of three components. The fourth element is the ‘event’ box. This allows for the possibility that despite the given context and the players involved, circumstances might change or be triggered by a specific event that is potentially always looming in the distance. The inclusion of this element allows for the incorporation of crisis and issue management planning, techniques, and tactics that might be considered crucial in proactive CSR stakeholder dialogue management. In summary, Figure 3 sets the scene for the CSR stakeholder dialogue management process (O’Riordan 2006).

To elaborate, stakeholder analysis along the lines of the series of steps proposed by Weiss (1998:33-4) is understood to be a necessary part of the ‘stakeholder’ element.

Figure 4 demonstrates how the elements in Figure 3 can be analysed at different levels. It thus extends the applicability of the overall framework by making it useful at varying levels of analysis, while simultaneously focusing attention on the necessity to choose and maintain the evaluation.

**FIGURE 6 DETAILED ISSUES FOR EXPLANATORY MODEL TO ADDRESS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanatory Model Question</th>
<th>Identification of and Relationship between the Factors</th>
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</table>
| What factors influence CSR stakeholder dialogue practices of pharmaceutical companies targeting stakeholders in the UK and Germany? | a. Pharmaceutical Decision-Makers Opinion regarding (e.g.):  
- Responsibility/Obligation  
- Risk/Image  
- Stakeholders’ expectations (see below)  
| b. Stakeholder Expectations based on (e.g.):  
- Internal Company Factors:  
  1. Size e.g. employees/sales/value  
  2. Success level e.g. profitability  
  3. Type of business/industry  
  4. External listing status  
  5. Activity undertaken  
  6. Business division  
  7. Product lines  
  8. Processes  
  9. Issue involved  
  10. Area e.g. third world  
  11. Aspect e.g. health  
  12. Affected e.g. poor people/children  
  13. Communication with Stakeholders  
  14. Business culture/ approach to stakeholders  
  15. Governance practices  
  16. CSR practices  
  17. Etc.  
| c. External/Contingent/Conditional Issues e.g.  
  1. PEST Climate  
  2. Media Influence  
  3. Effectiveness of Stakeholder Pressure  
  4. Competitor Activity  
  5. Etc. |

Source: Authors.
in order to concentrate on one level of perspective at a time. Finally, Figure 5 represents a sub-category of the "management response" element in Figure 3. Since one of the objectives in designing the model was to provide illumination for decision-makers undertaking CSR stakeholder dialogue business practices it was deemed useful to focus explicitly and in detail on this element. Figure 5 can be used to analyse the CSR process, the stages of which are adapted from those elements highlighted in the existing literature and frameworks as relevant as detailed in Section Two of this paper. The CSR process is considered to comprise two distinct phases: strategy development (which incorporates strategic analysis); and strategy implementation. The strategy development phase includes the following factors:

- values which drive the strategy
- alternatives which encompasses the various range of options available to decision-makers (e.g. using an analogy from chess, the pieces on the board that are available to be moved)
- and the strategy (or action) which is the ensuing result from the decisions taken in the two earlier steps of phase 1

The implementation phase marks the second stage two of the CSR process. It includes the factors:

- implement and control which involves the technical aspects of implementation at a more tactical level and the crucial step of control of the entire process (i.e. the feedback loop)
- Finally, the output step is included based on the rationale that a results orientated approach is beneficial to ensure an effective and efficient use of managerial resources

Application: Positioning in the External Environment

The literature review reveals that although the posture of the firm with respect to the greater external environment is critical to understanding the cultivation of corporate goodwill, a procedural context for managing the social environment has been largely ignored (Murray and Vogel 1997:142). The proposed model (specifically Figure 3) could be used as a graphic illustration to aid discussion to uncover how pharmaceutical decision-makers view their position in this greater external environment based on the ideas proposed by Freeman (1984:40) (O’Riordan 2006).

Application: CSR Practices

The literature review suggests that while considerable research effort has been directed at refining the content of corporate performance, relatively little empirical investigation has been undertaken to date on the processes (Blum-Kusterer and Hussain 2001:1). This issue is specifically addressed in Figure 6 where the model can serve to clarify the recognised information gap. Further, analysis of issues such as past CSR experience and response to specific events/situations is possible via the values and alternatives element in phase 1 of the CSR strategy development process outlined in Figure 5 (O’Riordan 2006).

Application: CSR Practices and Communication Strategies

The model clearly offers the potential for consideration of the dilemma of deciding which stakeholders should be a priority and how the choice is made (Figure 5). This addresses the challenge of pharmaceutical companies’ stakeholder relations identified in the literature as partly deriving from the contrasting priorities demanded from firms in the name of CSR by different stakeholders. Further, the literature revealed that although effective communication methods are recognised as paramount for the overall impact of managing corporate-stakeholder relationships, they are largely absent from social responsibility literature (Clark 2000:363). Thus the model includes communication as a key area in Figure 5 (O’Riordan 2006).

Application: To Counteract Existing Model Inadequacy

A review of previous literature suggests that models are, as yet, underdeveloped with regard to CSR and stakeholder dialogue (Cropanzano et al 2004:109; Saravanamuthu 2001:295; Murray and

Rationale for the model

Knox and Maklan (2004:510) citing Clarkson 1995, warn about the dangers of undertaking research that attempts to empirically validate inherently un-testable frameworks of social responsiveness rather than concentrating on how firms actually manage their stakeholders. With this in mind the following application serves as an illustration of how the model can contribute some insights in filling the gaps identified and aiding pharmaceutical managers to manage their CSR stakeholder dialogue relationships (O’Riordan 2006).
Vogel (1997:141). Freeman (1984:40) for example, argues that there is a need for conceptual schemata that analyse in an integrative fashion the external environmental forces (including the complex interconnections between economic and social forces). This clearly points to the need for a framework or model that might help to fill these gaps (O'Riordan 2006).

In summary, the model proposed here offers the basis for a systematic analysis of the CSR landscape, including the processes and practices associated with it. The result is a more comprehensive overview. Further, the framework proffered here provides a platform for identifying, considering, and analysing, the plausible explanatory circumstances or factors that influence the approach taken to CSR stakeholder dialogue in the pharmaceutical industry.

CONCLUSIONS
This fourth and final part of the paper summarises and concludes the discussion. The paper has argued that CSR and stakeholder dialogue has become a critical business activity. A comprehensive review of existing literature about CSR stakeholder dialogue and the pharmaceutical industry has formed the basis for a more extensive approach to the challenge facing business decision-makers of developing, implementing, and managing their CSR stakeholder dialogue strategies. In summary, having reviewed CSR literature and previous attempts to theorise stakeholder dialogue, the paper concludes that there are no simple solutions. From a general review of the substantial CSR and stakeholder dialogue literature a number of key themes and issues emerge. Concepts, terms, and labels such as CSR, stakeholders, and stakeholder dialogue remain contested to a degree. There is a lack of general consensus about how and why CSR activities may be beneficial to any given company (Welford 2004; Stigson 2002). In addition, the operating environment was pinpointed as a further complication, owing to its broad scope and complex composition containing a range of cultural, political and many other factors. The distinctive features of the pharmaceutical industry, coupled with its allegedly “sensitive”, controversial, and complex nature has been the topic of previous academic literature (Brammer and Pavelin 2004; Haugh 2003; Quist-Arcton 2001). The emergence of the pharmaceutical industry as a primary target for stakeholder pressure group interest groups (alongside other “sensitive” industries such as oil and chemicals) (Acutt et al 2004; Brammer and Pavelin 2004; Maignan and Ferrell 2003), as well as the evident challenge of managing stakeholder relationships for business decision-makers per se, combine to create an interesting, topical, and controversial theme for examination via academic research (O’Riordan 2006).

The literature review above has revealed the merits of existing models but also revealed gaps and weaknesses with regard to theory. This has provided a catalyst for the formulation of a new analytical tool in the form of a diagram-type model as presented above in this paper. In short, the literature review phase undertaken in drafting this paper, has signalled the need for systematic analysis in order to extract the most relevant factors and their relationships with regard to CSR and stakeholder dialogue. A new framework approach could then be developed that should provide illumination about how CSR stakeholder dialogue practices are developed, implemented, and, ultimately, managed in the pharmaceutical industry. Based on the premise that in the area of CSR problems will be inevitable, a key driving motivation for managers is the crucial practice of risk avoidance. In conclusion, as the business trend towards more responsible behaviour becomes more relevant and increasingly visible, the question about what CSR practices managers really undertake has never been more significant (O’Riordan 2006).

A review of previous literature specifically highlighted some of the key challenges that affect the firm-stakeholder relationship, as well as the factors underlying business practices and expectations. Attention was drawn to the nature of the challenge facing individual managers when attempting to act socially responsibly. In summary the most salient issues facing managers of pharmaceutical companies revolve around their potential role in addressing social problems (such as poor health, poverty, and access to medication). Further complications were identified in the form of the contextual aspects of culture, geography, history, political and social environments. Problems and gaps in existing knowledge were identified including the definitional problems surrounding the stakeholder concept and the often conflicting positions or expectations of stakeholders. It was suggested that difficulties were further compounded by a generally negative perception of business following the industry’s previous track record. The role of the media and NGOs as key stakeholders who wield the power to mount critical campaigns was noted. The paper has also raised questions
about how business decision-makers establish CSR priorities, manage their stakeholders, and develop particular strategies and tactics to effectively address CSR stakeholder dialogue. Given this focus, categories were identified to drive the identification of factors, elements, and frameworks that might be useful for inclusion in an explanatory model (O’Riordan 2006).

An assessment of existing models (in serving to address the challenges, frame the discussion, and generally add value) indicated that previous frameworks are useful for addressing fragmented or discrete questions, but inadequately address the CSR/Stakeholder Dialogue challenge in its entirety. Further, a review of existing theories revealed that, on balance, undertaking research and examining the results within the framework of existing theory should add robustness to the research findings. Finally, gaps in previous research clearly identified the need for further research. In short, these issues, challenges, and gaps drive the development of the new prototype model proposed here. In particular they provide the rationale for designing a new model that could more adequately capture, illustrate, and explain (via a conceptual schemata) the key external environmental forces affecting CSR stakeholder dialogue in the pharmaceutical industry including the complex interconnections between economic, political, social, and other forces in an integrative fashion (O’Riordan 2006).

The alternative model proposed in this paper attempts to throw light on the CSR stakeholder dialogue practices of the pharmaceutical industry by comprehensively linking external change drivers to a systematic analytical approach. In this way a platform for a CSR stakeholder dialogue decision-making process, emphasising the organisation-societal and stakeholder relationships and the image/reputation/goodwill strategy and communications dimension, could be established. This refined framework is designed to aid a structured and systematic CSR stakeholder dialogue decisions within the increasingly complex and uncertain context in which it takes place. The paper has explicitly shown how the model could represent an improvement on previous attempts to theorise CSR and stakeholder dialogue practices and has demonstrated how it can be used to fill the gaps identified in past research. In short, it is argued that the new prototype model could be particularly useful for its capacity to provide comprehensive framework that encompasses all aspects of the decision-making process (from the planning through to implementation). Simultaneously, however, it is argued that the model can be sufficiently specific to focus to permit a detailed examination of CSR decision and decision making processes.

This paper has highlighted some key points from an MRes dissertation in which the model was developed based on a more in-depth review and discussion than the one presented here. The resulting refined alternative model prototype proposal will be subsequently tested empirically (as part of the separate PhD thesis). The new model is designed to play a primary role in the data collection and analysis phase of the PhD, which adopts a case study approach in order to undertake comparative research using mixed methodologies and triangulation. Such a model, it is argued, has the potential to be applied to industrial sectors beyond the pharmaceutical industry. In this context this paper serves as an interim working document (O’Riordan 2006).
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