Special Issue - CSR and Circular Economy as a remedy for companies fighting systemic crises

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Special Issue

CSR and Circular Economy as a remedy for companies fighting systemic crises

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In a period when companies have to deal with the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (Koonin, 2020; McKibbin & Fernando, 2020), the question arises as to how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be a way out and a possibility for development and competitiveness in case of systemic crises (Hadj, 2020; Marín, Rubio, & de Maya, 2012; Vilanova, Lozano, & Arenas, 2009). This issue can be explored through three main research streams along the temporal dimension related to a potential crisis: ex-ante behaviors, in itinere behaviors, ex-post behaviors.

The first stream of research aims to investigate the companies' abilities to cope with the impact of a systemic crisis, while stressing their capacity of resilience. In this vein, attention should be paid to the effectiveness of risk management systems for responding appropriately to the crisis. Such effectiveness is influenced by difficulties in managing risks which are increasingly systemic in nature due to the strong interconnections between companies and society (Quarchioni e Trovarelli, 2013). Along these lines, one could explore whether and how CSR and/or the circular economy can help companies avoid systemic crises' effects by acting upon their capacity to understand risk interdependencies, as well as to withstand external shocks.

The second stream of research aims to investigate how socially responsible behaviors can be useful to alleviate the crisis' effects (such as the crisis from COVID-19) at least in the short period. In this perspective, companies can enhance virtuous behaviors towards both employees and customers (e.g. smart working for employees, contactless relationships with customers, etc.); they can undertake philanthropic projects (e.g. donations to hospitals, provision of essential medical supplies, etc.); they can promote specific business initiatives deemed as strategic in relation to the crisis (e.g. productive reconversion, production of essential goods, facilitated access to services, etc.).
Finally, the third stream of research is focused on business ethics and sustainable development on which the current crisis is once again shining a light. Specifically, more insights are needed to understand to which extent this crisis can affect companies’ implementation of CSR policies, actions, and tools, both in the positive and negative sense (Lamond et al., 2010; Kim & Li, 2014; Tencati, Perrini, & Pogutz, 2004; Yoon, Gürhan-Canli, & Schwarz, 2006). In this vein, studies could investigate possible organizational changes which could derive from the systemic crisis more or less directly. For instance, the current situation could push companies to rethink (and even radically change) their business models towards social responsibility and sustainable circular economy, thereby producing effects on the long term. In contrast, the current crisis could reinforce some negative effects such as those one produced by decreasing ‘real’ interactivity. More generally, companies could suffer the crisis rather than picking emerging opportunities.

In this regard, several topics can be identified that highlight the link between CSR and the crisis in the first place, and then the circular economy and the crisis. Addressing these topics can make the circular economy an opportunity in times of crisis and give rise to further research according to the above mentioned streams.

The call for paper of the European Journal of Social Impact and Circular Economy is aimed at advancing discussions on CSR social impact in times of crisis and on circular economy further. We welcome submissions from a wide range of theoretical, methodological and empirical approaches.

**Suggested topics for the EJSICE Special Issue include:**

- The role of CSR and related managerial tools in managing risks within the perspective of business
continuity in case of systemic crises.

- Stakeholder management as a way to foster resilience to systemic crises situations.
- The potential of CSR for developing organizational climate (internal culture, motivation, cohesion, etc.) which allows to better face exceptional periods, such as the current crisis.
- The significance of CSR for trust building on the part of investors aiming to support companies in periods of systemic crises.
- The role of socially-oriented companies (not-for-profit organizations, social enterprises, hybrid organizations, etc.) in overcoming systemic crises, such as the one from Covid-19.
- The opportunities to enhance social innovation during systemic crises.
- The role of institutional isomorphism mechanisms with reference to choices of social responsibility and in support of the circular economy in crises situations.
- The role of crisis in rethinking the function and features of social accounting and integrated reporting in support of CSR and circular economy.
- The systemic crisis as a means of driving the reshaping of companies’ identity (mission and vision), processes, roles, and accountability mechanisms.
- The ways in which business strategies can be improved through the CSR implementation in periods of crisis.
- The effects of crisis on the inclination of companies to adhere to sustainability and circular economy paradigms.
- The consequences of the current digital revolution due to the crisis from the perspective of CSR and the circular economy.

For Paper Publication Process & for more information about the journal, please refer to [http://www.ojs.unito.it/index.php/ejsice/about/submissions](http://www.ojs.unito.it/index.php/ejsice/about/submissions)

**Important dates and deadline:**
June 15th, 2020 submissions full abstract (about 2,000 words) or full paper

July 15th, 2020 revisions and acceptances

September 15th, 2020 second submission of revised paper

October 30th, 2020 publication

References


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