Towards a Dynamic Stakeholder Management framework for CSR Certifications

Manal El Abboubi
Associate Professor
Sup de Co La Rochelle
102 rue de Coureilles - Les Minimes
17024 La Rochelle Cedex 1
France

Annie CORNET
Full Professor
HEC Management School
University of Liege
7, Boulevard du Rectorat
4000 liège, Belgium

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the stakeholder involvement process in social certification projects. It aims to present a new general and realistic model for stakeholder involvement mechanisms. The abundant literature dealing with the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR), social certifications and stakeholder theory prompted us to analyse each concept before creating a new model. In fact, we conduct an in-depth literature review in order to understand the issue at hand. Then, the model of stakeholder involvement is presented taking into account the different theoretical approaches previously defined in the literature review.

Key words: Corporate social responsibility, stakeholder involvement, social certification, Stakeholder theory.

1. Introduction

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been extensively explored and several tools have been developed. Social certification is one of those tools. The effective application of social certification remains complex due to the challenges involved related to the certification process in general and to the search of legitimacy in particular. It also faces challenges that are specific to social certification, including in particular the issue of involving stakeholders in the certification project. Previous studies about CSR confirmed the relationship between social certification and stakeholders. They have led us to believe that those concepts are studied and used extensively. However, there are few studies that analyse the direct link between these three concepts.

In addition, while these concepts have become totally integrated into academic and professional literature, the same cannot be said about the understanding of the theoretical bases, which have remained at the "embryonic" stage of development (Donaldson and Preston, 1997). Throughout this paper, the main objective will be to understand the three interrelated concepts in order to identify their effects on stakeholder involvement for social certification. The remaining part of this article is structured as follows. In the first part, there is a state of the art guided by the research question which will define CSR and present the existing theoretical development. Then, the social certification will be introduced and explained in more depth as a tool promoting CSR .Third, the stakeholder concept will be introduced and typologies of management models will be presented. Finally our theoretical model will be discussed.

2. The concept of CSR

1. The genesis of the CSR concept

The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has experienced a profusion of conceptual and empirical developments throughout the world in recent years. Its success is based on a long and well-established history. In fact, since the beginning of the industrial era, European paternalism constituted the initial form of responsibility taken by organisations.

Social responsibility was developed by American authors with the concept of *Corporate Social Responsibility* in the 1950s, based on ethical and religious reasons. CSR is a concept embodied in a paternalistic vision of the relations between business and society. It occupied a significant place in the role of the capitalist enterprise. The Literature dealing with the CSR construct emphasized the American origin of the concept.

1.1. American origins

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been considered by a number of authors as a response to the conventional questioning by American society of the ideal link between individuals and institutions. Indeed, American public opinion has retained its prejudices in favour of the small business against the large company, the marketplace against bureaucracy and private solutions against the State (Pasquero, 2005). CSR is part of this American tradition and two main reasons have contributed towards it.

1.1.1. Ethical reasons

American thinking concerning the role of large corporations finds its origins in ethics. Ethics define and manage the rules relating to relationships between people. The main issue is about fighting immoral behaviour, without the constraint of official regulation, which is considered as restricting individual freedom, or generating adverse effects (Capron and Quairel-Lanoizelée, 2007). The ethical dimension is based on religious aspects on one hand (Epstein, 2002) and idealism on the other hand (Pasquero, 2005). The corporation is considered at the same level as individuals: a company is only perceived to be social when it is faithful to a firmly anchored ideal of loyalty towards the social players to whom it owes its success. This tradition takes its origins from American capitalism, and more particularly from the dominant Protestant doctrine.

1.1.2. Religious reasons

American religious preoccupations have influenced the development of CSR. Bowen (1953) used the expression *Corporate Social Responsibility* to promote the wishes of the evangelical church by giving itself a social doctrine with the same scope as the Catholic church (Capron and Quairel-Lanoizelée, 2007). At that time, CSR represented charitable acts that sought to remedy the shortcomings in the system and put abuses to the system right rather than prevent the damage caused by corporations.

1.2. European origins

Previous studies confirmed the American origins of the CSR concept. However, the earliest premises of CSR can be traced back to the 19th century in Europe, with the paternalistic model and organisational practices that ensued. In fact, the paternalistic model development in 19th century Europe bears some major similarities with modern-day CSR practices (Ballet et De Bry, 2002). Paternalistic practices also raised controversy regarding the hidden motivation behind them, as well as a number of debates between proponents and opponents. The biggest area of similarity lies in the principal foundation of the paternalistic model in its quest for balance between the yearning to preserve capitalism in the face of the rise of socialism and unionism and the desire of certain bosses to improve the living conditions of their workers. Paternalism began with initiatives by bosses who were innovative in the area of social protection. These practices were gradually taken over by the State to give legitimacy to the ideology of socialism. The paternalistic model like CSR includes practices designed to improve the living conditions of workers, such as a payment system based on “profit-sharing”; provident associations and social protection institutions (savings funds, emergency funds, retirement funds); low-rent accommodation for workers or access to home ownership; educational structures (schools, orphanages, subsidies for schooling); entertainment structures (creation and aid to various societies) and commercial structures (various businesses).

There were many movements that marked the development of paternalism in Europe in the 19th century. For instance, we can mention the emergence of legislation relating to the improvement of working conditions. Furthermore, the two international declarations: the guidelines set by the OECD[1] for multinational companies in 1976, then the tripartite declaration of the ILO[2] about multinational companies and their social policy in 1977, laid down the rules of conduct recommended for multinational companies. It is also worth mentioning the birth of the Social Report in France (1977).

[1] OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
[2] ILO: International Labour Organisation.

In 1980, the notion of the socially responsible company emerged in France, while the ethical offer (e.g. ethical funds, social responsible investments) re-emerged at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (Salmon, 2002). In the 1990s, initiatives in favour of CSR increased in number in the wake of disasters or scandals (Bhopal, 1984, Enron, 2001), international summits (Rio in 1992, Johannesburg in 2002), and public or private initiatives.

To conclude, regarding the various origins of CSR, there are two interpretative methods concerning the emergence of CSR that are:

• An "ethical" Anglo-Saxon approach based on ethics, pragmatic or religious foundations working on the ideal link between the individual and the institutions.

• A "societal" European approach based on paternalism that aims at improving living conditions for workers.

2. The various definitions of CSR

2.1. A semantic clarification

The term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) is an Anglo-American concept. The interpretation of each word often has numerous definitions and consequently numerous interpretations. Responsibility is one of the least stable notions in philosophy (Neuberg, 1997). The etymological term for "being responsible" stems from the Latin "respondere", which means "to answer for". So, being responsible is to be part of a dynamic, opening up to someone else or to a group: a person is responsible for something, responsible to someone to whom one must effectively report (Gomez, 2005). In addition to the term "responsibility", Gond and Mullenbach (2003) underline the confusion that may arise from the translation into French of the English term "social", which in French is covered by two terms, effectively meaning "social" and "societal". The first related to a company's workers, while the second refers to society as a whole (Toublan, 1995).

2.2. 1950 – 1970: The first conceptual developments

From the 1950s onwards, the question of a link between business and society began to occupy a significant place in debates due to the increased pressure from civil society on companies. During the 1970s, debate focused more on methods of integrating businesses into society by questioning the organisations' obligations and duties and the need to supervise private initiatives through authorities.

The 1950s saw intensive debate regarding social responsibility in the world of business. Chamberlain (1953) defines CSR in terms of actions that the manager and the unions plan to implement in some specific situations. These actions may have a direct link with workers' rights. This definition presents a "response mechanism" for which CSR can only be satisfied through a response to individual obligations and not to society in general. The way Davis (1960) sees it, CSR is all about "*decisions and actions taken for reasons other than the company's business or technical interests*". Eels and Walton (1961) add an ethical aspect that characterises relations between companies and society. In defining CSR, Eels and Walton (1961) return to "*the body of problems that appears when a company projects its shadow on the social scene, and the ethical principles that should rule between enterprise and societ*y". This question of ethics is reviewed in terms of soul by Backman (1975), who defines CSR in terms of objectives and reasons that give business a soul, rather than searching for economic performance. Until 1975, CSR meant the non-business sphere of the company and the moral principles underlying managerial action (Aggeri and Pezet, 2005).

2.3. Between 1970 and 1980: CSR and new business practices development

From the 1970s onwards, new actors appeared, bringing a change of paradigm focusing on organisational procedures, with a more managerial stance and less normative than previous research. In 1978, Frederick put forward the concept of the company in his definition of CSR, assuming more initiatives in managerial leadership – and consequently a greater level of pro-activeness. Other proactive models were developed by some authors, such as Sethi (1975), who presented three social behavioural stages:1) behaviour involves social obligations; 2) behaviour involves social responsibilities. These first two stages are conceptualised as organisational response mechanisms. 3) behaviour involves social responses. These responses are represented as anticipative and preventive actions within a proactive mechanism. In the same period, Preston and Post (1975) suggested replacing the principle of CSR with the principle of public responsibility, stipulating that "companies are responsible for the consequences associated with their primary involvement (the direct impact of their business) and secondary involvement (the social issues of their business).

The principle of public responsibility refers to a broader conceptualisation of the principles put forward and generally accepted, guiding and controlling actions that have a major impact on society. Later, in 1967, Klein (1967) tried to explain CSR in terms of internal and external organisational problems. Internal organisation problems include the rights of shareholders and workers. Under external problems, Klein (1967) includes problems relating to products and services and their impact on the community, as well as citizens' rights. Zenisek (1979) proposed a CSR model according to which CSR is designed to be the degree of adjustment between the expectations that society has of the business world on one hand, and managerial ethics on the other. This adjustment is made up of two components: 1) The first is behaviour-based: i.e. the adjustment between societal demands and the actions of an organisation. 2) The second is attitude-based and is the adjustment between societal demands and the ones deemed to be legitimate by managers. This represents the ideological aspect of the organisation's ethics and relates to questioning who or not is responsible in terms of organisational behaviour.
The 1980s saw the development of new concepts relating to CSR, in particular corporate social performance (CSP) (Carroll 1979, Carroll, 1991, Wood, 1991a, Swanson, 1995, Carroll 1999, Swanson, 1999). Following previous research, Carroll defined CSP based on 3 dimensions: 1) with reference to CSR principles; 2) in terms of evoking response methods and deployment processes; and 3) with regard to the dimension relating to the "social issues" facing the company (Carroll, 1979).

2.4. New concepts from the 1990s

Towards the end of the 1990s, new laws appeared, regarding social accounting, such as the French law on the new NRE[3] business regulations, as well as the emergence of a dynamic by bodies dedicated to ranking socially responsible companies (rating agencies, index and ethical funds). In 2001, the European Commission, in conjunction with the Employment and Social Affairs department, ran a workgroup bringing together a range of different partners (businesses, government departments of member countries, consumer associations and NGOs) to produce a Green Paper on CSR. The European Commission (2001, p.8) defined CSR as: *"the voluntary integration of social and ecological concerns of companies with their commercial activities and their relations with their stakeholders"*. According to the European Commission, actions that are socially responsible meet two criteria: voluntarism (the desire to go beyond regulations and the search for profit) and the incorporation of external bodies (relations with stakeholders).

In a more general view, Dupuis and Lebas (2005) provided a more specific definition, which stated that *"CSR asks managers to shift the purpose of their company away from the level of solely seeking profit towards more far-reaching and complex strategies requiring major investments in relations with the social actors and scrupulous compliance with environmental protection standards. Companies should include a "triple bottom line" in their concerns and operations: the quest for business performance, supplemented by the repercussions of the company's activities on the socio-economic, cultural, political and natural environment".*

Other contemporary authors have mentioned societal responsibility. Alberola and Richez-Battesti (2005) also refer to the voluntary criterion of incorporating social and environmental preoccupations into the management of the company. These preoccupations may be linked to business activities or to relations with all internal actors. However, they may also be associated with any actors outside the scope of the company who may be affected by its operations. Alberola and Richez-Battesti (2005) prefer to talk about societal responsibility to include both internal and external stakeholders.

As part of a more in-depth development, Gendron (2001) defined four dimensions on which CSR is based: 1) ***practices*** that are often represented in the form of voluntary initiatives. They are used to evaluate the ability of companies to take on responsibilities that go beyond the requirements of the law. 2) ***discourse*** which becomes the corollary of a new role for the company in a globalised economy (Champion 2003). Bartha (1990) suggests that a good image supported by the proper discourse of CSR makes civil society more disposed to enterprise and provides managers with room to manoeuvre in pursuing their activities. 3) The third dimension of CSR is represented in the form of ***questioning***: This dimension examines the means of making enterprise socially responsible and its role in a post-fordist scenario, which opens up debate on the various types of regulation that might be envisaged in the context of globalisation. 4) ***new regulations***: these are CSR tools, such as codes of conduct, standards and social certification.

[3]NRE: Nouvelles Régulations Economiques = New Business Regulations.

By adopting systems of social or environmental certification, a business is able to respond to the expectations of several stakeholders – in particular investors, customers and pressure groups (Bouslah et al, 2006). Certifications as well as codes of conduct may become a regulatory system as they provide the market with indicators on the social performance of companies. As a summary for this first part, we present figure 1 below which brings together the various approaches of CSR related in the literature.

Figures

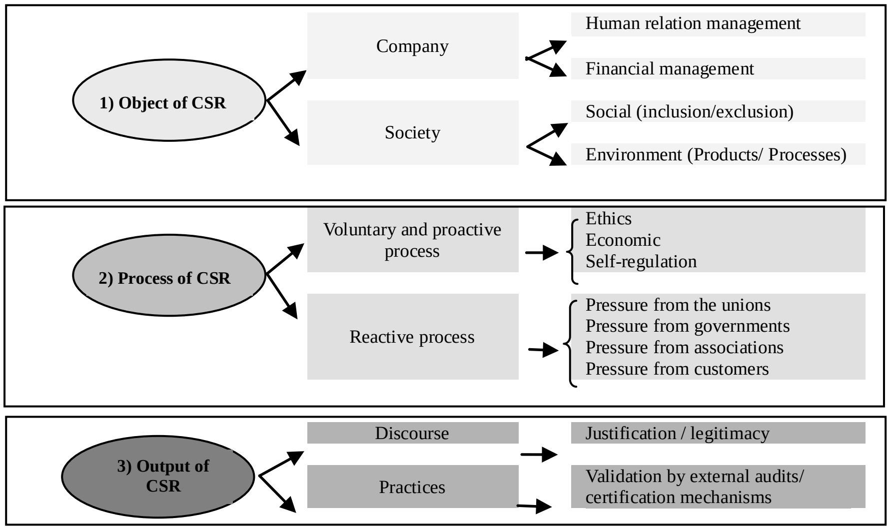

Figure 1: An integrating model of various CSR approaches

As a conclusion for this first part, the various definitions, often admitted for CSR, pivot between voluntarism and exceeding compliance with regulatory obligations. The regulatory potential of CSR is different for each of the various dimensions put forward by the various authors and hence raises different issues. Beyond discourse and private initiatives, the analysis of the ability to regulate CSR through social certification was chosen. This certainly constitutes an informative tool for individual and institutional consumers (Bouslah et al, 2006), however, it may be more profitable to have a more in-depth analysis when using such a tool.

3. Social certification: a new regulation model

Through their social commitment, some companies seek to preserve their reputation or their products or brands by implementing some measures to their production or marketing processes (Diller, 1999). This desire for justification is the origin of many initiatives in the area of codes of conduct and social labels that demonstrate compliance with the work code. Consequently, a proliferation of tools to promote working standards has emerged. These represent the main tools used by companies either to respond to social pressures to comply with work standards, or to emphasise the social commitment. Boiral (2003) distinguishes four main tools, based on their application level and their auditing mechanism as presented in the figure 2:

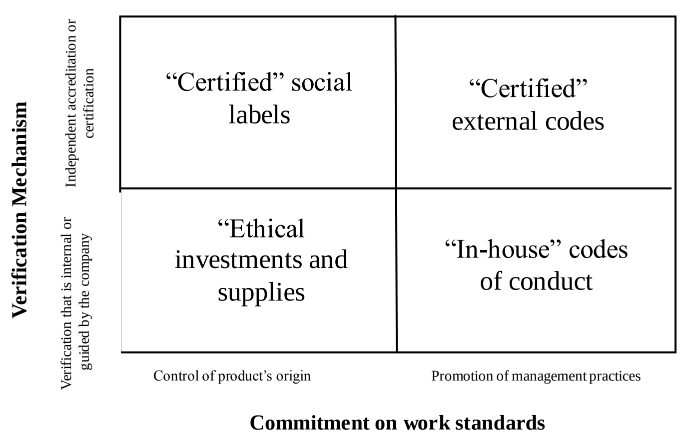

Figure 2: Main tools for promoting work standards (by Boiral, 2003)

Using this model, tools based on certification can be designed around "products" such as social labels, or around "business practices" such as external codes. Contrary to "in-house codes", which remain largely associated with public relations campaigns (Verna and Bernard, 1996, Diller, 1999), certified external codes warn of the risks associated with conflicts of interest and verification processes (Boiral, 2003). Like certified social labels, external codes stem from a need for objectivity in establishing the criteria, as well as more extensive recognition (Boiral, 2003). Among the potential benefits in the area of improving working conditions, certifications are an indicator of social performance. They should have the potential to constitute an information tool that influences the client / consumer (Bouslah et al, 2006). As a result, the adoption of a certification system could meet the expectations of several stakeholders, in particular investors, customers and pressure groups. However, standardisation raises some significant issues. Some remain common to all certification processes, especially for ISO, while others are more specific to CSR. In the following section, each type of issue is evaluated in more detail.

4. The challenges with all certification process (ISO 14001 / ISO 9000)

The demand for new practices in the area of environmental management and quality management is not always the result of a deliberate will on the part of the organisation to demonstrate its commitments. Taking a neo-institutional approach suggests that companies are seeking legitimacy and recognition from the various stakeholders (Dacin, Goodstein and Scott, 2002), which justifies their action in terms of certification. Alongside the quest for legitimacy, the development of ISO 14001 and ISO 9000 certifications may reflect a form of *coercive isomorphism* according to which organisations conform independently to the intrinsic value of standards (Boiral, 2006). This is due fundamentally to the regulatory and institutional pressures that govern environmental and quality management in organisations, as well as pressure from certain external stakeholders: customers, citizens, environmental groups, local government, etc. The logic of institutional conformity raised by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) may also be societal and relational in nature and hence justify the development of ISO certifications.

The issue of ISO certifications may also be linked to an organisational conformism that applies across the bureaucratisation that may harm the company's managerial efficiency. More particularly, in the implementation of ISO 14001 certification, the bureaucratisation phenomenon is being implied more and more acutely in a highly formalised system of management which is targeted by the audit (Casisco, 1996; Boiral, 1998). In fact, the introduction of ISO certifications encourages companies to comply scrupulously with formalised management procedures, which may reinforce organisational conformism and encourage bureaucratisation, rather than making procedures more flexible. With the use of the ISO 9000 benchmark, organisations have begun to see a functionalist paradigm through which organisational behaviour is involved in a prescriptive and procedural manner (Mouritsen, Ernst and Jorgensen, 2000). The operating methods imposed by ISO 9000, in terms of a mechanical and systematic vision, contribute towards developing a functionalist paradigm. The main issue raised by this paradigm is ignorance of subjectivity, contradictions and conflicts among individuals and their replacement by the formal rigour of management practices. Indeed, the principle of *"Write what you do and do what you write"* is a good expression of the management's rationalist concept encouraged by ISO certifications (Cochoy, Garel and Terssac, 1998).

5. Specific challenges for social certification

The processes of social certification do not escape the common problems encountered in standards procedures. Faced with a number of specific features, social standardisation has its own issues. Boiral (2003) underlines the two following specific issues: the verification system and the CSR expansion. The author highlights the important place given to verification systems and the dissemination of information used to influence social certification processes. In fact, the application of codes of conduct and certified labels is still flexible, regardless of the way used for disseminating information about CSR questions. It should also be noted that the audit subject questions are socially-oriented, whereas the time granted to verification does not always allow for much in-depth analysis. Elsewhere, Mispelbom (1995) questions the neutrality of certification bodies insofar as they may be accredited to issue certifications, but they are also selected and paid by the companies being audited. This means that they play the role of auditor and service-provider – a dual role that places their neutrality in doubt.

The second issue concerns the uncontrolled expansion of CSR tools over the world. The experience of ISO 14001 certifications related by Peglau (2002) displays the high level of disparity in the geographic distribution of these certifications.

Consequently, geographic zones may be penalised as soon as the selection of providers starts following the movement of ISO certifications. The penalisation of certain regions intensifies when it is easier to obtain CSR tools in developed countries because the national regulations already cover a good number of basic agreements on the fundamental rights of workers.

In addition, one of the major questions raised in dealing with the problems relating to social certification is stakeholder involvement. In actual fact, a number of CSR standardisation tools for CSR require active collaboration with stakeholders. The collaboration may vary from simple information into an active involvement in organisational projects, which may handicap the way the company operates in the absence of a genuine strategy of enrolment and mobilisation. However, the ambiguity that surrounds the stakeholder concept does not facilitate its management. Since its first conceptual developments in the 1980s with Freeman, the concept has continued to expand its scope, which does not simplify its integration into part of management models, such as social certifications. In part 4 the stakeholders' concept and its integration into social certification processes is examined in more detail.

6.The Stakeholder concept

For the past fifteen years or so, stakeholder theory has been the subject of many conceptual developments. The notion of stakeholders was first put forward as a strategy before becoming an essential element of corporate governance. before studying a semantic clarification; the genesis of the "stakeholder' concept is analysed in order to explain the various fields around the concept. Second the various typologies listed in the literature are discussed before concluding with a stakeholder management model.

7. The genesis of the Stakeholder concept

The stakeholder concept originated from the word "stake" (interest). It stems from a deliberate will to indicate that other parties have an interest in the enterprise. The term "Stakeholder" has several meanings according to academics and practitioners. (Phillips and Freeman, 2003). The development of the term "Stakeholder" began in the 1960s with the research carried out by Ansoff (1968), who considered that an enterprise is obliged to adjust its objectives to balance out the satisfaction of stakeholders. From the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, the term stakeholders began to occupy a significant place in the literature (Charan and Freeman, 1979; Sturdivant, 1979). These authors argued in favour of bringing together several schools of thought with a view to the development of a management theory that would enable senior managers to formulate and put in place corporate strategies in turbulent environments (Freeman and Reed, 1983).

The stakeholder concept really gained a foothold in management literature with the publication in 1984 of Freeman's work *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder approach*, which marked a first stage in conceptual construction by being anchored strategically in the management of stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). Following the transformation of the institutional environment and the conditions for doing business, Freeman thought it important to modify the theory of enterprise: *"in the same way as the separating out of the jobs of owners/ managers/ employees required a rethink of the concepts of control and private ownership, as analysed by Berle and Means (1932), the emergence of numerous stakeholder groups and new strategic issues creates a need to rethink our representation of the company".*

a. Stakeholders: a conceptual clarification

In 1963, the Stanford Research Institute introduced the original definition of stakeholders by designating the groups that are indispensable to the organisation's survival. In this same train of thought, Rhenman and Stymne (1965) insist on the variable of "dependence" for survival by qualifying stakeholders as: 1) the groups that depend on the company to achieve their own goals. 2) the company depends on its groups to guarantee its own existence. In 1984, Freeman's work on *Strategic Management, A Stakeholder Approach* marked the first stage in conceptual construction. In doing so, Freeman defined stakeholders as "any group or individual who can influence or be affected by the organisation achieving its goals". With this in mind, the organisation occupies the centre of the diagram, linked to its stakeholders by spokes.

The first characteristic of the stakeholder approach put forward by Freeman is that it rests on a relational representation of the firm. In other words, the company enters into a relationship with the various stakeholders, whether voluntarily or not.

Freeman and Evan (1990) suggest that some relationships imply a form of "contract" between the stakeholders and the organisation. This notion of contract is similar to the one put forward for the agency theory (Jensen and Meckling, 1972) or for the contractual theory of the firm (Williamson, 1985). The nature of contracts remains very varied. Hill and Jones (1992) revert to a relationship of legitimacy and define stakeholders as any participant with a legitimate right over the company. The question of legitimacy was raised by Donaldson and Preston (1997) who qualified stakeholders by their legitimate interest in procedures or the substantive aspects of the organisation's activity. Consequently, legitimate stakeholders are identified by the existence of a contract with the organisation, whether implicit or explicit. This is close to Clarkson's definition (1995), which refers to persons or groups who, voluntarily or not, make a claim on part of the ownership, rights or interests in the company and its business. Clarkson's definition (1995) enhances the debate by adding the notion of "involuntary", which makes it possible to include non-active stakeholders in the claims on rights of interests in the organisation. Clarkson (1995) also adds that those stakeholders whose stakes or rights are similar should be grouped into similar categories. The specific feature of Clarkson's definition (1995) is that it refers to the notion of a stake and a gamble to justify the distinction between voluntary and involuntary stakeholders. To raise the debate, Mitchell & al (1997) define three variables that can identify a stakeholder. This involves possessing one or more of these three attributes: power, legitimacy and urgency. There is also a wider view of the stakeholders' notion brought in by Sternberg (2001), who suggests that anyone can claim to have an interest in an organisation.

b. Stakeholder typologies

Freeman (1984) aims his ideas at the company's real strategic issue and suggests making a distinction between "*important*" and "*unimportant*" stakeholders. Clarkson (1995) proposes refining this ranking still further by distinguishing "*primary*" stakeholders (whose participation is required for the company's survival) and "*secondary*" stakeholders (whose relationship is not considered as vital for the company). Secondary stakeholders may have a potential influence (in the event of boycotts for example) and may emerge rapidly as players capable of influencing the company's performance (Mercier, 2001). Clarkson (1995) also makes a distinction between voluntary and involuntary stakeholders. This classification is based on the notion of risk. Voluntary stakeholders are taking a risk by investing a form of capital in the business and thereby contributing to the creation of value. Unlike involuntary stakeholders, they expose themselves to the consequences of the company's activities in seeking to reduce the negative impact that its actions may have on its wellbeing. Later, in 1997, Carroll and Nasi put forward a classification that opposed internal stakeholders (owners, directors, employees) to external stakeholders (competitors, consumers, governments, pressure groups, media and the natural environment).

Mitchell & al. (1997) go further by suggesting a classification based on three attributes: power, legitimacy and urgency. Based on these attributes, they identify seven types of stakeholders depending on whether they have one, two or three attributes in the model: as a result, they distinguish stakeholders who are discretionary, dominant, dormant, urgent, definitive and dangerous. For those authors, managers need to give more priority to "definitive" stakeholders, who have three attributes (power, legitimacy and urgency). The model remains dynamic: changes of positioning can happen at any time. Phillips (2003) makes a distinction between "normative" stakeholders vis-à-vis whom the company has moral obligations (customers, employees, shareholders) and "derivative" stakeholders whose demands only have to be taken into account if they have any potential effects on the company or on the normative stakeholders. More recently, Sobczak and Girard (2006) have designed a classification model based on the degree of commitment of the stakeholders with regard to the company (organisational commitment) and with regard to society (societal commitment). This segmentation highlights four profiles of stakeholders: allied / committed / passive / militant.

c. Stakeholder Management

While the literature on stakeholders presents several elements separately, it is surprising to note the minimal efforts that have been provided to build comprehensive models for managing stakeholders. Aggeri and Acquier (2005) suggest a model for involving stakeholders with an interpretive vision (understanding the practices of companies) and an instrumental one (managing relations with stakeholders). Their model is made up of the four following propositions: 1) all organisations have stakeholders who have requirements with regard to it; 2) not all stakeholders have the same ability to influence the organisation; 3) the prosperity of the company depends on its ability to meet the demands of influential stakeholders; 4) the main function of management is to arbitrate between the potentially contradictory demands of the stakeholders.

We feel this model is restrictive insofar as it only takes into consideration the scenario of the stakeholders claiming rights or interests. It is, in fact, possible to consider the organisation, or the management team, as an actor that attacks its stakeholders in order to bring about its own organisational projects. This is often the case in managing the processes of social certifications in which the organisation is required to make demands on certain stakeholders (especially suppliers and subcontractors). In the case of this figure, Aggeri and Acquier’s model (2005) becomes: ***1)*** all organisations have stakeholders who have requirements with regard to them, but also in regard of whom the organisation may have demands; **2)** not all stakeholders have the same ability to influence the organisation, and inversely, the organisation does not have the same ability to influence each of its stakeholders; ***3)*** achieving the organisational objective depends on the organisation’s ability to act on its most influential stakeholders; ***4)*** the main function of management may be to arbitrate between its organisational needs and the potentially contradictory demands of stakeholders, but it is also to mobilise stakeholders behind its organisational project, whereas they are not necessarily asking to be involved.

Preble (2005) adds to this debate by putting forward a model for managing stakeholders that is designed to be comprehensive. It is based on an initial event that will prompt the stakeholders to adopt a position for taking a subsequent interest in a chain of actions and reactions and in the organisational responses that will result in the main actors adopting a new position and a new organisational response. This progression in relations between the stakeholders and the organisation leads to the highlighting of a dynamic process to mobilise stakeholders. Preble’s model (2005) has the merit of integrating a number of analysis frameworks for the stakeholder theory, in particular with regard to their classification. The analysis of the various positions makes it possible for the organisation to prepare its organisation's responses based on the abilities the stakeholders have to exercise influence, as well as based on its own abilities to influence them (balance of power). Preble (2005) does not develop the methods of preparation for organisational responses clearly. This gap can be filled by the Actor Network Theory. This theory is particularly relevant in explaining the actor's behaviour in a changing process. It insists on the process by which the organisational change is conducted. The analysis in terms of translation then makes it possible to identify the strengths and weaknesses of how management implements a project involving organisational change.

The analysis in terms of translation, as well as the development of a network, and by extension any change process may be prompted by the following stages: ***1) Contextualisation***: This first stage consists of analysing the interests and issues of the actor and their degree of convergence. This analysis includes both human and non-human players (technical objects, laws, financial constraints, etc.) ***2) Problematisation***: This stage involves formulating a question to include the actors involved and to change each entity from one specific position into the cooperation acceptance, in other words, to constitute a network. ***3) Obligatory passage point***: It is a moment that turns out to be essential through its ability to produce convergence in the process of constituting a network. This is a required condition, but not sufficient for the process to be irreversible. ***4) Enrolment and involvement***: Once the interests and issues of the actors have been analysed, the problem been defined, and an obligatory passage point has been released, the next stage is to allocate roles to actors in order to obtain their involvement. It is through the enrolment stage that the actors become integral parts of the networks being constituted.

8. Towards a new model for stakeholder management in CSR certifications

The state of the art below enables us to highlight the various conceptual developments associated with the issue of stakeholder involvement in a CSR certification process. Each of the theoretical models presented above remains insufficient alone to provide a comprehensive tool for managing stakeholders in CSR certification projects. It is then possible to integrate certain aspects in some models, especially Preble’s (2005), Mitchell & al (1997) and Sobzack and Girard (2006) positioning model, and the Actor Network Theory. Compiling these four models enables us to highlight how companies can prepare their organisational responses and finally succeed in involving their stakeholders.

The model put forward is presented in figure 3:

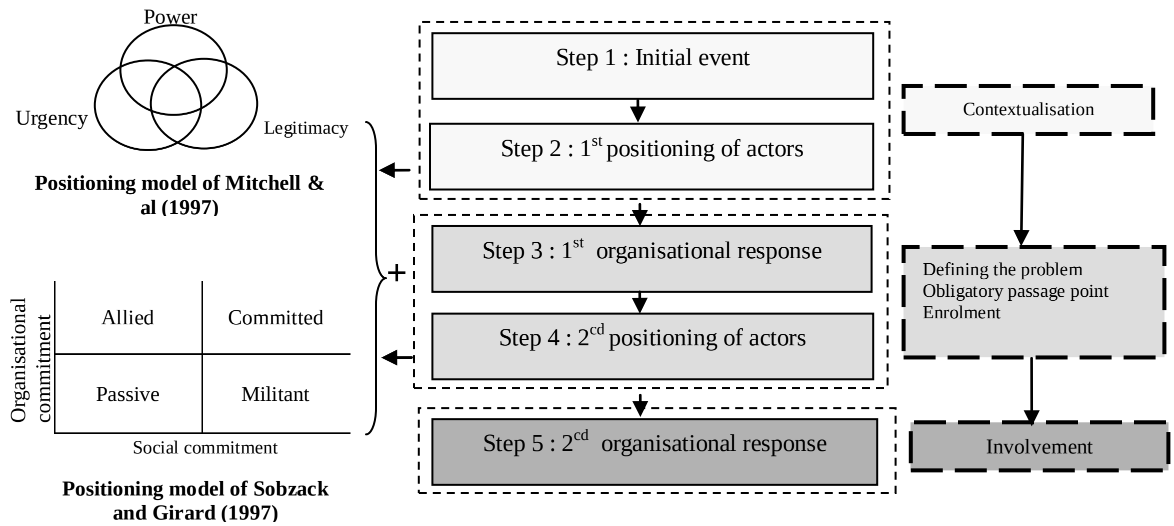

Figure 3: stakeholder Involvement model

The model provides answers to three essential questions: Who are the influential stakeholders in the CSR project? How are they positioned in relation to the organisational project being studied? What involvement process could be put in place around the project?

Each framework proposed in the model provides answers to one of these questions. The two identification models provided by Mitchell & al (1997) and Sobzack & Girard (2006) enable a dynamic positioning. The two models are not redundant, but instead are complementary insofar as each one raises essential dimensions. The compilation of the two models makes it possible to identify stakeholders at the same time based on their level of organisational and societal commitment, as well as based on their own characteristics (power, legitimacy and urgency). The identification stage can be implemented through contextualisation: taking into consideration the interests and issues of the various stakeholders, as well as their level of convergence in relation to the CSR project in question. The organisation can hence provide its answers based on the positioning of the players in the face of the problem posed (defining the problem) and of an event that is able to create convergence (obligatory passage point). This response may take the form of an enrolment that will be the first step towards real involvement in the proposed CSR project.

9. Conclusion

Having examined the historical origins of CSR, its numerous definitions and the various contemporary debates, a link was made to social certification as a CSR tool. Among the main issues of certification, the problem for legitimacy and the issue of stakeholder involvement of the various CSR projects in general, and in certification in particular are raised. A number of debates remain open as to the concept of CSR. First of all, the origins of CSR, often considered to be American, are based on religious or ethical attitudes. Contrary to the European approach – rarely mentioned in the literature – CSR is considered to be a paternalistic movement aimed at improving the living conditions of workers.

The concept of CSR is still subject to tension in contemporary debate, both from a theoretical and practical point of view. Its implementation through various tools such as social certifications raises the question of stakeholder involvement in those organisational projects. Existing literature offers several theoretical frameworks that can be consulted to achieve stakeholder management. This paper has attempted to combine certain approaches to design an overall model that can contribute to stakeholder involvement in organisational projects such as CSR certification. The empirical validation of this model will be the subject of a future paper that will attempt to test it in two case studies.

References

Ackerman. R.W., Bauer. R.A., (1976), *Corporate Social Responsiveness*, Reston, Virginia.

Aggeri. F., Pezet. E., (2005), *Organiser le développement durable – Expériences des entreprises pionnières et formation des règles d'action collective*, Vuibert, Paris.

Alberola. E., Richez-Battesti. N., (2005), «L'éthique féministe : quels apports pour la responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise ?», in Dupuis J.C. et Le bas.C. (ss, la dir.), Le management responsable – Vers un nouveau comportement des entreprises? Economica, Paris.

Alberola. E., Richez-Battesti. N., (2005), «L'éthique féministe : quels apports pour la responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise ?», dans Dupuis J.C. et Le bas.C. (ss, la dir.), Le management responsable – Vers un nouveau comportement des entreprises? Economica, Paris.

Ansoff.I., (1968), *Stratégie du développement de l'entreprise*, Editions Hommes et Techniques, Paris.

Backman J. (1975), *Social responsibility and accountability*, New York University Press.

Ballet & De Bry. F (2008), *L'entreprise et l'éthique*, Ed Le Seuil, Paris.

Bartha. P., (1990), *Environment and Social Theory*, Londres & New York, Routledge.

Berle. A.A, Means. G., (1932), *The Modern Corporation and the Private Property*, New York, Mc Millan.

Boiral. O., (1998), « ISO 14001, Against the Tide of Modern Management ? », *Journal of General Management*, vol 24, n°1, p. 35-52.

Boiral. O., (2003), « Certifier la bonne conduite des entreprises : enjeux et perspectives d'avenir », *Revue Internationale du Travail*, vol 142, n° 3, p. 345-370.

Boiral. O., (2006), « La certification ISO 14001: une perspective néo-institutionnelle», *International Management*, vol 10, n°3, p. 67-79.

Bouslah. K et al, (2006), « Responsabilité sociale et environnementale, certifications et performance financière », *Gestion*, vol 31, n°2.

Bowen, H.R (1953), *Social Responsibility of the businessman*, New York, Happer and Row.

Capron. M., Quairel-Lanoizelée. F., (2007), *La responsabilité sociale d'entreprise*, Collection Repères, Ed La Découverte, Paris.

Carroll. A.B., (1979), «A Three Dimensional Conceptual Model of Corporate Performance», *Academy of management Review*, vol 4, n°4, p. 497-505.

Carroll. A.B., (1991), «The pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility: Toward the model management of Organizational Stakeholders», *Business Horizons*, juillet-août, p.39-48.

Carroll. A.B., (1999), «Corporate Social Responsibility. Evolution of a Definitional Construct», *Business and Society*, n°38, p. 268-295.

Carroll. A.B., Nasi. J., (1997), «Understanding Stakeholder Thinking: Themes for a Finnish Conference», *Business Ethics: A European Review*, vol 6, n°1, p.46-51.

Casisco. J., (1996), *ISO 14001 Guide: The New International Environment Management Standards*, New York: MacGraw-Hill.

Chamberlain. N.W., (1953), *Social Responsibility and Strikes*, New York, Harper & Row.

Champion. E., (2003), « De la responsabilité sociale corporative à la citoyenneté corporative : l'entreprise en quête de légitimité pour assurer un nouveau rôle social », *international Symposium called « l'équité, l'efficience ou l'éthique : les codes de conduite et la régulation sociale de l'entreprise mondialisée*, organized by CRIMT, Montréal, Ecole des hautes études commerciales, Avril-Mai.

Charan. R., Freeman. R.E, (1979), «Stakeholders Negotiations: Building Bridges with Corporate Constituents», *Management Review*, November, p.8-13.

Clarkson. M.B.E., (1995), «A Stakeholder Framework for Analyzing and Evaluating Corporate Social Performance», *Academy of Management Review*, vol 20, n°1, p.92-117.

Cochoy. F., Garel et G. Terssac., (1998), «Comment l'écrit travaille l'organisation : le cas des normes ISO9001», *Revue Française de Sociologie*, vol 39, n° 4, p. 673-699.

Dacin. M.T., Goodstein. J., et Scott. WR., (2002), « Institutional Theory and Institutional Change : Introduction to the Special Research Forum», *Academy of Management Journal*, vol 45, n° 1, p.45-57.

Davis. K., (1960), «Can Business Afford to ignore Social Responsibilities?», *California Management Review*, vol 2, n°3.

Diller. J., (1999), « Responsabilité sociale et mondialisation : qu'attendre des codes de conduite, des labels sociaux et des pratiques d'investissement ? », *Revue Internationale du Travail*, vol 138, n°2.

Donaldson. T., Preston. L.E., (1995), «The Stakeholder Theory of the Corporation: Concepts, Evidence and Implications», *Academy of Management Review*, vol 20, n°1, p.65-91.

Dupuis. J.C., Lebas. C., (2005), *Le Management Responsable – Vers un nouveau comportement des entreprises?*, Economica, Paris.

Eels.R., Walton., C.C., (1961), *Conceptual Foundations of Business, Homewood III?,* Richard D. Irwin.

Epstein, E.M, (2002) « Religion and business – The critical role of religious traditions in management education », *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol 38, n° 1-2, p. 91- 96.

Frederick. W.C, (1978), «From CSR1 to CSR2: The Maturing of Business-and-Society Thought», (Working paper 1978-publié en 1994), *Business and Society*, vol 32, n°2.

Freeman. R.E., (1984), *Strategic Management: A Stakeholders Approach*, Pitman.

Freeman. R.E., Evan. W.M., (1990), «Corporate Governance: A Stakeholder Interpretation», *Journal of Behavioral Economics*, vol 19, n° 4.

Freeman. R.E., Reed. D.L., (1983), «Stockholders and Stakeholders: A new Perspective on Corporate Governance», *California Management Review*, XXV (3printemps).

Gendron. C., (2001), « Emergence de nouveaux mouvements sociaux économiques », Revue Pour, n° 172, p.175-181.

Gendron. C., Lapointe. A., Turcotte. M.F., (2004), « Responsabilité sociale et régulation de l'entreprise mondialisée », *Relations Industrielles*, vol 59, n°1, p-73-100.

Gomez. P.Y, (2005), «Le management responsable : une grille de lecture », In Dupuis J.C. et Le bas.C. (ss, la dir.), Le management responsable – Vers un nouveau comportement des entreprises? Economica, Paris.

Gond. J.P., Mullenbach. A, (2003), «Les fondements théoriques de la responsabilité sociétale de l'entreprise », *La revue des sciences de Gestion*, n° 205, p. ??- ??

Hill. C.W.L., Jones. T.M., (1992), «Stakeholder-Agency Theory», *Journal of Management Studies*, vol 29, n°2, p.131-154.

Jensen. M.C., Neckling. W.H., (1972), «Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behavior, Agency Costs and Ownership Structure», *Journal of Financial Economics*, vol 3, p.305-360.

Klein. P., (1967), paper not published cited by C.Walton, *Corporate Social Responsibilities* (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth).

Mercier. S., (2001), «L'apport de la théorie des parties prenantes au management stratégique: une synthèse de littérature», *X^th^ Conference of International Association of Strategic Management*, June, Québec.

Mispelbom. F., (1995), *Au-delà de la qualité : démarches qualité, conditions de travail et politiques du bonheur*, Syros, Paris.

Mitchell. R.K., Agle. B.R., et al. (1997), «Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts», *Academy of Management Review*, vol 22, n° 4, p.853-886.

Mouritsen. J., Ernst. J., et A.M. Jorgensen., (2000), «Green Certification as a Managerial Technology», *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, vol 16, p. 167-187.

Neuberg. M., (1997), «La responsabilité : étude philosophique d'une notion incertaine», dans Qu'est-ce que être responsable?, *Sciences humaines communication*, Auxerre, p.21- 54.

Pasquero. J., (2005), « *la responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise comme objet des sciences de gestion : le concept et sa portée* », in Turcotte M.-F. B. et Salmon A. (ss, la dir.), *Responsabilité sociale et environnementale de l'entreprise*, Presses de l'université de Québec, Coll. » Pratiques et politiques sociales et économiques», Québec.

Peglau. R., (2002), *ISO 14001 Certification*, Federal Environmental Agency of Germany.

Pfeffer.J., Salancik. G.R., (1978), *The External Control of Organizations: A Ressource Dependence Perspective*, Harper & Row publishers.

Phillips, R.A., Freeman, R.E., (2003), «What stakeholder theory is not», *Business Ethics Quarterly*, Vol 13, n° 4, p 479-502.

Preble.J.F., (2005), «Toward a Comprehensive Model of Stakeholder Management», *Business and Society Review*, vol 110, n°4, p.407-431.

Preston L.E., Post. J.E., (1975), *Private Management and Public Policy, Englewood Cliffs*, New Jersey, Prentice-Hahll.

Rhenman. E., Stymne. B., (1965), *Corporate Management in a Changing World*, Aldus/Bonniers, Stockholm.

Samon. A., (2002), *Ethique et ordre économique*, CNRS Editions, Paris.

Sethi. S.P., (1975), «Dimensions of Corporate Social Performance: An Analytical Framework», *California Management Review*, vol.17, n° 3, p. 58-64.

Sobczak. A., Girard. C., (2006), «Des parties prenantes aux parties prenantes engages: pour une nouvelle lecture de la théorie des stakeholders», 1st *International Congress for researches on Organizations and sustainable development*, December, Paris.

Swanson. D.L., (1995), «Adressing a Theoretical Problem by Reorienting the Corporate Social Performance Model», *Academy of Management Review*, vol 20, n°1, p.43-64.

Swanson. D.L., (1999), «Toward an Integrative Theory of Business and Society: A Research Strategy for Corporate Social Performance», *Academy of Management Review*, vol 24, n° 3, p.506-521.

Toublan.O., (1995), Les informations sociétales : un moyen pour l'analyste externe de déterminer quelques caractéristiques de la firme? , PhD thesis, Ecole des HEC Lausanne.

Verna. G., Bernard. J., (1996), *L'éthique de la production en sous-traitance, le cas de l'industrie du vêtement*, a research document (Québec, Faculté des sciences de l'administration de l'Université Laval).

Williamson. O.E., (1985), *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism*, Free Press, New York.

Zenisek. T.J., (1979), «Corporate Social Responsibility: A Conceptualization Based On Organizational Literature», *Academy of Management Review*, vol 4, n° 3, p. 359-368.