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Between Western hegemony and local appropriateness of CSR practices in developing countries – The process of contextualization in the agricultural industry of Uganda.

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Executive Summary

In the past years, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been developed to be considered as a crucial tool that can significantly enhance development in southern countries. However, CSR has shortcomings, that were recently intensively discussed in research. In this regard, CSR was often associated with western hegemony. However, not only the CSR research is strongly characterized through a western perspective. Also, developed CSR practices in emerging countries are driven by western-hosted multinational enterprises (MNE) or standards as for example ISO 26000, that were developed in a western context. Previous studies have shown, that such understanding did not always lead to indented benefits in emerging countries.

Even though previous research emphasized the existing tension between international standards and local appropriateness, an examination of the process of contextualization has not been established yet. Therefore, this work aims on developing a concept, that leads to positive impacts by implementing CSR practices in the developing country context. For that purpose, an explanatory study with a trip of in total three weeks to Uganda has been conducted. Thus, local voices and perspectives could be incorporated that can provide a valuable supplement to the current literature. Finally, the results show a concept of contextualization of western based CSR practices in a developing country context.

Keywords:

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), western hegemony, developing countries, Uganda, explanatory study

Introduction

The importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has significantly increased in the past decades and nowadays it enjoys huge importance for business firms. From a research perspective, the consideration also enhanced, but was strongly examined in a western, particularly in an American and European context (Tilt, 2016). Therefore, developed theories, values and common understanding about CSR are based on research in the western context. Regarding the differences of the circumstances in western and southern countries, it can be further suggested that those, in western countries developed theories are not appropriate in the context of emerging markets. Assumptions, on that western practices are developed, can significantly differ from the developing country context. Blowfield (2004) for example criticizes the underlying cultural assumption, on that western CSR practices are based. Furthermore, the relevance of the institutional environment is stated by Dobers and Halme (2009). Hence, the contextual examination and the CSR interpretation of local actors are crucial for adding a further perspective to the CSR research.

This has led to a more critical perspective on CSR in developing countries, that was further addressed by several studies. In addition to Blowfield (2004), for example Lund-Thomsen (2008) or Idemudia (2011) emphasize the tension between indented and ultimately reached outcomes of CSR initiatives in emerging country contexts.

However, the conducted researches are also characterized through gaps and limitations. First, the view of local actors is generally very limited studied. Thus, there

is a great need existent for conducting further research in this area for enriching such perspective. As Khan et al. (2010: 1434) point out *"future research needs to also incorporate local voices and the sense-making frameworks through which engagements with the West, and CSR interventions in particular, are made meaningful and responded to"*. Local community voices and perspectives therefore need to be considered (Jamali & Sidani, 2011). Secondly, the few existing studies that analyze the developing country perception of the tension, were mainly conducted in India and Bangladesh. This points out, that further emerging country contexts need to be examined. Thirdly, the literature does not indicate, how local actors transfer their understanding to those western characterized CSR practices. Lastly, the existing literature focuses on export oriented countries and on CSR practices, that are implemented on behalf of western based multinational enterprises (MNE). Here, Lund-Thomsen et al. (2008) emphasize to conduct more depth studies in countries that are domestic oriented.

The following research considers the agricultural industry in Uganda. Uganda offers a great research context for adding a further value to the academic research by considering the African perspective. Furthermore, Uganda can be considered as a domestic oriented country, where the CSR initiatives are not mainly driven by MNE. However, it can be assumed, that developed and used CSR practices are western based. Katamba and Nkiko (2016), for example, point out that the future of CSR in Uganda strongly depends on the usage of ISO 26000 standards. Those standards offer great development opportunities for the Ugandan society. According to Katamba and Nkiko (2016:

169) those *"[CSR] standards offer far much better and detailed social responsibility guidelines than legal requirements"*. This underlines the orientation on western based CSR concepts and highlights the tension Uganda faces between global standardization and local appropriateness.

Even though previous research emphasized the existing tension between international standards and local appropriateness, an examination of the process of contextualization has not been established yet. Researchers showed that simply complying with certification schemes or such standards does not automatically guarantee improvements. Hence, they emphasize the need of considering the local context (Lund-Thomsen, 2008). However, how the process of addressing the tension between intended and reached outcomes look like, can be still considered as a black box. Consequently, Idemudia (2011) proposes that future research should focus and investigate the process that links the relationship of CSR initiatives and desirable outcomes.

Therefore, the following paper aims to investigate the process of how western based CSR initiatives can be contextualized in an emerging country context for ensuring, that the desired outcomes of CSR practices can be reached. Ultimately, the underlying **research question** is formulated as follows:

"How can western based CSR practices in the agricultural industry in Uganda be contextualized?"

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

Based on Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan's

(2007) taxonomy of the theoretical contribution of empirical organizational studies, this study can be considered a "builders" study. While introducing a new perspective that incorporates local stakeholder voices, it is the aim to change the current thinking. The term "builder" becomes evident in consideration of the imbalance of the existing CSR research. Due to the lack of previous researches in the context of emerging countries, no prior theorizing exists. Thus, new constructs and processes need to be "built" in the first place. The focus lies on an inductive study with a strong focus on contextual examination. The primary aim of this study is the development of a concept, that presents the transfer process of the local context on western based CSR practices. In this concern, the theory building interest is high. Furthermore, because the study aims to gather exploratory data, it is not argued that this developed framework is necessarily shared in all sectors or in all countries. This means, that developed propositions need to be analyzed and tested in future studies.

The practical relevance for understanding how locals perceive the implementation of CSR standards is of great importance. The adherence to CSR standards is crucial for companies in Uganda, as they offer better opportunities to strengthen CSR interventions in Uganda than governmental regulations could prevent (Katamba & Nkiko, 2016). As 70 percent of the society in Uganda are employed in the agricultural sector, insights specifically in this industry are extremely valuable. The agricultural sector has the potential to transform the economy in Uganda in general and to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth (Deloitte, 2016). A mutual understanding in this context could highly increase the chances

for a successful implementation. Not only would it bring benefits through social responsible acting companies, but also the adherence to CSR standards could increase the chances for companies to enter the export market.

On the other side, western companies could highly benefit from a such enriching perspective. Taking the bottom of the pyramid theory into account, it shows that emerging countries present a great market opportunity. While understanding the southern perspective, and seeing emerging country companies as equal partner, the possibility of unlocking such market potential can rise significantly. Hence, such additional perspective enjoys high practical relevance for the southern and western perspective.

Structure of the Study

The study is structured in the following way. First, an overview of existing literature related to the work is given, followed by stating the underlying theoretical framework of this study. The subsequent section presents the applied methodology to conduct this research that was chosen to provide an answer to the research question. Afterwards, the findings related to the research question are shown, emerged from the on-site study in the agricultural industry in Uganda. This is followed by the presentation of the developed concept of contextualization. Lastly, the study is supplemented by managerial implications, limitations of the conducted research and recommendations for future research which finally sums up in a conclusion.

Literature Overview and Theoretical Framework

In the following section the key concepts for the research are introduced. Firstly, an understanding to distinguish developed and developing countries is provided. Secondly, the used concept of CSR is defined in the context of emerging countries. This includes the difficulties of defining a universally accepted concept of CSR, followed by a more detailed examination of which dimensions influence the concept of CSR and lead to differences between the southern and western context. This is specifically shown in the context of Uganda. Furthermore, a literature overview of the fundamental critique on western CSR hegemony is given, supplemented with research examples of negative consequences by implementing western based CSR practices. Lastly, the effects of incorporating local actor voices are shown.

Developed countries and developing countries

Without starting a discussion and moving to the extensive literature about the exact differentiation between developed and emerging countries, a basic classification needs to be established for the purpose of the study. Referring to the United Nations, the assignment whether a country belongs to developing or developed countries can be done according to a per capita gross national income, a human assets index and an economic vulnerability index. Here, Uganda is classified as a developing economy while most European countries and the United States of America belong to the category of developed economies (United Nations, 2014). Subsequently, it is referred to those developed countries, when the term of "western" countries is used and presents the source of the western CSR practices which applicability and contextualization this paper explores within the context of Uganda (Dartey-Bah & Amponsah- Tawiah, 2011).

CSR in emerging countries

Emerging markets are often characterized through an absence of norms, weak legal system and uncertain political conditions (Peters et al., 2016). Therefore, the focus in those countries for improving the societal and environmental situation moved to the concept of CSR (Eweje, 2014). Moreover, in emerging countries the concept of CSR can be seen as an alternative way to facilitate and enhance development (Jamali & Sidani, 2011). Recent literature provides several definitions for the concept of CSR. The definition by Blowfield and Frynas (2005: 503) is used for describing the CSR concept:

"[CSR is] an umbrella term for a variety of theories and practices all of which recognize the following: (a) that companies have a responsibility for their impact on society and the natural environment, sometimes beyond legal compliance and the liability of individuals; (b) that companies have a responsibility for the behaviour of others with whom they do business (e.g. within supply chains); and that (c) business needs to manage its relationship with wider society, whether for reasons of commercial viability, or to add value to society."

A universally accepted CSR definition is especially complicated to develop because of the strong contextual dependency. Existing literature emphasizes that the general business environment strongly influences the development of CSR, which

therefore need to be viewed as a contextual framework (Fetscherin et al., 2010). Such influential factors can be classified in four categories: (1) cultural, (2) economic, (3) legal and (4) social.

Firstly, Ewing and Winidsch (2007) showed that CSR practices are related to the cultural dimension of the country of implementation. Dartey-Baah and Amponsah-Tawiah (2011) point out, that religious beliefs, cultural traditions of philanthropy and community embeddedness affect the concept of CSR. This is also applicable for the context of Uganda, which is influenced by the belief of Muno Mukabi (Nkiko & Katamba, 2010). In Uganda, socially responsible actions are not new, but deeply rooted in their cultural understanding. The concept of Muno Mukabi describes the creation of small welfare groups that provide support in times of for example the loss of loved ones or a bad harvest (Katamba et al., 2012).

Secondly, economic development presents an important dimension that shapes CSR practices (Welford, 2005; Baughn et al., 2007). By way of example, Xiao et al. (2005) showed, that CSR practices in developed and emergent countries are significantly different because of their economic development. In this regards, Uganda can be considered as one of the 20 poorest countries in the world, where 50 percent of the population lives under the poverty line (FSD, 2006).

CSR practices are further related to legal conditions in the country of implementation. It leads to significant differences, if they are implemented in a stable and strong institutional environment or in a system that is characterized through insecurity and corruption (Dobers

& Halme, 2009; Jamali et al., 2007). Blowfield and Frynas (2005: 502) state, that in developing countries CSR can be seen as *"an alternative to government"*. Uganda is for example strongly characterized through a high level of corruption, weak enforcement and adherence to legislations (Nkiko & Katamba, 2010).

Lastly, CSR practices aim strongly on influencing the social dimension. The social issues that are addressed by CSR practices in the developing context differ from the western country as for example HIV, supply chain integrity or working conditions would be normally addressed by governmental institutions (Visser, 2008). By way of example, in Uganda regarding a total population 22 million people, approximately 1.9 million have been infected with HIV. The statistics also show, that nowadays at least 1.4 million people in Uganda are presently living with HIV.

Consequently, different cultural, economic, legal and social environments impact the value of CSR activities to benefit society and the natural environment (Tilt, 2016). The concept of CSR aims to make a visible difference in the life of people in developing countries contexts (Lund-Thomsen, 2004). Through the existing mainly western based CSR research, such intended beneficiaries are not always achieved. Thus, the following section continues with an examination of such critique and shows which consequences a non-incorporation of differences in cultural, legal, social or economic dimensions can have.

Critique on Western CSR hegemony

In the introduction, it was already

examined that only a western based CSR consideration is problematical and therefore an extension of the CSR literature with a southern perspective is crucial. Further, the different dimensions between western and southern countries were elaborated. The following section conducts a more detailed examination and aims to explain, why a consideration of a southern perspective on CSR is necessary. Based on Idemudia (2011), critique on the CSR research can be distinguished in three research streams.

Firstly, conditions that in reality significantly differ are universalized. Western based CSR often considers adherence to legislation as given and therefore demand organizations to go beyond compliances with existing national legislation. However, in emerging countries such compliance is more voluntary due to weak social and environmental legislations. Thus, the challenge in the emerging country context is rather to emphasize the compliance to legislations, while taking violations as for example corruption into account. Hence, the compliance to legislation should be emphasized instead of motivating organizations to go beyond legislation (Khan & Lund-Thomsen, 2011; Fox, 2004). This refers to the prior described different legal dimensions between a western and an emerging country context.

Secondly, while only focusing on CSR initiatives from a western perspective, the problem of not considering the "big picture" and not incorporating economic differences appears. The problem of not taking the "big picture" into account arises through the fundamental differences in the local contexts between western and southern countries and problems and challenges they face. For example, even

though preventing child labor is a well-intended approach, it does not address the real problems in emerging countries. If a country is so poor, such that progress can be measured in terms of how much the average person gets to eat, it needs to be considered in terms of the introduced CSR initiatives (Krugman, 1999). This shows, that through the significant differences in what kind of problems and challenges western and southern countries encounter, a western approach is not always advantageous and appropriate. If such initiatives are driven by MNE, the literature further points out the accusation, that MNE act in their favor and their concerns. Therefore, they address issues as child labor as it is related to a bad reputation in their home country, instead of facing issues that put southern and not western concerns first. Here, the critical stream on CSR questions, whether CSR initiatives contribute to improve local conditions in developing countries or rather aim to please western companies (Blowfield, 2007; Margolis & Walsh, 2003). This point refers to the strong economical differences between western and southern countries. Due to significant differences in the economic situation, also the priorities that CSR practices should address have a different focus.

Thirdly, western CSR literature is criticized for suffering from "selective amnesia" that can be referred to social differences between western and southern countries (Jenkins, 2005). In this argumentation, CSR initiatives address the wrong issue while not recognizing which "real problems" emerging societies are confronted with. Moreover, those initiatives focus on micro- issue instead of macro-issues, which are critical for the community development. The literature emphasizes, that it is crucial to address

issues that are responsible for the community underdevelopment. Hence, problems such as corruption or lack of accountability need to be approached in the first place, before focusing on micro-level issues as by way of example infrastructure programs (Idemudia, 2011).

Examples of negative consequences by implementing western based CSR practices

The prior section provided the theoretical overview about critique on western CSR hegemony. This can be supplemented by conducted research, that has shown negative consequences by implementing western based CSR practices in the emerging country context.

One negative example, that resulted through the implementation of western based CSR practices, could be seen in the football stitching industry in Pakistan. In this example, women were working from home and were supported by their children in the manufacturing process. In line with the Atlanta agreement, which aimed to prevent child labor, a change in home manufacturing occurred and women needed to work in new created stitching centers. Even though workers were for example provided with meals and transportation to work, such change had unintended consequences. Negative unintended consequences are typically for interventions that are implemented by a top down approach. By way of example, due to the cultural understanding of the role of the women in Pakistan, this change caused serious problems for families. As women in some villages are not allowed to leave the house without a male, for some women it was not possible to work anymore. Another negative consequence was related to the economic dimension.

Due to the change to the stitching center, women did not work anymore in their "family factory", but alone in the new created center. While losing the support from their children, the workers could finish less work each day. Therefore, instead of getting paid for approximately twelve balls per day, workers only finished about three balls. Even though the salary per ball was increased, it could not compensate their loss. Consequently, families had a significant loss in their income (Khan, 2007; Lund-Thomsen, 2008).

Another example is shown in the research by De Neve (2014). Their research in the Jalandhar football cluster regarded CSR initiatives, that aimed to improve the working conditions. Therefore, fixed wages, an eight-hour work routine and working in a monitored, factory-based environment were implemented. However, those initiatives were negatively perceived by the workforce. By way of example, it hindered women on continuing their job as such inflexible

working hours did prevent the combination of work and domestic duties as household work. Therefore, such CSR practices that had the intention to enhance the working situation led to negative consequences as it was ignoring local traditions and ways of doing things (Khan & Lund-Thomsen, 2011; Lund-Thomsen et al., 2016).

Incorporating local actors voices

Supplementing to the prior literature, which has shown the negative consequences of western hegemony of CSR practices, another literature stream has further researched the positive impact of incorporating local actors voices.

Frynas research (2005) questioned the

effectiveness of CSR practices of western MNE in the oil and gas sector in Nigeria, while identifying country specific issues as limitations for the efficacy. Furthermore, he proposes the incorporation of the local community and therefore the usage of local knowledge as approach for avoiding those discrepancies. The author further states, that a non-involvement of local actors lead to a dependency mentality. Through the dependency mentality local actors do not feel responsible for the CSR project but rather consider them only as gifts.

The same issue is addressed by Lund-Thomsen (2008), who states CSR practices should not be designed without understanding the perceptions of local actors. According to Lund-Thomsen (2008) it is not feasible to decide from an ivory tower in a western country about the development of CSR practices, without incorporating those voices that are supposed to be impacted by. The author states, that by considering the voices of suppliers, workers and communities in the southern countries, a better fit of CSR implementation can be ensured.

This can be further related to Khan et al. (2010: 14), who claims that "*Western-derived CSR perspective leading to Western initiated interventions catering to Western audiences, providing Western solutions and their evaluation, and ultimately serving Western interests*". Therefore, they confirm that differences between western and emerging countries need to be considered and the assumption that the west knows what is for the rest is invalid. Khan et al. (2010: 16) also acknowledge that "*negative, and sometimes catastrophic, consequences in the indigenous community*" can be a consequence. Further the authors state,

that the voice of local actors is missed, which is especially significant, because they are the supposed target of CSR interventions (Khan et al., 2010). Moreover, these local actors are the only one who possess in-depth knowledge to understand the local context and therefore to anticipate unintended consequences.

All in all, the literature states that (1) cultural, (2) economic, (3) legal and (4) social differences lead to problems of western driven CSR practices that are implemented in a southern country. Furthermore, the literature shows the positive influence of including local actors.

Methodology

In the following section the research method is elaborated, that has been used to investigate the underlying research question. Therefore, the research design, research context, data collection and data analysis are described.

Research design

For ensuring a successful elaboration of a research question, the correct application of the methodological fit is crucial (Edmondson & McManus, 2007). In their study, Edmondson and McManus (2007) relate the design of a research project to the current state of the literature. As demonstrated in the introduction, the underlying theory of the research question is based on nascent theory. This assumption is confirmed by Jamali and Sidani (2011: 71) as they emphasize to "*challenge commonly publicized Western assumptions about CSR and encourage more careful scrutiny of how CSR as a nascent trend can be leveraged more effectively to bring about real positive change across the developing world*". In

this context, the research question aims to develop a concept, that shows how local actors in the agricultural industry in Uganda can contextualize western based CSR initiatives. Therefore, a qualitative research approach is the most suitable to address the research question. Additionally, a "how" question is chosen for the research question, because it aims to find deeper insights of a phenomenon. Here, also the qualitative approach offers the most value (Yin, 2003). In accordance to Van de Ven (2007) the approach is appropriate since qualitative methods are particularly useful to examine meanings, perceptions, and complex processes (Creswell, 2012).

Research Context

The data gathering was conducted in Uganda in collaboration with the research project Agri- quest. Therefore, the focus lied on the agricultural industry. The agricultural sector represents an appropriate sector for mainly two reasons. First, one of the main objectives of Agri-quest is the implementation of codes of conducts in the agricultural industry. Thus, Agri-quest provides a high level of knowledge and experience regarding CSR practices. Secondly, the agricultural sector is one of the most important sectors in the Ugandan economy and employs approximately 70 percent of the population. Especially for the agricultural sector, the adherence to standards is crucial, as it significantly increases export opportunities. Furthermore, social improvements in this industry would impact the majority of the Ugandan society as 95 percent of the people that live under the poverty line are located in rural areas.

The specific environment, in which Agri-quest is acting, offers an interesting setting to address the underlying research question. Most of the existing researches were conducted in an export oriented field. Thus, CSR practices were developed and coordinated from an "ivory tower" located in a western country. In contrast to that, in the research setting of Agri-quest, CSR initiatives are not driven by a MNE. Therefore, such conditions offer an interesting research setting in order to understand the contextualization of western based CSR initiatives from an African perspective. On the one hand, they have insights in CSR initiatives that were developed within a western view. By way of example, Uganda was among the signatories of the ISO 26000 standard (Katamba & Nkiko, 2016). This emphasizes the relevance of strong influence of the western perspective. On the other hand, they have insights in the actual implementation and possess knowledge about problems, harms and the contextualization. The research was mainly conducted on the fields in rural villages in Uganda and aimed to address the bottom of the pyramid players. Therefore, those stakeholders were considered, that should be primarily affected by and benefit from CSR practices. Furthermore, CSR consultants were considered as they can see the big picture of both the western and southern perspective. With their contribution, it is enabled to fill the research gap, addressed by the underlying research question.

Data Collection

The data collection was conducted by interviews with a semi-structured character due to the exploratory nature of the research as proposed by Saunders et al. (2007). Semi-structured interviews are organised around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with the

opportunity of adding more questions emerging while conducting the interview (DiCicco- Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). First, it allows a common structure along the interviews that enables to compare different interviews. Secondly, it furthermore offers the interviewer a flexibility, if for example an interesting topic reveals and a need for further question appears (Rowley, 2012). According to Qu and Dumay (2011), semi-structured interviews emphasize the need to understand the world from the interviewees perspective. In respect to the research question, this is crucial as the development of the local understanding is central. They specifically help to understand individuals' perspectives in-depth about detailed insights (Gill et al., 2008).

Especially the fact about being flexible was important for the research context. While being part of a research team in an African environment, it was crucial to adapt to individual interview settings. As meetings where mostly organized shortly in advance, a specific interview preparation in accordance to the interviewee was often not possible. Therefore, the semi- structured approach offered the necessary flexibility to adapt in a short time frame.

For the data collection, in total two field trips were conducted. During the trips, the locations of the districts Bugiri and Oyam were visited, that represent the rice and cassava value chain. Being aware of, that the given field settings can influence results and therefore minimize the generalisation, different value chains were chosen for increasing the validity in the agricultural perspective (Stone-Romero, 2008). Those interviews were mainly conducted in group interviews with several

researchers in a time frame of three weeks, starting in April 2017. The dominantly used language was English, as this is the main language in Uganda. However, some interviews were also conducted in the local language. Uganda is a multi-lingual country were in total 43 different languages are spoken. Especially in rural areas, were the research mainly took place, people were not always capable of speaking English. In those cases, local staff was supporting the research team to translate and guide the interview.

Data Analysis

During the data collection process, the data analysis developed gradually. The initialization phase characterized a strong focus in the data analysis. Through the continuous re-reading of the interviews and field notes, an overall understanding could be obtained and main focuses could be identified (Vaismoradi et al., 2016). After the data collection process was completed, a final analysis followed. First, 13 of 15 of the used interviews were audio recorded and afterwards transcribed. As the interviews were mostly conducted outside, background noises of animals, children and other interview listeners enhanced the complexity to transcribe the recordings. Also, the uncommon and different dialects in the English language of the Ugandan speaker were partly difficult to understand for the researchers. Due to these aggravated circumstances, the transcription process appeared to present various challenges. However, the researchers tried to transcribe as carefully and intensively as possible, which enabled nearly a complete transcription. Nevertheless, it is to mention that there are some parts which remained inaudible and intranscribed. Besides the audio

recording, detailed field notes were additionally taken. Lastly, the collected data was structured in detail, coded and finally converted into different themes, which concluded the results of the research.

Research Findings

In the following chapter the research findings are presented, analysed and interpreted. Therefore, the collected data is summarized and an in-depth analysis is processed. In total, four dimensions are developed and for those compelling quotes from the interviews are used. At the end of this section, Figure 1 summarizes the findings and illustrates the developed dimensions. Following, this developed concept is described and a discussion concludes this section.

Dimension 1: Incorporating local actors in the development and implementation of CSR practices:

The need of incorporating local actors in the development of CSR practices was already identified by the existing literature as main approach for contextualizing the western based CSR practices to local circumstances. The on-site study in Uganda could open such issue by showing how exactly such an incorporation should look like for providing the most efficient result. The interviews provided specific insights about how the incorporation of local stakeholders needs to be organized. Thus, mainly two perspectives could be identified, which are presented in detail.

The first captured perspective states, that it is crucial to incorporate local actors in the implementation of CSR practices but not in their development. This perspective indicates, that in contrast to the developed

country context, emerging countries encounter macro-issues as for example lack in health care, education etc. or with respect to the agricultural industry they lack in for example professional machinery. According to this perspective, it *"does not need a professor" (I13)* to understand and identify the problems and challenges in Uganda. Rather, it is the challenge to choose which problem to address through CSR. Therefore, an incorporation of local voices in the development of CSR practices can be seen as unrealistic because of the difficulty to consider all voices. The societal needs are so high, that a too strong involvement of the local stakeholders could lead to an unmanageable amount of perspectives and beliefs and due to the obvious character of problems and challenges it is further not necessary. However, CSR practices in developing countries face the question to which extent the local stakeholders need to be involved. In this context, the perspectives states to focus on incorporating the local stakeholders during the implementation process. Here, interviewees referred to the explained "dependency theory". First, such involvement could increase the understanding process of the local stakeholders. Second, if the community can actively participate in the implementation, they automatically feel involved and see it as their own property. Consequently, they make it part of their community, feel responsible and defend it. Such attachment is crucial for ensuring a successful application.

However, by strongly distinguishing between the development and implementation of CSR practices, it faces the hazard of giving stakeholders the impression of overruling them. The

importance of also considering them in the development process became obvious while speaking to various local farmer groups, which leads to the second incorporated perspective. This can be illustrated by the following quote:

"We have a problem with policy makers. They sit down, make a policy and then they bring it to you, but not involving the people who are going to consume them. So, you find that it is very hard to implement it. [...] But the implementation is not there as long as they are not coming down to the grass. (I2, p.15)

This statement refutes the first presented perspective. The quote emphasizes, that developing a policy without involving the people who should benefit from it, is not working in the implementation phase. Hence, two contradictionary assumptions about the incorporating of local actors in the development of CSR practices are stated. On the one hand, the involvement of local actors in the CSR development is questioned as the needs are so high and diverse, that the development will *"fail from the start" (I13).* On the other hand, a perspective argues, that the development and implementation are coherent. Hence, an implementation is seen as problematic, if local actors are not considered in their development. Incorporating both valuable perspectives, the approach referring to the next quote offers a solution that can combine both:

"If you want to set up a good CSR event [...] you cannot do it without the support of the local leaders. Most especially political leaders. These local leaders have loads of touches with the local people. The local people believe so much in the political leaders." (I13, p. 116)

This quote indicates, that for getting the local people to follow CSR practices, it is highly relevant to take political leaders into account. Those political leaders have such a high impact and reputation in local communities, that without their acceptance of any initiatives, they are about to fail from the start. Therefore, the local stakeholders could be represented by people that are highly esteemed in the specific district while simultaneously minimizing the amount of voices and perspectives that need to be considered. Furthermore, the approach also ensures that the development side comes "down to the grass", while getting to know the circumstances and meeting local representatives.

All in all, these results offer a more in-depth description about how the incorporation of local actors can look like. As the presented results doubt on the development of CSR practices while incorporating all actors, but also states the coherent relation between development and implementation of CSR practices, it further presents a solution with focusing on local leaders and thus receiving a manageable amount of perspectives.

Dimension 2: Integrating CSR practices in an economic development plan:

"The focus is not on food security but that there is no hunger at the home." (I7, p. 47)

The first discrepancy between western comprehension of CSR and the actual status in the developing country context becomes clear while analysing the definition which underlies this study. According to Blowfield and Frynas (2005) CSR need to for example *manage its relationship with wider society or have a responsibility for the behaviour of others.*

This becomes contradictionary when considering the reality faced by rural farmers in Uganda. This definition can be questioned as long as stakeholders have problems to fulfil the responsibility for themselves.

"The biggest problem farmers have, they are very poor. They don´t have anything." (I9, p. 87)

This quote refers to the answer of a commercial cassava farmer in the district of Oyam to the question, according to how local farmers can overcome the challenges and barriers of adherence to for example standards for enhancing ethical behaviour. He pointed out, that farmers struggle immensely with getting money for simply living, so they do not have any other issues on their agenda. He also made clear, that in the first-place cassava is important for the own consumption and for feeding children in order to survive.

"[...] when we talk about cassava, that is also something we should consider, in a home like this if you don't have cassava, you cannot feed children". (I10, p.77)

During several site visits and interviews the existing poverty could be confirmed through observations. By way of example, all visited small holder farmers lived in little huts with all their family members. Another indicator for the poorness was the frequency of observing little children which had clear references to a malnutrition indicated through their potbelly.

Moreover, such existing poverty could be identified as one of the main reasons for unethical behaviour in the agricultural value chain. It does not only lead to not taking ethical behaviour into account, but also enhances it. Most of the identified unethical behaviour appearing in the agricultural value chain could either be related to a lack of money or to the need of money. By way of example, due to their poverty and the fast need for money, they do not have time to dry the rice properly and harvest pre-mature rice. Another example is that farmers mix white stones into their rice bags to increase the weight than can be sold. This can be illustrated by the following quotes:

"You may find that they even put some stones in the rice, just to get weight they add some kilograms of stones." (I1, p. 11)

"If they dry directly from the ground, it can dry very fast. You can find a farmer keeping the tarpaulin inside." (I2, p. 25)

"Because for them, all they are looking at, when you asked him or her, all they are doing, they want to get their weights, to increase the weights of their product [...]." (I1, p. 10)

Furthermore, the farmers have no strong monetary incentives of acting ethically. Agricultural officers in Oyam narrated, that one main reason for unethical behaviour and the connected poor quality of cassava is that there is just limited monetary incentives for the farmers. As the cassava production does not have any quality grading scheme, there is no quality differentiation between the cassava produced by the different farmers. Additionally, many farmers are not aware of the economical possibility of using agriculture as business opportunity at all. It further emphasizes, how strongly the economic perspective and ethical behaviour is connected.

All in all, it demonstrates, that for any implementation of CSR practices in such contexts the economic situation needs to

be incorporated. Thus, CSR practices need to be integrated in a bigger picture of societal development. Therefore, for implementing practices that aim for example to reduce unethical behaviour in the agricultural value chain, they need to be developed in line with how to increase the economic situation of those farmers.

Dimension 3: Addressing the roots of societal problems with CSR practices:

The on-site study in the rural areas in Uganda showed, that the origins for unethical behaviour are not only rooted in the business itself, but the sources for unethical behaviour lie deeper in the societal history. Therefore, during the implementation of CSR practices the bottom of these problems need to be addressed. During several interviews the mind-set of the people was identified as one main reason for unethical behaviour. By way of example, the war, which just ended in 2007, was identified as main reason for the negative mind-set. On the one hand, a significant short-term-thinking characterizes the stakeholders in Oyam. Due to the war, where people needed to fear the death every day, long-term-thinking was not existent. This can be illustrated by the following quote:

"What I feel is, first of all, we are affected by the war. Originally this place should have different minds and attitudes. But when the war came, I think most people were traumatized. [...] For over 20 years the region has been in war, people are being desperate, people knew any time and day you would be killed, so they lost hope in living. People were just looking at the smartest way to satisfying yourself, because you are finally being killed. Because the rebels could come and abduct and take you any time! So, I think

that this is the main cause that has affected the mind-set of our people." (I8, p. 49)

Therefore, the general behaviour is characterized through the aim to earn "fast" money. On the other hand, people are dramatized through the war, which led to a problem of alcohol consumption which is in general widely spread throughout in the society of Uganda.

"There is a lack of alcohol consumption and this is affecting agriculture so much. That is the main reason why men don't go for farming. But honestly, those who are drinking don't go to the field. They sit, have their hangover and go back to drink [...] [The Farmers] tend to grow only crops, that can bring money immediately." (I8, p. 49)

This quote clearly shows, that the major issues and sources of problems are deeply rooted in the societal history, which is typically not addressed by CSR practices. This goes further by showing the following quote:

[Alcohol] is the main reason why men don't go for farming. They wake up in the morning, some of those who are hard-working try to deal with it but they leave the part of the work to the women." (I8, p. 49)

This statement indicates directly to another societal problem of gender issues, which has a strong impact on the agricultural industry in Uganda. As the relationships between husbands and wives in Uganda are still extremely traditional, the effectiveness and workforce in the agricultural industry are also influenced. Women are not only responsible for taking care of the children, but also for the agricultural production.

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Men are only responsible for selling the products at the end of the day and are supposed to take care of the financials. Observations during interviews emphasized the traditional thinking, as in most interviewed farmer groups the women were seated on the floor, while only men and the guests were allowed to sit on chairs (Figure 2).

On this example of the gender issue it can be shown, how difficult such problems are to assess from a western perspective. This can be shown by the following quote:

"So, the Western culture, the Western understanding of gender issues probably still have a long way to work here. Unless if you are going to make every woman a divorced and put all the men in jail [...] Because you'll find even the minister of gender, maybe he is doing what his grandfather or uncle in the village has done, so that is what I am saying, we lack the role models. The government officials, they don't believe in the gender movement [...]. So even government officials, even police officers, even, who has the gender issues at heart?" (I15, p. 121)

All in all, it can be seen, that problems and challenges are not only ultimately related to the business itself, but represent deep lying societal problems. In the case of the agricultural industry in Uganda the excessive alcohol consumption and gender inequality could be identified.

Dimension 4: Providing on-site support:

The last identified dimension can be related to a similar result discovered by Frynas (2005). In his research in the context of Nigeria, he identified that local people sometimes saw representatives less than once a year (Frynas, 2005). This problem was also discovered during the

on-site study in the context of the agricultural industry in Uganda. In various discussions, interviewees explained, that they lack in on-site support. Through observations, it became obvious, that especially "white" people are barely seen in local districts and personally demonstrating interest in the situation of the bottom of pyramid players. Being white as a researcher automatically created enormous attention as many people came to join discussions. By way of example, children were extremely curious and sometimes even afraid of white people as it can be assumed, that they saw a western person for the first time in their life (Figure 3). Furthermore, on-site support was identified by the interviewed stakeholder as a missing part of prior experienced cooperation's. While speaking with local stakeholders about their previous experiences with initiatives, it became clear that often such on-site support was missing and cooperation's ended rapidly.

"Yeah, we have some experiences. We were supported by IFDC (International Fertilizer Development Center[1]). Cassava was one of the enterprises. They brought in even some buyers. [...] But in the end, these guys they disappear. So, in the end the farmers are frustrated." (I8, p. 72)

Moreover, during the conducted interviews it became apparent, that stakeholders in the agricultural industry in Uganda show strong interest in receiving guidance,

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[1] IFDC enables smallholder farmers to increase agricultural productivity, generate economic growth, and practice environmental stewardship by enhancing their ability to manage mineral and organic fertilisers responsibly and participate profitably in input and output markets. IFDC offers training/workshops and assistance to access finance (Mburu, 2014).

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creating partnerships and developing relationships in order to enhance the quality of their harvest. By way of example, an interview with agricultural officers of various sub countries was scheduled in Oyam. The interview location was already visited earlier for a prior conducted interview and it was observed, that a significant number of agricultural officers already arrived far earlier than the interview was scheduled. When referring to the understanding of punctuality in the African society, this clearly underlines the importance such officers assigned to this interview. Moreover, an impressive amount of seventeen agricultural officers of the district in Oyam attended this interview. All in all, this argumentation can be shown by the following quote of the Marketing and Production Officer:

"Let me thank the cross sector for mobilizing the district stakeholders for coming and allow me to thank them for coming very early, I want to encourage you to maintain the spirit [...]. On behalf of the department I want to say, that we always embrace partnerships. We are plaid in commitment, we are promising support of whatever kind. You have seen that our sub county officers have shown, meaning that they are ready to work with you." (I8, p. 59)

Further, the on-site support argument goes in hand with the prior explained incorporation of local voices as it directly creates a possible facilitation. Therefore, training needs to aim to increase the awareness of ethical behaviour and their benefits. This can be shown by one example discovered while visiting a local farmer group of the cassava value chain in Oyam. One main issue of acting unethically was that farmers could not dry their cassava on tarpaulins but only on the

ground as they could not afford that drying material. Therefore, the quality of the cassava and the prices sunk. However, during one meeting it was experienced that the cassava was dried on the bare ground, while the available tarpaulins were used to sit on during the interview (Figure 4 and 5). This example clearly shows, that not only the missing economic resources present a problem, but there is also a lack of knowledge and awareness of using existent resources effectively. This clearly demonstrates, that in this example the sole provision of material is not sufficient as problems lie much deeper.

Concept of Contextualization

The explained dimensions of the concept to contextualize western based practices in a developing country context were derived from the results analysis are presented in Figure 1. As it could be already recognized in the elaboration of the different dimensions, the concept needs to be seen as a dynamic framework. This means, that it can be characterized as a circle, multiconnecting the four dimensions. Therefore, all different dimensions are interrelated. It also demonstrates, that all four dimensions are equally important. As a starting point, this work also emphasizes the importance of such western engagement. Especially on the example of the agricultural in Uganda, which misses activities of western companies, it could be seen, what relevant role western based companies possess on promoting CSR in the first place. Therefore, it is an active interaction between western representatives and southern representatives. However, the developed concept shows, which dimensions need to be considered for ensuring that indented benefits can be reached. It is further

important to consider this process as a circle that does not end and therefore can start over again. This has mainly two reasons. The first reason is because of the initiatives being considered as long-term projects and the second is because of the complexity of the challenges encountered by developing countries.
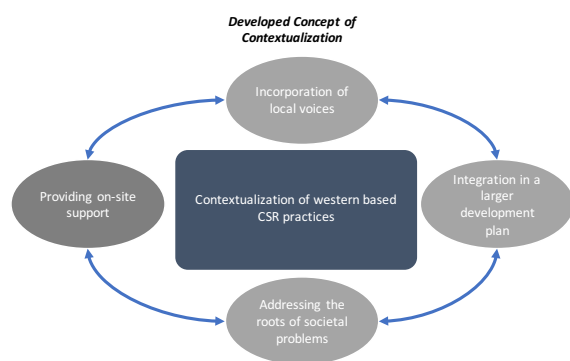

Figure 1: Concept of contextualization.

Implications of the Research

The first identified[22] dimension offers valuable addition to the literature by confirming the importance of incorporating local voices, but also adds a more in-depth analysis about difficulties in such approach and how those can be overcome. Here, political participation was identified as the most effective approach of incorporating local voices. Therefore, the interests of the local stakeholders should be represented by a political representative. However, it was seen that also western representatives need to be actively involved in the process of contextualizing CSR practices.

Additionally, the second identified dimension clearly pointed out one significant issue that developing countries encounter: the poverty of the society especially in the rural areas. This also presents importance for the area of CSR practices as such always needs to

consider the economic dimension in their decisions. Therefore, it can be assumed that CSR practices will not be successfully implemented if the economical dimension is not addressed. An integration of CSR practices in a larger development plan could provide a solution. A larger development plan could ensure that macro issues are followed. By integrating CSR practices in line with a larger development plan it can be further ensured, that the "real" problems are actively addressed. It could be demonstrated, that not only the western favoured initiatives are implemented, but initiatives which are helpful for the local society. Hence, such a larger development plan could provide guidance and also present a control mechanism in favour of the local society. In this context, CR innovations need to be emphasized. CR innovations focus on developing new business models for solving social and environmental problems (Halme & Laurila, 2009). Therefore, they differ from the philanthropically approach, but they offer a win- win situation as they even bring monetary value to the company while reducing or solving a societal problem. Most importantly, they also strengthen the economic situation. Therefore, CR innovations reduce the dependency of support and aid as they provide the opportunity for people to earn their own money and stabilize their economic situation.

Further, the third identified dimension of deeply rooted societal challenges lead to several conclusions. As stated, the literature argues, that western CSR practices go for issues that address western interests but not inevitable for the number one priority of the developing country. By addressing deeply rooted societal problems, western initiatives could disprove this argument, as they would

address problems that are not directly connected to their business. However, the on-site study implied, that only through an active interplay between western and southern representatives it can be ensured, that the typically deep lying problems can be identified and addressed. In the case of the agricultural industry in Uganda, those societal problems are first, the excessive alcohol consumption and second, the gender issue. Those problems cannot be identified, if no active involvement in the local society takes place. By way of example, the extreme alcohol consumption is present in daily life as for example little packets of local brewed gin could be found on a high frequency base, but it was only a topic of discussion in a small number of interviews (Figure 6). This emphasizes the importance of having an active relationship as key focus during the development and implementation of CSR practices. Only by creating a personal relationship between western and southern representatives, it is possible to identify those issues.

Moreover, the third dimension shows how complex and sensitive challenges in Uganda are. Even though cultural characterized issues are difficult to assess from a western perspective as pinpointed in the theoretical abstract, the issue of gender does not belong to those that are ambivalent and should be discussed. The elimination of gender disparity belongs to the defined millennium goals and without gender equality, the economic and social improvement for rural women as well as any further development is difficult to achieve. This shows, that the main concern is about the mind-set of people. Hence, it becomes clear which issues CSR practices need to address and why those cannot be led from an ivory tower in a western country. Furthermore, problems

can be considered as so complex, that single initiatives may have a limited impact.

Fourth and finally, the importance of being on on-site could be identified. Besides the strong symbolic meaning, enhancing the incorporation of local voices and strengthening the recognition of the developing country as an equal partner, it further demonstrates long time commitment. As the third dimension emphasizes, are challenges and problems often deeply rooted in the societal history, which underlines the complexity and difficulty of creating a change. Hence, the problems cannot be solved quickly, which makes a long-term view even more important. Further, it could be demonstrated that guidance and advisory present an important part. It could be pointed out, that it is not done by solely incorporating local actors in the development and implementation of CSR practices, but it is also necessary to provide support and advise during the process. Lastly, a long-term commitment can increase the chances of creating a trustful relationship. Thus, the chances of identifying deeply lying societal problems can be enhanced.

Limitations

Firstly, it needs to be mentioned, that Uganda is not strongly accessed by western companies and due to the geographical situation, a strong amplification cannot be assumed for the future. Therefore, it has to be questioned how strong CSR practices by western initiatives can be implemented in Uganda, especially in the agricultural industry. However, Uganda still offers the typical circumstances and challenges, that developing countries are facing. Moreover,

through the lack of participation and activeness of western initiatives also the importance of those could be demonstrated in promoting CSR in general and putting it on the agenda in rural developing areas.

Secondly, it needs to be considered that only one interview round with a field trip time of three weeks was conducted. Therefore, participants in the interviews could not be documented in a longitudinal approach. This short period cannot provide a trustful behaviour between interviewer and interviewee, which may lead to a bias. However, while being aware of these issue, an experienced guide was joining the research group and provided support with personal contacts.

Thirdly, it needs to be considered as a hazard, that interviewer and interviewee were representing a cultural background with significant differences. As the research specifically aims to decrease the tension between western and southern understanding, it may be problematic that the interviewee does not present both cultural contexts. Therefore, even speaking the same language, words may have different cultural meanings (Qu & Dumay, 2011).

Finally, qualitative research is strongly influenced by personal interpretations. Hence, the generalizability of the research may be limited. Thus, it is important for future research to conduct research in different contexts to increase the generalizability and also the transferability independent of the agricultural industry in Uganda.

Recommendations for Future Research

Due to the explanatory nature of the study and the nascent literature status, the findings of this research characterize a beginning in the exploration. Therefore, future research needs to test the proposed concept especially in a longer time frame. Moreover, a longer time frame is especially important for creating a trustful research context. As it could be seen in the example of the excessive alcohol consumption, a trustful relationship is important to identify societal problems. Furthermore, if the research team represents a different cultural background, it is recommended to plan a longer time frame for being able to adapt to the new research environment. This can significantly minimize the likelihood of cultural misunderstandings, which may lead to wrong interpretations and assumptions. Furthermore, as the study was limited to a specific industry, it presents a valuable addition to supplement further perspectives through increasing the amount of researched industries. However, it is important to consider circumstances, that are similar to the researched context. In this case, especially the in general low research environment of African countries are recommended to consider. Lastly, in the considered study context, it would be interesting to conduct research on a concrete case study.

Conclusion

Through the conducted research important insights could be provided to the existing literature. Firstly, the research supports a crucial literature stream in CSR: it does emphasize the differences between developed and developing countries and that this difference needs to find consideration in regards of CSR practices. It clearly denies the assumption, that the west knows better. Further, it shifts the focus from the western consideration to

local realities by conducting on-site research (Blowfield, 2007). However, it is important for the Ugandan development to look up for western "best practices" in the agricultural sector with respect to for example planting, quality management, relationship management et cetera. This also counts for CSR practices. Western initiatives can play a crucial role in promoting CSR for putting it on the agenda in the first place. But as emphasized, CSR is not the same over the world and cannot be considered as unitary model. Hence, this work delivered an approach about how those western driven practices can be successfully implemented in the developing country context, according to the research question:

"How can western based CSR practices in the agricultural industry in Uganda be contextualized?"

More importantly, the research actively addressed rural stakeholders and incorporated local voices. Having this in mind, a framework was developed to provide guidance for facilitating the contextualization of CSR practices. With the engagements from the West, and CSR interventions in particular, the resulting impact can be made meaningful. The proposed concept ensures a real bottom-up approach in which the interests of developing countries can be incorporated through their active participation. By developing the presented concept of contextualization, the link between CSR practices and desirable outcomes could be addressed.

However, this work does not aim to deliver a solution about what can be considered as the "right" CSR approach in a developing country, but it aims to present a concept, how the chance of choosing a "wrong" approach can be minimized. Therefore, it is recommended to continue CSR research particularly in areas, where the bottom of pyramid players can be incorporated, because their voices and an active cooperative between the western and southern representatives can ensure a successful and sustainable implementation of the CSR practices.

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Appendix:

Figure 2: Typical interview setting – women seated on the ground and men seated on chairs

Figure 3: Example of enormous attention "white" researchers created

Figure 4: Cassava drying on the bare ground

Figure 5: Farmer group sitting on a tarpaulin (same farmer group as in Figure 5)

Figure 6: Typical alcohol packet found on a way to a farmer village