

**“ONE DOES NOT ALWAYS THINK THAT IT`S  
ALWAYS PRESENT”  
-A CASE STUDY OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT IN  
CSR**

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## ABSTRACT

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<p>According to micro-CSR studies individual stakeholder reactions to corporate social responsibility (CSR) can explain the variability between CSR activities and organization's financial performance (Jones et al., 2017). Therefore, studying and understanding stakeholder perspectives on CSR is needed. This case work focuses on one specific stakeholder group, namely employees and their involvement in CSR. Employee involvement in CSR is necessary for strategy implementation, but it is also beneficial, since involvement can improve organization reputation (De Roeck et al., 2016) and lead to additional organizational outcomes, such as higher employee commitment (Kim et al., 2010).</p> <p>This work aims to examine employee current involvement in CSR as a case study in large multinational corporation. The aim with this work is to help organization in its CSR strategy implementation by describing the current involvement of employees and giving recommendations how involvement could be further supported. This qualitative study is based on the theoretical background considering the relationship between employees and CSR and empirical data consisting of five focus group interviews conducted within the employees of the case organization.</p> <p>The results of the work indicate that employees as a group are comprehensively involved in CSR. Comprehensive CSR rise emotions and is connected to organizational commitment, which is found to be mediated from organizational identification. As a group employee involvement is comprehensive, which is based on the tripartite role of employees and variability in individual perceptions and experiences of CSR. Employees as a group see that CSR is present comprehensively, even though they do not actively think about it. Comprehensiveness of employee involvement may be a challenge, since in order to support involvement, CSR work need to be consistent and be communicated consistently between different segments and dimensions for different kind of individuals. Overall this work recommends case organization to take the full benefits out of its comprehensive CSR work, which employees of the organization seem to value. This work suggests organization to translate CSR strategy to employees in interaction with CSR, HRM and communicational professionals and employees themselves.</p>	
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## TIIVISTELMÄ

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<p>Yksittäisten sidosryhmien reaktio yritysvastuuseen voi osittain selittää yritysvastuutoimenpiteiden ja organisaation taloudellisen tuloksen välistä yhteyttä (Jones et al., 2017). Tämän vuoksi sidosryhmien näkemyksiä yritysvastuusta on perusteltua tutkia ja ymmärtää. Tämä tapaustutkimus keskittyy yhteen sidosryhmään, nimittäin henkilöstöön ja sen osallisuuteen yrityksen vastuullisuudessa. Henkilöstön osallisuus yritysvastuuseen on tarpeellista strategian jalkauttamisen kannalta, mutta se on myös hyödyllistä, sillä osallisuus voi vaikuttaa positiivisesti mm. organisaation maineeseen (De Roeck et al., 2016) ja tuottaa muita hyötyjä, kuten vahvistaa henkilöstön sitoutumista organisaatioon (Kim et al., 2010).</p> <p>Työ tutkii henkilöstön nykyistä osallisuutta yritysvastuuseen tapaustutkimuksena kansainvälisessä suuryrityksessä. Työn tarkoituksena on auttaa organisaatiota yritysvastuustrategian jalkauttamisessa kuvaamalla henkilöstön nykyistä osallisuutta, sekä antaa suosituksia osallisuuden kehittämiseen. Tämän laadullisen tutkimuksen teoriaosuus käsittelee henkilöstön ja yritysvastuun välistä suhdetta ja empiirinen osuus perustuu viiteen fokusryhmähaastatteluun tutkitussa yrityksessä.</p> <p>Työn tulokset osoittavat, että ryhmänä henkilöstö on kokonaisvaltaisesti osallisena yrityksen vastuullisuuteen. Yritysvastuu herättää henkilöstössä tunteita ja on sidoksissa organisaatioon sitoutumiseen. Ryhmänä henkilöstön osallisuus on kokonaisvaltaista, mikä perustuu toisaalta henkilöstön kolmiosaiseen rooliin yritysvastuutyössä ja toisaalta yksilöiden erilaisiin näkemyksiin ja kokemuksiin yritysvastuusta. Henkilöstö näkee vastuullisuuden olevan läsnä kokonaisvaltaisesti, vaikka eivät usein ajattelisikaan sitä. Henkilöstön kokonaisvaltainen osallisuus yritysvastuuseen voi olla haaste, sillä osallisuuden kehittäminen vaatii johdonmukaista yritysvastuutyötä ja viestimistä eri segmenttien ja osa-alueiden kautta erilaisille yksilöille. Kokonaisuudessaan tämä työ suosittelee tapausyritystä hyödyntämään täyden potentiaalin sen kokonaisvaltaisesta yritysvastuutyöstä, jota henkilöstö vaikuttaa arvostavan. Työ suosittelee yritysvastuustrategian kääntämistä henkilöstölle yhteistyössä yritysvastuun, henkilöstöjohtamisen ja viestintäammattilaisten sekä henkilöstön itsensä kanssa.</p>	
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a management concept that aims to improve organisation`s triple bottom line, namely its financial, social and environmental performance (Epstein, 2008, 19). Competitive advantage, financial performance, corporate reputation, stakeholder demand (Epstein, 2008; Branco & Rodrigues, 2006) and risk management are some of the reasons why organizations implement CSR (Epstein, 2008). There are several definitions for CSR (Celma, Martinez-Garcia & Coenders, 2012, 83; Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar & de Colle, 2010, 235; Kramar, 2014, 1070; Onkila, 2015, 223; Raubenheimer & Rasmussen, 2014, 37-39) and quite many of them include stakeholder perspective (Raubenheimer & Rasmussen, 2014, 38). For instance, United Nations define CSR to be *“a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders”* (UNIDO, 2018).

In this thesis I will focus on one internal stakeholder group, namely employees and their relationship to CSR. This thesis acknowledges that employees are involved in CSR in three ways, as targets, perceivers and participants of it. First of all, employees are the targets of CSR through the organizational practices that aim to increase the employee welfare. In its simplicity, employee welfare can be supported for example by employee training or by taking care of the work safety (Bärlund & Perko, 2013, 218). Secondly, employees are also the perceivers of CSR, which according to Glavas and Godwin (2013) means that employees form a perception of how responsibly organization treats its stakeholders and natural environment (Glavas and Godwin, 2013, 17). Lastly, employees can also be participants of CSR for example through involvement in decision making (Kim, Lee, Lee & Kim, 2010, 562) and execution of CSR initiatives (De Roeck, El Akremi & Swaen, 2016, 1161; Kim et al., 2010, 562).

For many organizations implementing CSR is strategic decision. As in any strategy also in CSR strategy, employee involvement is necessary in order to be able to call it a strategy (e.g. in Mintzberg, 1987). However, employee involvement in CSR is not only necessary, it is also beneficial. Several studies have found that employee involvement in CSR does not only create benefits related to CSR performance (Benn, Teo & Martin, 2015, 505; Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 485-486) and organization`s reputation (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161; Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 301) but generates also additional organizational outcomes (Benn et al., 2015, 504-505; Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 121 De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159; De Roeck, Marique, Stinglhamber & Swaen, 2014, 101-103; De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397; Haski-Leventhal, Lonneke & Meijs, 2017, 47; Jones, 2010, 857; Kim et al., 2010, 564-565;). Especially employee perception of CSR (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159; De Roeck et al., 2014, 91; De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397; Kim et al., 2010, 564), attitude (Jones, 2010, 857) and participation to CSR (Kim et al., 2010, 565) support employees` organizational identification, which is found to be connected to other

organizational outcomes, such as higher job satisfaction (De Roeck et al., 2014, 101-103, De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397), intentions to stay (Jones, 2010, 870), commitment (Kim et al., 2010, 565) and organizational citizenship behaviour (Jones, 2010, 861). Even though employee role in CSR has been acknowledged, many organizations find challenging to implement CSR in all levels of organization (Merriman, Sen, Felo & Litzky, 2016, 820). Employee involvement may be challenging for instance because it requires financial and administrative resources (e.g. Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 394; Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 486;), knowledge (Coutinho et al., 2018, 37, Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 384) and consistency (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1162).

This case work aims to study employee involvement in CSR in a case organization, which is a multinational corporation that employs thousands of people internationally. Case organization has updated their CSR strategy recently and this case work aims to help organization in its CSR strategy implementation. Employee involvement is studied as a qualitative study consisting of five focus group interviews that were conducted among organization employees at the beginning of 2019. Altogether 22 employees were participating in the semi-structured interview session, which we partially conducted in-person and partially online. The data was analysed through thematic network analysis.

In this introduction I will next present the motivation for the research, which is followed by research questions. In last part of this introduction, I will shortly describe the structure of this work

## **1.1 Motivation for the research**

The reason to study employee involvement in CSR can be motivated by academical, organizational and employee related reasons. For academia, this kind of micro-CSR study has been found to contribute to meso level phenomenon by explaining underlying reasons on why CSR may lead to higher financial performance of an organization (Jones et al., 2017, 12). According to micro-CSR studies individual stakeholder reactions to corporate social responsibility (CSR) can explain the direction and strength of how CSR activities relate to organization's financial performance (Jones et al., 2017, 6-7). Therefore, for an organization, who aims to improve financial performance through CSR, it is crucial to understand stakeholder reactions related to responsibility. This case work focused on one specific stakeholder group, namely employees. Because organizations may have different challenges in terms of CSR (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 393), this kind of case study provides organization-specific information of employee involvement. For an organization, studying employee involvement is important since involvement has been found to contribute to organization many ways, for instance through improved CSR performance (e.g. in Benn et al., 2015, 505), reputation (e.g. in De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161) and in a form of additional organizational outcomes such as higher job satisfaction (e.g. in De Roeck et al., 2014, 101-103)



and higher employee commitment (Kim et al., 2010, 565). Lastly, studying and improving employee involvement can also benefit employees themselves, since through organizational identification employee may feel oneness and belongingness to the organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, 104) and therefore make them more satisfied and committed to employer through their involvement in CSR. Because of these academical, organizational and employee related reasons studying this micro-CSR phenomena is needed, since it provides information of case organizations current involvement and recommendations how this involvement could be supported in order to reach the positive organizational reactions linked to CSR. In a case organization`s perspective the aim with this work is also to increase the internal discussion of the CSR issues within the organization.

## 1.2 Research questions

The overall aim with this thesis is to learn about the current employee involvement in CSR in case organization and whether the employees are identified with the organization through CSR. This thesis also aims to find ways how the involvement of employees can be supported in the organization to help it in CSR strategy implementation.

In order to provide the necessary information of the current situation of employee involvement as well as to create recommendations, the following research questions are formulated:

- *How are employees involved in CSR in studied case organization?*
- *What supports and hinders employee involvement in CSR in case organization?*
- *Are employees identified with the organization through CSR in case organization?*

## 1.3 Structure of the work

The structure of this work is following. The section 2 represent the literature and theory linked to intersection of CSR and employees. Section 2 presents how employees and CSR are connected, what kind of challenges and possibilities are linked to employee involvement in CSR, the theory of organizational identification and lastly the review of findings of past studies including practices that may develop employee involvement. The third section reveals the methodology if this work by representing how the empirical part of the study is conducted. The fourth part is for results and discussions that are based on the focus group interviews and their relation to past studies and theoretical models that were introduced in section 2. The fifth part considers the conclusions and recommendations

of this work. In the last part I will also discuss of the limitations and possibilities of further research of this subject.

## 2 LITERATURE AND THEORY

The theory of this thesis is divided into four parts. First, I will explain the relationship between employees and CSR by presenting the concept of CSR and the roles that employees have in relation to CSR. Next, I will review the literature and explain why it is important to involve employees in CSR and what kind of challenges organizations face in the involvement process. Thirdly, I will present the theory of organizational identification and draw the overall picture of the theoretical framework of this thesis. Lastly, I will review the literature to present some recommendations literature provides to support employee involvement in CSR.

### 2.1 The relationship between CSR and employees

In this chapter the relationship between CSR and employees is presented. I will start by shortly describing the diversity of the concept of CSR. In order to examine employee views and perceptions of CSR it is valuable to note that CSR is not a univocal concept even for the academia and professionals who are working with the concept daily. After discussing about the concept of CSR, I will explain the three ways how employees can be involved in CSR through being targets, perceivers and participants of CSR.

#### 2.1.1 Explaining CSR

CSR is a management concept that aims to improve organization`s triple bottom line, namely its financial, social and environmental performance (Epstein, 2008, 19). Competitive advantage, financial performance, corporate reputation, stakeholder demand (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006; Epstein, 2008) and risk management are some of the reasons why organizations implement CSR (Epstein, 2008). Literature acknowledges several definitions for CSR (Celma et al., 2012, 83; Freeman et al., 2010, 235; Kramar, 2014, 1070; Onkila, 2015, 223; Raubenheimer & Rasmussen, 2014, 37-39) and quite often the definitions are linked to organization`s stakeholders (Raubenheimer & Rasmussen, 2014, 38). For instance, United Nations defines CSR to be

*“a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders”*  
(UNIDO, 2018)

The variety of definitions may reflect the idea that CSR does not necessarily mean the same thing to everyone (Garavan & McGuire, 2010, 490; Raubenheimer &

Rasmussen, 2014, 38;). Because different industries have different sustainability challenges that they need to be focused on (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 393), organizations may find individual definitions for CSR by stating what being responsible means to them. As an example, an organization can distinguish cultural sustainability as its own separate dimension of CSR in addition to traditional economic, environmental and social aspects (e.g. in City of Espoo, 2019). This distinction might be due to the idea, that an organization has large cultural impacts and wants to emphasize the role of that dimension.

When talking about CSR, it is important to note the broadness of the concept. In addition to variety of definitions for CSR (Celma et al., 2012, 83; Freeman et al., 2010, 235; Kramar, 2014, 1070; Onkila, 2015, 223; Raubenheimer & Rasmussen, 2014, 37-39), there are also several alternative concepts that similarly reflect the responsibility of the business (Bolton, Kim & O`Gorman, 2011, 61-62). These concepts include for instance business ethics, corporate citizenship and sustainable development (Bolton et al., 2011, 61-62) and in the literature there might be terms such as corporate sustainability (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 113) and sustainability (Haugh & Talwar, 2010), which, in this thesis, are interpreted to reflect somewhat similar kind of organizational practices than CSR does. This interpretation is made even though some authors (Garavan and McGuire, 2010, 493) have found slight differences between some of the terms (e.g. CSR and corporate sustainability). In addition, there is a body of literature that handles precisely the environmental factors related to business operations, and this might be referred for instance by terms green management (Masri & Jaaron, 2016), environmental management (Benn et al., 2014; Masri & Jaaron, 2016) and environmental sustainability (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 113).

Based on the variety of definitions and number of terms used to reflect the responsible business practices, it can be concluded that CSR is a complex concept that means different things to different people and organizations. For the purpose of this thesis, it is necessary to understand the complexity of the CSR concept before examining employees` knowledge and perceptions of it. The looseness of definition leaves room for organizations to decide what being responsible means to them, but according to Garavan and McGuire (2010) lack of univocal definition may simultaneously lead difficulties when aiming to implement CSR in practice (Garavan & McGuire, 2010, 490) and also, when aiming to analyse the findings of past research. However, in order to simplify this work, it will not be analyzed whether the studies referred in this thesis understand or explain CSR differently. Instead, it is presumed that CSR means approximately same thing despite the terminological and definitional differences.

### **2.1.2 Employee involvement in CSR**

As mentioned in previous section, CSR often includes stakeholder perspective (Raubenheimer & Rasmussen, 2014, 38) and stakeholders are defined to be any groups or individuals that are influencing in or influenced by an organization

(Cornelissen, 2017, 64). One internal stakeholder group for an organization is its employees, who may have different roles in the implementation of CSR. Next, I will explain how employees may be involvement in CSR work by being the targets, perceivers and participants of it.

Social responsibility can refer to organization's responsibility towards its stakeholders, for instance towards customers and surrounding communities but also towards organization's employees (Epstein, 2008, 34). Social responsibility towards employees is about taking care of employee welfare, which can appear in several ways, for example organization can arrange employee training, take care of the work safety and provide teleworking possibilities (Bärlund & Perko, 2012, 218). This perspective views employees as the targets of social responsibility. This viewpoint is also supported by De Roeck et al. (2016), who point out that one important dimension of CSR is how an organization treats its own members (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161).

Employees however are not only just the targets of CSR but can also have other roles. For instance, employees can also be associated to CSR through their perception of their employer's CSR (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1142; Glavas & Godwin, 2013; Kim et al., 2010, 562). According to Glavas and Godwin (2013, 17) perceived CSR means stakeholder's perception of the impacts that organization have on the well-being of its stakeholders and natural environment. In employee perspective this can be interpreted so, that employees form a perception of how their employer treats stakeholders and the environment. De Roeck et al. (2016) underline the importance of consistency in CSR by explaining that organizations that interact fairly towards internal and external stakeholders, support employees' perception of CSR, which can furthermore reinforce employees' organizational identification (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161-1162). Lastly, employees can also be viewed as participants of CSR work (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161; Kim et al., 2010, 558; Onkila, 2015, 233). Participation to CSR can appear for example through involvement in decision making (Kim et al., 2010, 562) and execution of CSR initiatives (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161; Kim et al., 2010, 562).

Based on these three perspectives mentioned above, it can be formulated that employees can be involved in CSR in three different ways; as targets, as perceivers and as participants. I have illustrated this tripartite role of employees in figure 1 below.

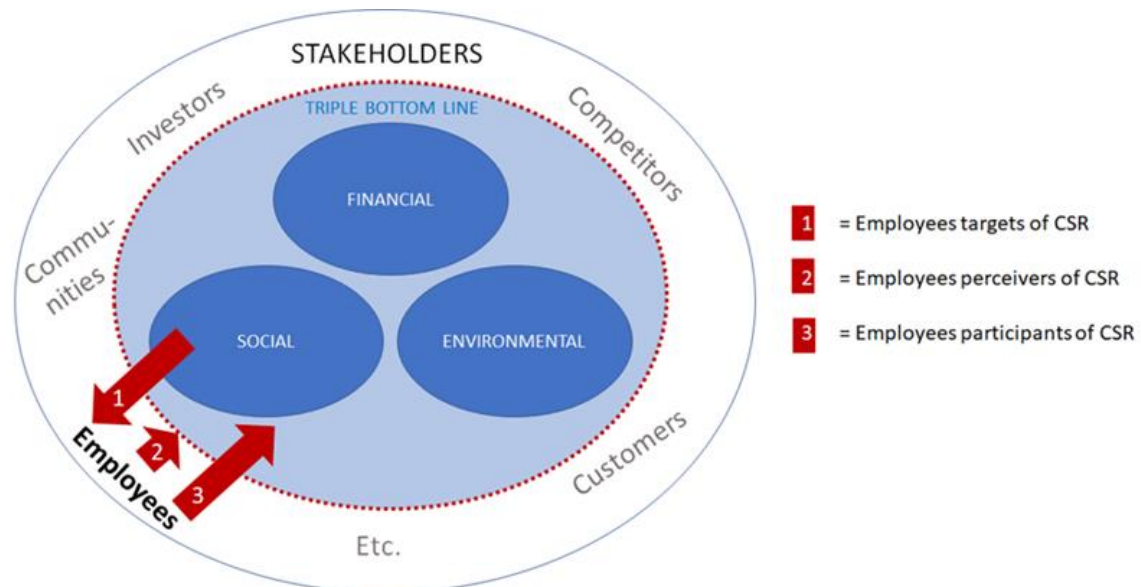


Figure 1: Employees tripartite role in CSR

Even though the three levels of involvement are presented separately in figure 1, in the reality, levels are interconnected, since they can affect on one and other. For instance, De Roeck et al. (2016) remark that the treatment of employees as targets may effect on employees overall perception of organization's CSR (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1162). On the other hand, also employee participation to CSR can affect on their perception (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161). This perspective that employees have diverse role in the CSR is also supported by Haski-Leventhal (2013), who emphasize that responsible companies need to treat their stakeholders not only as voices to be heard and considered, but also as providers and givers (Haski-Leventhal, 2013, 127). Therefore, understanding this three-level role of employee involvement is needed in order to examine and improve employee involvement.

## 2.2 Importance and challenges in employee involvement in CSR

In this section, I am reviewing the literature to explain why employee involvement in CSR is important. The importance of employee involvement can be viewed as both; a necessary activity and a beneficial activity for an organization. On the other hand, I am also going to explain why employees are often not fully involved in CSR work in practice by explaining what kind of difficulties many organizations face while aiming to involve employees.

### 2.2.1 Importance of employee involvement in CSR

The aim of employee involvement in CSR is to make organization's sustainability goals consistent with organization's reality (Siano, Vollero, Conte & Amabile 2017, 34). Many CSR studies have been focused on the organizations (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017, 36) and the financial performance linked to CSR (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012), but in recent years there has also been growing number of studies that emphasize the importance of employees in CSR work (e.g. De Roeck et al., 2016; Jones et al, 2017; Merriman et al., 2014; Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 301). In this chapter, I will present the importance of employee involvement through explaining its necessity and beneficiary. First, I will explain why it is necessary that employees are involved in CSR when CSR is viewed as a strategic decision. Then I will present some additional benefits that employee involvement in CSR can cause to an organization.

For many organizations CSR is a strategic decision and employee involvement can be viewed as a part of strategy implementation. In the literature there are many definitions for what a term strategy stands for. One famous definition for strategy is given by Mintzberg (1987, 11-17), who presents that strategy can be defined by five P's, namely as a plan, ploy, pattern, position and perspective. This definition includes the idea that strategy is consistent behaviour in an organization (thus a pattern) and it is shared by the members of an organization and revealed by their intentions and actions (thus a perspective) (Mintzberg, 1987, 11-17). Therefore, the members of organization play an important role in strategy implementation and it could be conducted that a CSR strategy without employees' consistent behaviour, intentions and actions is not in accordance with Mintzberg's (1987) definition of strategy. To conclude employees are a necessary part of CSR strategy implementation and as stated by Collier and Esteban (2007) employees are the ones who implement organization's ethical behaviour daily and the work results depend on employee willingness to cooperate (Collier & Esteban, 2007, 19-20).

Despite employees being a necessary part of CSR strategy implementation, studies have also found that employee involvement in CSR can create many benefits for an organization. Employee involvement can for example improve organization's CSR performance (Benn et al., 2015, 505; Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 121; Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 485-486), reputation (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161; Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 301) and create additional organizational outcomes (Benn et al., 2015, 504-505; De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159; De Roeck et al., 2014, 101-103; De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017, 47; Jones, 2010, 857; Kim et al., 2010, 564-565;). These necessities and benefits of employee involvement I have illustrated in figure 2 below.

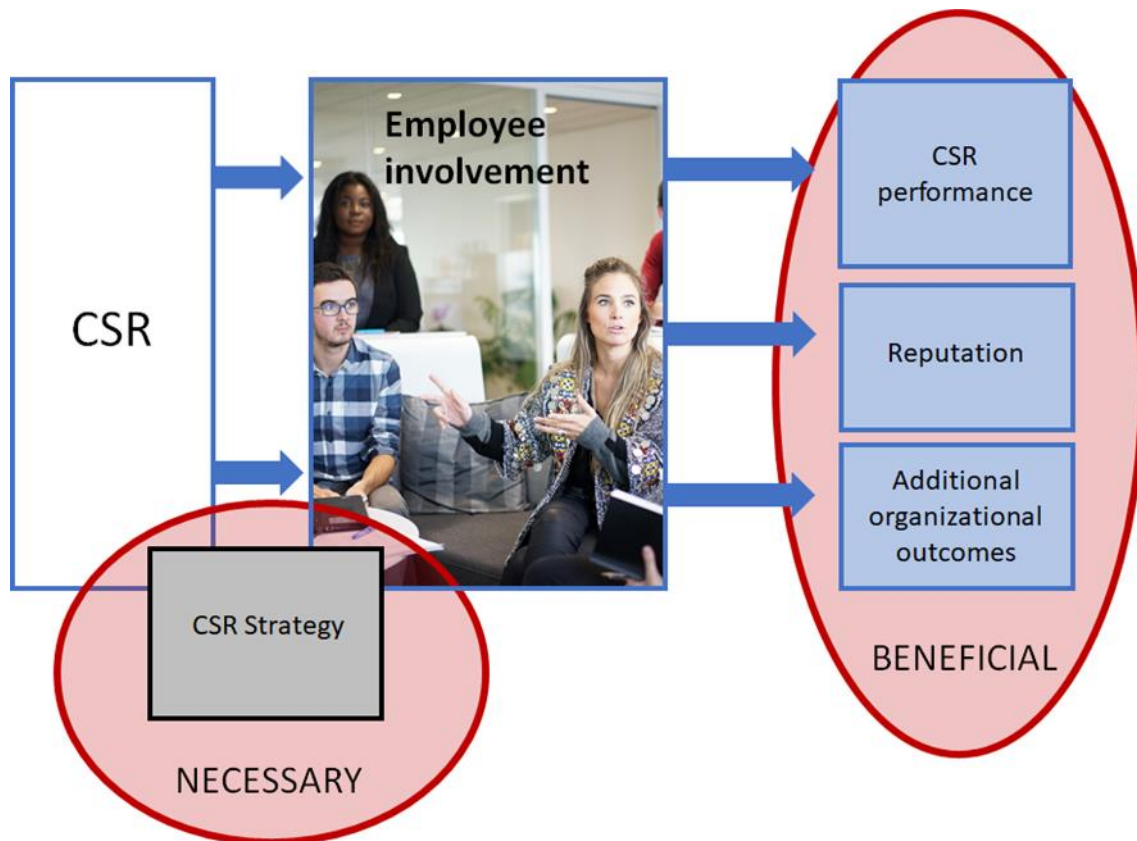


Figure 2: Employee involvement in CSR is necessary and beneficial<sup>1</sup>

Figure 2 represents why employee involvement in CSR is important. In the following chapters I will take a closer look on these three benefits that employee involvement can create and explain how employee involvement can lead to higher CSR performance, reputation and create additional organizational outcomes.

First of all, employee involvement in CSR can improve organization's CSR performance. Especially when looking at one dimension of CSR, namely environmental CSR, there are number of studies that found a positive connection between employee involvement and organization's environmental CSR performance (Benn et al., 2015, 492, 494; Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 485-486). According to Benn et al. (2015, 494) higher environmental CSR performance is achieved because involvement and participation develops employees understanding of the reasons behind the organization's environmental goals. However, employee involvement does not only increase the knowledge of employees but can also be viewed as a learning process for an organization. As an example, Masri and Jaaron (2016) explain that organizations may gain a higher environmental performance by connecting the environmental goals to specific human resource management (HRM) practices (Marsi & Jaaron, 2016, 487) and through that support employee involvement in CSR. Linking environmental CSR goals to specific

<sup>1</sup> A photo utilized in this figure is with creative commons license and downloaded from <https://pxhere.com/en/photo/910324>



HRM practices may shape the environmental practices in a way that leads to a higher environmental CSR performance (Marsi & Jaaron, 2016, 487). In addition, Bolton et al. (2011) note that employee involvement in CSR ensures that the concerns of the local political, economic and social landscape are better represented (Bolton et al., 2011, 71). Therefore, it can be interpreted that organizations can increase their CSR performance, because employee involvement allows organizations to view CSR in broader perspective when they identify what employees represent.

Secondly, employee involvement in CSR can be linked to organization's reputation. Employee involvement in CSR can be a way to gain external and internal legitimacy for an organization (Bolton et al., 2011, 61). Through being involved in CSR employees can affect on external stakeholders view of the organization (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161) and organization's reputation, because external stakeholders see employees as credible source of information (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 301). Even though legitimacy ("the right to exist") is often focused on the external stakeholder's views (Bolton et al., 2011, 64), internal stakeholders' perspective is likewise important. For instance, organization's social responsibility reputation may attract higher skilled job applicants and improve current employees' motivation, commitment and loyalty (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 111). And as stated previously by De Roeck et al. (2016) employees' participation and treatment as the targets of CSR can affect on their perception of CSR (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161-1162), and therefore the internal reputation of CSR.

Lastly, employees involvement in CSR can create different kind of organizational outcomes (Benn et al., 2015, 504-505; Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 121; De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159; De Roeck et al., 2014, 101-103; De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017, 47; Jones, 2010, 857; Kim et al., 2010, 564-565), such as increased job satisfaction (Benn et al., 2015, 504; De Roeck et al., 2014, 101-103, De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397), employee commitment (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 121; Kim et al., 2010, 565) and less intentions to quit (Benn et al., 2015, 504). In this thesis the focus is particularly on one mechanism that explains how employee involvement improves these additional organizational outcomes. This mechanism is organizational identification, which has been found to be the mediating factor between employee involvement in CSR and different organizational outcomes (Kim et al., 2010, 564). I will explain mechanism and benefits of organizational outcomes more detailed in section 2.3.

The overall picture of the importance of employee involvement in CSR I have illustrated in figure 3, which covers the necessity and beneficity of involvement and explains how involvement is beneficial.

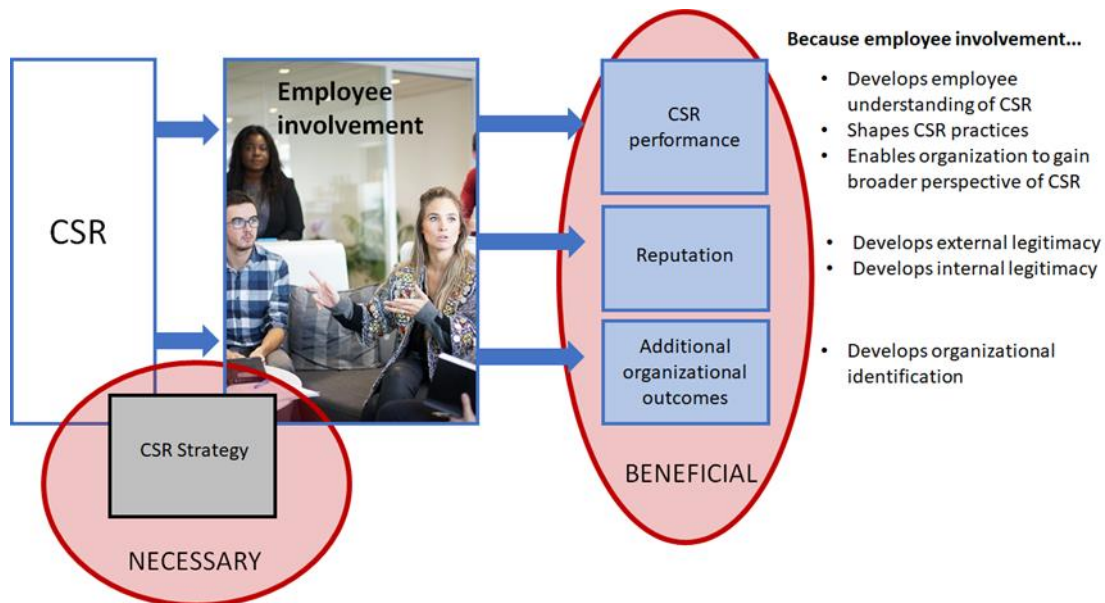


Figure 3: Employee involvement in CSR is beneficial because of many reasons

Even though the figure 3 presents the possible results of employee involvement in a very structured format, reality may be more complex. For instance, the benefits of employee involvement may also be interrelated. This is supported by Glavas and Godwin (2012) who argue, that employees positive perceived image of organization's CSR strengthens their organizational identification (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 23). This may be interpreted so that developing internal legitimacy do not only lead to higher reputation, but also creates additional organizational outcome. However, all in all, employee involvement can create multiple benefits even though the results are not always as straightforward as presented in the figure 3.

This section represented the importance of employee involvement in CSR. When an organization aims to increase employee involvement, the first step can be to study their current involvement in CSR. Organizations should explore how important CSR is for their employees (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 23). If employees find CSR important, there is a possibility to increase CSR actions within the interested employees (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 23). Simultaneously, if employees care about CSR but find out that the organization does not act responsibly, it is dangerous for an organization (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 23). Also Bolton et al. (2011) stress the importance of hearing employee viewpoints, because employees are the ones who generate and sustain organization's identity as "a good company" (Bolton et al, 2011, 70).

## 2.2.2 Challenges of involvement

As stated in previous section, employee involvement in CSR has been linked to many benefits. Regardless, organizations often face challenges when aiming to translate their CSR related goals and strategies into reality. These challenges can

vary from the expenses of involvement (e.g. Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 394; Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 486) to the lack of knowledge (e.g. Coutinho et al., 2018, 37) and lack of consistency in CSR work (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1162). Figure 4 represents how these challenges may dilute the possible benefits of employee involvement.

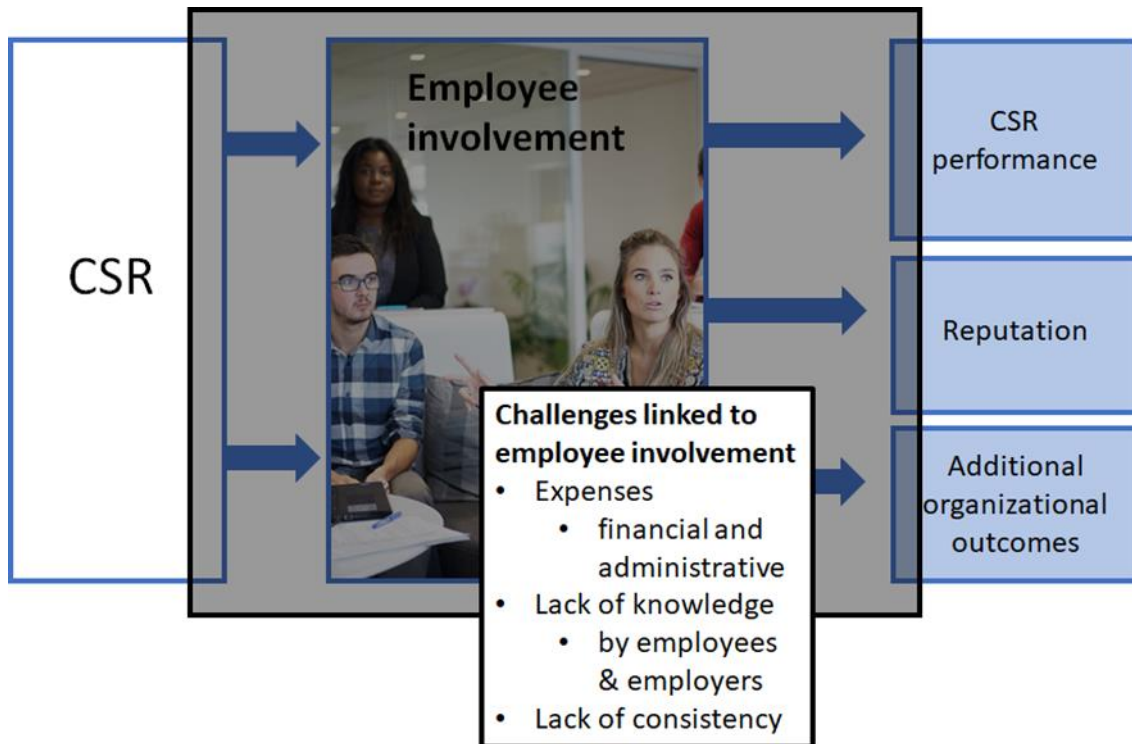


Figure 4: Requirements of employee involvement

As illustrated in figure 4 employee involvement in CSR requires financial and administrative resources from the organizations (Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 486). However, probably the larger challenge in employee involvement is the lack of knowledge both from employee and employer perspective. CSR strategies are often managed top-down (Epstein, 2008, 49) and if CSR represents only managerial interpretation of the organization, employees may find sustainability initiatives distant from their own work (Onkila, 2015, 225). And as presented by Coutinho et al. (2018) quite often employees have uncertainties of their practical role in the implementation of CSR (Coutinho et al., 2018, 37). In addition, employees are found to have low knowledge of basic CSR concepts (Coutinho et al., 2018, 37) and especially of those CSR issues that are beyond their own work responsibilities (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 384). Also, employees understanding of CSR as a strategic tool is defective since according to Haugh and Talwar (2010) employees might not be familiar with long-term goals and benefits related to CSR (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 384) and employees are often not participating in the discussions related to CSR policies and strategies (Garavan & McGuire, 2010, 490). From employer perspective the challenge is how to implement CSR in all levels of organization (Merriman et al., 2016, 820) and the lack of knowledge how to

involve employees in CSR. Even though organization would agree on the importance of employee involvement and are willing to invest in it, there is no straightforward solution how to reinforce employee involvement in any organizational strategy. And CSR strategies make no exception. Instead, there are number of studies that provide recommendations on how organizations can reinforce employee perception and participation to CSR. Some of the findings of these studies are reviewed in section 2.4.

The third challenge is linked to the consistency of CSR work and especially to employees` perception of how well and consistently CSR work is conducted in the organization. Even if employees are involved in CSR it is often done because organization aims to gain external legitimacy (Bolton et al., 2011, 62). However, aiming only towards external legitimacy can be problematic, since according to De Roeck et al. (2016) employees became sceptical on CSR initiatives if employees believe that resources are mainly directed to external stakeholders instead of enhancing the well-being of employees (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1162). Therefore, to reinforce employee perception of CSR and to reach the positive effects of it, organization need to be consistent and treat both external and internal stakeholders fairly (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1162) and viewing internal legitimacy as integral part of CSR instead of a by-product (Bolton et al., 2011, 64).

## **2.3 Organizational identification**

The main theory that will be utilized and examined in this thesis is organizational identification theory. Especially this thesis aims to study if employee involvement in CSR affects on employees` organizational identification. According to studies, organizational identification is the mediating factor between employee involvement and organizational outcomes, such as commitment and job satisfaction (e.g. in Kim et al., 2010, 564). In this section, I will present the concept of organizational identification through first describing the theory itself and then review the literature to explain how CSR is linked to organizational identification. Finally, I will draw an overall picture of the theoretical framework of this thesis.

### **2.3.1 What is organizational identification?**

Organizational identification is a term that refers to individual`s perception of oneness and belongingness to an organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, 104; Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 153). Within this section, the concept of organizational identification is shortly presented by introducing the concepts through organizational identity and social identity and by explaining how identification can affect on the organization by introducing the different impacts, levels and organizational units related to identification.

Identification is linked to organizational identity, which according to Pratt, Schultz, Ashforth and Ravasi (2016) aims to describe who organization is as a collective (Pratt et al., 2016, 3) and how this collective identity works (Pratt et al., 2016, 297). Organizational identity combines a central form of human collectivity, namely organizations, and identity, that is a prevailing concept in social science (Pratt et al., 2016, 1). Social identity theory states that individuals want to have a positive self-concept (Chmiel, Fraccarol & Sverke, 2017, 411). In its simplicity positive self-concept means that individuals want to feel good about them-selves (Chmiel et al., 2017, 411). Self-concept is constructed by two factors, that are personal identity (individual characteristics, strengths and weaknesses) and membership of a social group, for example a workgroup (Chmiel et al., 2017, 411). According to Chmiel et al. (2017) individual's thoughts, feelings and actions can change, when the membership of a social group becomes important to one (Chmiel et al., 2017, 411). For instance, the members of a group can start to see the group's common goals increasingly important and therefore change their action in order to reach those goals (Chmiel et al., 2017, 412). Therefore, identification is valuable for groups, such as organizations.

Organizational identification has both individual and organizational outcomes (Ashforth, Harrison & Corley, 2008, 334-338; Chmiel et al., 2017, 426). For example, organizational identification can impact on the well-being and performance of the employees and organization's functioning (Chmiel et al., 2017, 426). Examples of individual outcomes of identification is fulfilling the essential human need of belonging to a larger group ("I as part of we") (Ashforth et al., 2008, 334-336) or feeling of organizational pride (Jones, 2010, 875). There are also several organizational outcomes, such as identification's effect on job satisfaction, commitment (Ashforth et al., 2008, 337), less intentions to quit, in-role performance (Riketta, 2005 according to Chmiel et al., 2017, 413) and extra-role performance (also known as organizational citizenship behaviour) (Jones, 2010, 875; Van Dick, 2006 according to Chmiel et al., 2017, 414). Furthermore, organizational outcomes such as satisfaction and commitment, can lead to higher productivity and performance (Silverthorne, 2005, 191). In addition to employees, organizational identification can affect positively on organization's other stakeholders (Pratt et al., 2016, 297).

Stakeholders can identify with the organization in different levels, either as situated or deep-structure (Pratt et al., 2016, 478). Situated identification means belonging to an organization based on situational cues, that signal shared interest between the organization and an individual (Pratt et al., 2016, 478). Deep-structure identification means deeper level connection, for example when employees perceive that their sense of self in work role corresponds to broader self-concept (Pratt et al., 2016, 479). Deep-level identification can also be self-defining, which means that employees may redefine themselves through identification (Pratt et al., 2016, 479). These different levels of identification are connected, since deep-structure identification presumes situated identification (Pratt et al., 2016, 479). Therefore, organizational identification can also be viewed as a process, that

starts from employee perception of whether she/he could be part of an organization and may lead to re-defining her/his broader sense of self (Pratt et al., 2016, 479).

In addition to organization as a whole, members may also identify with some smaller unity within the organization (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 137). This unity may for instance be work group, department (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 137; Haslam, 2004, 75) or even a lunch group (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 137). According to van Knippenberg and van Schie (2000) organizational members may rather identify with a part of an organization than the entire organization (van Knippenberg & van Schie, 2000, 145). The identification with these sub-units was found to be better predictor of job-related variables, such as job satisfaction, job involvement and motivation (van Knippenberg and van Schie 2000, 145). In addition, interventions that aim to increase the organizational identification (f. ex. team building) may be easier to implement in work-group level than in organizational level (van Knippenberg & van Schie 2000, 145). Even though the identification to sub-unit may create organizational outcomes (van Knippenberg & van Schie 2000, 145) and is found to contribute to higher level of organizational identification (van Knippenberg & van Schie 2000, 142) it may also lead to negative effects. Namely, sub-unit identification may create distinction from other internal groups (van Knippenberg & van Schie 2000, 145) and employees' unwillingness to adapt to the changes regarding restructuring the organization (Jetten, O'Brian & Trindall, 2002, 281; van Knippenberg & van Schie 2000, 145). As found by Jetten et al. (2002) employees who are identified to organization as a whole rather than a subgroup, are less negative towards changes (Jetten et al., 2002, 281). Therefore, even though sub-group identification can lead to organizational outcomes and correlate to organizational identification, high level sub-group identification is not necessarily always beneficial for the organization (van Knippenberg and van Schie 2000, 142-145).

Organizational identification is a concept that has sometimes been mixed with the concept of organizational commitment (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 138). However, in this work in line with past research (as presented in Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 138) commitment is rather seen as something that identification can support. As Hatch and Schultz (2004) explain, identification is organizational-specific, whereas commitment, which is linked to organization's goals and values, is not (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 138). For instance, an employee may be committed to an organization, because of its conveniency with employee's personal career goals, and may therefore change the employer without sacrificing her goals (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 138). However, if employee is identified with the organization, changing the job is also a mental loss for an employee (Levinson, 1970 according to Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 138). Therefore, it can be interpreted that it is valuable for organization to promote the commitment also through identification instead of just job-design.

To conclude, organizational identification is a concept that illustrates stakeholders, such as employee perception of oneness and belongingness to an

organization (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 153; Mael & Ashforth, 1992, 104). This concept is related to organizational identity and social identity theory. Organizational identity describes who organization is as a collective (Pratt et al., 2016, 3). Social identity theory states that individuals aim towards positive self-concept, which is constructed from personal identity and from a membership of a social group (Chmiel et al., 2017, 411). When the membership of a social group (such as organization) becomes salient, it can affect on individual's thoughts, feelings and actions in a way that it supports the success of the group (Chmiel et al., 2017, 411-412). In addition, organizational identification can generate individual and organizational outcomes, for instance through employees' higher job satisfaction (Ashforth et al., 2008, 334-338). Identification can happen in different levels and may be aimed towards entire organization or the sub-unity of it (Hatch & Schultz, 2004, 137). Even though identification is in general linked to positive organizational outcomes, it may also sometimes have negative effects, because it may create distinction between the organizational sub-units or complicate restructuring the organization (van Knippenberg and van Schie 2000, 142-145).

### **2.3.2 Organizational identification and CSR**

Employees' identification to an organization can be supported by various ways (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, 117) for instance by CSR practices (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159). De Roeck et al. (2016) found that CSR may increase employees' feelings of pride and support their identification with an organization (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159). Furthermore, several studies have found organizational identification to be a mediating factor between certain CSR practices and the organizational outcomes related to those. For instance, as presented in De Roeck et al. (2016, 1142), through organizational identification CSR practices have affected on employees' job satisfaction (De Roeck et al., 2014, 101-103, De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 103), intentions to stay (Jones, 2010, 870), commitment (Kim et al., 2010, 565) and organizational citizenship behaviour (Jones, 2010, 861). There are several models that describe how CSR can affect to organizational identification. One model presented by Kim et al. (2010) describes that CSR affects on employees' perceived external prestige and organizational identification, which in turn leads to employee commitment (Kim et al., 2010, 559). The results of the model indicated that employee participation in CSR affects directly to their organizational identification, whereas perceived CSR (CSR association in the article) affect only indirectly, through perceived external prestige (Kim et al., 2010, 564).

Figure 5 describes the overall theoretical framework for this paper. In figure 5, as supported by the literature (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 121; De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159; De Roeck et al., 2014, 101-103; De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397; Jones, 2010, 861-870; Kim et al. 2010, 565) CSR can effect on employees' organizational identification. Furthermore, organizational identification may lead to the earlier presented organizational outcomes that I have also listed in figure 5.



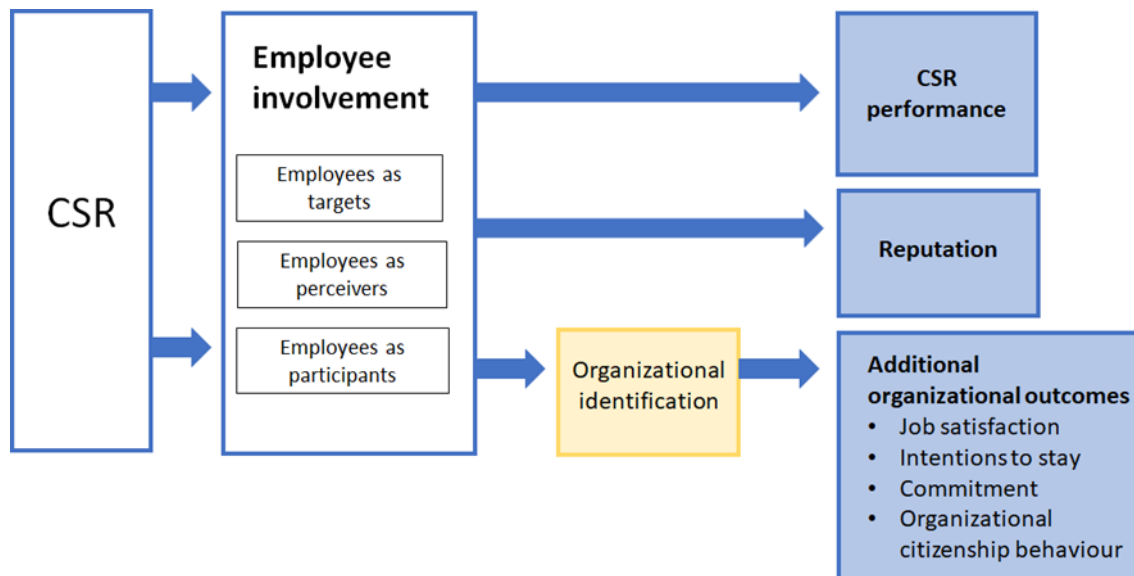


Figure 5: CSR can support employee organizational identification and create of organizational outcomes

Of course, CSR can support organizational identification only if the members of the organization are somehow familiar with the existence of CSR and involved in it. As present in figure 5 and previously in this thesis, employees can be involved in CSR through being targets, perceivers and participants of CSR. This is also supported by several studies that have found that employees perception (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159; De Roeck et al., 2014, 91; De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397; Kim et al., 2010, 564), attitude (Jones, 2010, 857) and participation to CSR (Kim et al., 2010, 565) support employees` organizational identification.

## 2.4 Developing employee involvement in CSR

This section present literature of development of employee involvement in CSR. Even though there is no one prewritten strategy how to increase employee involvement in CSR, literature carries number of recommendations how employee involvement could be supported in the organization. In this section, I will examine peer-reviewed articles that focus on the development of employee involvement.

Employee involvement in CSR could be supported by the utilization of human resource management (HRM) practices. Literature holds a specific term for this intersection of CSR and HRM, namely sustainable HRM. Sustainable HRM is a concept that combines two management practices and field of studies, which both CSR (Celma et al. 2014, 83; Freeman et al., 2010, 235; Kramar, 2014, 1070; Onkila, 2015, 223) and HRM are concepts without exact definitions (Beardwell & Claydon, 2010, 4; Kramar, 2014, 1070;). Therefore, it is not a surprise that the concept of sustainable HRM lacks the precise definition as well (Celma et al.,



2014, 83; Kramar, 2014, 1075;). Employee-relationships are in many organizations managed by human resource management (HRM) activities (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997, 876) and HRM can be described to be set of practices that help organizations to reach their objectives (Armstrong & Baron, 2002, 124). While there is a long history for managing employees through HRM (Beardwell & Claydon, 2010, 6), only in recent years the attention has been growing towards the intersection between CSR and HRM (Guerci, Decramer, Van Waeyenberg & Aust, 2018, 2). As mentioned before, sustainable HRM is concept with several definitions (Kramar, 2014, 1075; Celma et al., 2014, 83). For instance, Kramar (2014) describes concept broadly, by explaining that sustainable HRM includes an idea that HRM creates financial, social and environmental effects that can be both negative and positive (Kramar, 2014, 1070-1071). Alternative definition formulated by Guerci et al. (2018) focus on the aims of sustainable HRM, when authors describe that sustainable HRM aims to preserve, regenerate and develop economic, environmental and social resources of the organizations (Guerci et al., 2018, 2). Finally, maybe the most practical definition for the needs of this thesis is given in the article of Ehnert, Parsa, Roper, Wagner and Muller-Camen, (2016), where authors describe the concept as utilising HRM practices and strategies to achieve the financial, environmental and social goals while minimizing the negative impacts (Ehnert et al., 2016, 90). More simplified interpretation of the last definition is that sustainable HRM utilises employees to reach CSR objectives. Sustainable HRM may even be called by other terms, that indicate approximately same thing, such as Socially Responsible Human Resource Management (SRHRM), that Shen and Benson (2016) describe to be CSR directed to employees (Shen & Benson, 2016, 1723).

In practice, sustainable HRM can be utilized by linking strategic CSR goals to specific HRM practices as interpreted from Masri and Jaaron (2016, 487). Masri and Jaaron (2016) explain that linking organization's strategic environmental CSR goals to specific HRM practices, gives employees an opportunity to develop the environmental CSR, so that the higher CSR performance can be reached (Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 487). Literature carries examples how employee perception and participation to CSR can be supported. For example, employee perception of CSR can be altered through practices, such as targeted communication (Glavas & Godwin, 2013, 23; Kim et al., 2010, 565), training (Glavas & Godwin, 2013, 23) and recruiting (Jones, Willness & Madey, 2014; Puncheva-Michelotti, Hudson & Jin, 2018). Participation to CSR can then again be reinforced for example through corporate volunteering programs and financial donations (Kim et al., 2010, 566).

To conclude, employee involvement in CSR can be managed by implementing sustainable HRM, which according to Ehnert et al. (2016) is a concept that utilise HRM practices and strategies to achieve the financial, environmental and social goals while minimizing the negative impacts (Ehnert et al., 2016, 90). In practice, sustainable HRM can be conducted by linking organization's strategic CSR goals to specific HRM practices (as interpreted from Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 487), such as targeted communication (Glavas & Godwin, 2013, 23; Kim et al.,

2010, 565) and volunteering programs (Kim et al., 2010, 566). In the following sections, I will present more closely how employee involvement in CSR can be reinforced through following practices of communication, recruiting, volunteering and compensations and rewards.

### **2.4.1 Communication**

Communication is a way to affect on employee perception of CSR (Glavas & Godwin, 2013, 23; Kim et al., 2010, 565). In this chapter the role of communication is presented through first explaining communication's role in strategy implementation in general, which is followed by review of literature findings on how employee involvement could be supported through improving the communication of CSR.

For many organizations CSR is a strategic decision and employee involvement can be viewed as a part of CSR strategy implementation. According to Shimizu (2012) communication plays a key role in strategy implementation and can be utilized to exchange information and to interact between the sender and the receiver (Shimizu, 2012, 113-114). The usability of different communication channels varies according to information type. Shimizu (2012) explains, that complicated information may be good to share face-to-face, especially when aiming to increase individual understanding instead of confirming the information that is already known (Shimizu, 2012, 114-115). On the other hand, e-mails are a good tool for sharing facts and data, but not that efficient in making objectives understood or transmitting contextual information (Shimizu, 2012, 114-115). In organizations the contextual and qualitative information is needed, because of the possible gap between the top-management and front-line employees (Shimizu, 2012, 119). In this context middle managers play an important role, since they are the ones who can make sense of front level information in strategic perspective and lead the strategic implementation to involve both: top managers and employees (Shimizu, 2012, 119). Lastly, the role of communication is to be the mean not the goal, which means that the focus of communication should be in on the achievements and not on the amount of communication itself (Shimizu, 2012, 115).

In order to increase employee involvement, number of studies recommend different communicational improvements (Glavas & Godwin, 2012; Haugh & Talwar, 2010; Kim et al., 2010; Merriman et al., 2015; Siano et al., 2017; Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010). First of all, employees are recommended to be among the ones, who receive CSR communication (Kim et al., 2010, 565). According to Glavas and Godwin (2012) communication of CSR should be comprehensive and distributed by many communication channels (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 23). In line with the statement of Shimizu (2012), who presented that e-mails are not that efficient in transmitting contextual information also Glavas & Godwin (2012) stress the importance of providing CSR information in additional means than internal newsletters (Glavas and Godwin, 2012, 23). Authors also encourage organizations to seek additional means for communication than GRI reporting, that

may mostly be aimed to external stakeholders (Glavas and Godwin, 2012, 24). Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) recommend face-to-face communication in form of regular informal meetings (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307) and as supported by Siano et al. (2017) naming CSR contact persons in different organizational units (Siano et al., 2017, 33; Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 308). The idea of CSR contact persons is to link CSR policy in employee's own work and help translating CSR texts into practice (Siano et al., 2017, 33). Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) also recommend that CSR related communication could rather include simple, practical messages (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307). According to Haugh and Talwar (2010) communication is better to be provided to all members of an organizational instead of certain groups (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 393). This is explained by the finding of their study, that employees in operational or supply chain level are less willing to change their collectively shared values if the action is not company-wide (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 393). Some studies would also link the communication of CSR to financial objectives (Merriman et al., 2015, 820, 832) and stress the cost-benefits of CSR (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307-308). Other studies found stressing of financial effects problematic, since there is a risk that employees would only act sustainably if they find it economically beneficial (Slack, Corlett and Morris, 2015, 546). Jones et al., (2017) found that individual reaction to CSR is based more on how stakeholders perceive CSR practices exist rather than how they actually exist (Jones et al., 2017, 9). Therefore, organizations can affect on stakeholder reactions by effective communication about its CSR practices to individuals (Jones et al., 2017, 9). Jones et al. (2017) conclude the importance of communication by stating that if CSR practices are not communicated, the benefits of CSR are not fully gained (Jones et al., 2017, 9). This is also supported by Glavas and Godwin (2012), who found that especially in the socially responsible organizations, whose employees found CSR important, raising awareness is important, since it affect positively on employees (Glavas and Godwin, 2012, 24).

Based on this short review of the role of communication, it can be concluded that communication is an essential part of strategy implementation (Shimizu, 2012, 113-114) and therefore plays an important role when aiming to involve employees in the implementation of CSR strategy. Literature carries number of recommendations how internal communication of CSR could be improved in an organization. Articles include recommendations on how to communicate (e.g. comprehensively (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 23), with simple and practical messages (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307), aimed for all the members of the organization (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 393) or with including financial objectives (Merriman et al., 2015, 820, 832, Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307-308) or excluding them from the CSR communication (Slack et al., 2015, 546)). In addition, articles include recommendations related to communication channels (e.g. distributing information through several channels (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 23), informal meetings (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307) and CSR contact persons (Siano et al., 2017, 33; Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 308)). All in all, the role of

communication was found crucial, since as stated by Jones et al. (2017) without communication the potential benefits of CSR may be diminished (Jones et al., 2017, 9).

#### **2.4.2 Recruiting**

One way to reinforce employee involvement in CSR is to include CSR related information to the very beginning of employee career path, namely to recruiting process. According to Puncheva-Michelotti et al. (2018) even the organizations, that have excellent CSR reputation, do not fully benefit their existing reputation in recruiting (Puncheva et al., 2018, 643), even though CSR have found to give organizations competitive advantage by attracting larger application pool (Jones et al., 2014, 401). This section presents practical recommendations how CSR could be integrated to HRM practice of recruiting to support employee involvement in CSR and increase the organizational reputation. In this part, recruiting practices are first considered through job advertisements and then in general.

Puncheva et al. (2018) present that clear and consistent CSR communication in job advertisement may enhance the organization's attractiveness in the eyes of job applicants (Puncheva et al., 2018, 651) and increase their interest in the offered position (Puncheva et al., 2018, 649). According to Jones et al. (2014) CSR may affect on organization's attractiveness for job applicants, because CSR information leverage signals, such as pride to be connected to such an organization, of perceived value fit and may work as an indication of how organization treats its employees (Jones et al., 2014, 383).

The practical recommendations by Puncheva et al. (2018) consist of 4 parts, where the first one is to optimize the structure of job advertisement. Puncheva et al. (2018) recommend including the company overview section with CSR information at the beginning of advertisement, reporting position-relevant CSR practices and providing external links to further information of CSR (Puncheva et al., 2018, 649). The second recommendation is to expand the scope of CSR by including information of environmental performance and company relations to job advertisement (Puncheva et al., 2018, 650). The third recommendation is to inform employee opportunities to engage with CSR, which may f.ex. support the perceived value fit between themselves and the organization and increase the likelihood to recruit an employee who have high interest and motivation to participate in CSR initiatives (Puncheva et al., 2018, 650-651). The fourth recommendation is to adopt a strategic approach to include CSR information to job advertisement to ensure the consistency (Puncheva et al., 2018, 650). This strategic approach is needed, since according to Puncheva et al. (2018) including CSR in job advertising seem to be inconsistent even within the same company, which communicates that the integration is rather an ad-hoc solution than strategic decision (Puncheva et al., 2018, 650).

Also Jones et al. (2014) stress the importance of communication of CSR in recruitment process (Jones et al., 2014). Based on the findings on Jones et al. (2014)

CSR sends signals to the job applicants, that may create pride among them, perception of value fit and indicate how employee treats its own members (Jones et al., 2014, 383). However, these signals can only be received if job applicants are aware of the existence of CSR (Jones et al., 2014, 400). To increase the awareness Jones et al. (2014) suggests communicating about the external recognitions and rewards and to signal the value fit by explaining how organizations values are connected to the CSR practices (Jones et al., 2014, 400-401). As an example of how values may be connected to CSR practices Jones et al. (2014) present that organizations may communicate for instance following way: "We care about our communities, and that is why we encourage our employees to volunteer during regular hours" (Jones et al., 2014, 400-401).

Jones, Willness and Heller (2016) found that majority (two-third) of the research participants reacted positively to CSR information incorporated in recruiting process (Jones et al., 2016, 14). However, there were also participants that had more sceptical view and therefore CSR information incorporated in recruiting does not always attract employees (Jones et al., 2016, 12-13). Some employees stated that CSR was not attracting to them for instance because of lack of value fit, views that CSR may detract the profits and general cynicism considering CSR (Jones et al., 2016, 13). Employees sceptical views were based on their previous experiences of greenwashing, need to witness and experience practices themselves and get more detailed information of the responsible practices (Jones et al., 2016, 13). As suggestions Jones et al. (2016) recommend designing the recruiting messages so that they signal organizational values and make it easier for job applicants to interpret their value-fit, indicate that organization is sincerely concerned about the others and to highlight current employees' possible pride of CSR (Jones et al., 2016, 14).

To conclude, increasing CSR information to recruitment process can increase the attractiveness of the organization in the eyes of job applicants. Organization may support the signals, such as pride, perception of value fit and predicted treatment of employees by including CSR information to the recruitment process in job advertisement as well as the recruiting communication in general. Including CSR information to recruiting process may help organization in two ways, namely giving competitive advantage by attracting larger application pool (Jones et al., 2014, 401) and attracting employees whose values fit to the organization values (Jones et al., 2014, 400-401; Puncheva et al., 2018, 650-651) and have a high interest to participate in CSR initiatives as employees (Puncheva et al., 2018, 650-651).

### **2.4.3 Volunteering**

Corporate volunteering program is one additional way to encourage employees to participate in CSR (Kim et al., 2010, 566). Corporate volunteering means that employees are provided an opportunity to volunteer during their paid working hours (Jones, 2010, 857). Often volunteering is part of so-called extra-role CSR,

which means participation to CSR activities that are not embedded in employee's job design (Glavas, 2016, 1). Literature has found corporate volunteering affect employees both positively and negatively. Jones (2010) found volunteering to be linked in employees' organizational identification, since employees, who appreciated their employers corporate volunteering program, had less intentions to quit and were identified with the organization (Jones, 2010, 857). On the other hand, Glavas (2016) found that such an extra-role activity, as volunteering can have a negative effect on employees, since employees may perceive CSR disingenuous because of such activities (Glavas, 2016, 4-7). It was found that smaller hours of volunteering (1-12h) can positively effect on employees, but higher hours may on the other hand lead to negative effects and become a burden for employees (Jones et al., 2017, 11).

Jones (2016) suggest that corporate volunteering could be designed to develop tangible work-related skills of employees (Jones, 2016, 1). This kind of skill development while volunteering may make volunteering experience simultaneously beneficial for employers, employees and causes they served (Jones, 2016, 1). Jones investigated 10 work related skills that could be developed through volunteering and the skills were such as leadership, project management and public speaking (Jones, 2016, 1). Jones (2016) found that designed corporate volunteering developed the work-related skills of employees in general and no differences related to employee attributes, such as age, gender or education level were identified (Jones, 2016, 12). Only employee characteristic, namely employee self-efficacy was found to improve the skill development (Jones, 2016, 12).

To conclude, corporate volunteering may affect on employees organizational identification and reduce employees intentions to quit (Jones, 2010, 857), but it may also lead on negative responses from employees (Glavas, 2016, 7) While designing volunteering programs the special focus could be laid to the scope of the intended working hours as well as on development of work related skills of employees while volunteering. However, these recommendations are somewhat controversial, since in the study of Jones (2016) work related skills were developed with 20-35h of volunteering work (Jones, 2016, 12), which according to Jones et al. (2017) is above the recommended voluntary working hours and may create also negative reactions among employees (Jones et al., 2017, 11).

#### **2.4.4 Rewards and compensations**

Different kind of rewards and compensations are one additional way to motivate employees to participate in CSR (Masri & Jaaron, 2017; Renwick et al., 2013, 2; Kim et al., 2010, 566). Rewards and compensations can be in form of monetary or non-monetary benefits (Renwick et al., 2013, 9) and can be allocated directly to the employee itself or the organization as whole in a form of cost-savings. This section presents the literature review considering the use of re-wards and compensation as a way to increase employee involvement in CSR. The main focus in following paragraphs is on the monetary rewards.

There are several studies that agree on the importance of including rewards, such as financial incentives to CSR objectives in order to motivate employees to participate in CSR practices. For instance, Merriman, et al. (2016, 832) found that paring CSR objectives with financial objectives increase the engagement of employees. Young et al. (2015) conducted a multi-disciplinary literature review of 17 articles on the initiatives that influence the behaviour change in workplace, which suggested that environmental CSR should be incorporated with financial reward system in an organization (Young et al., 2015, 701). In addition, Masri and Jaaron (2017) found that rewards and compensations have a positive and significant relationship to organization's environmental CSR performance. Similarly, Slack et al. (2015) found that financial incentives may increase employee participation to CSR activities (Slack et al., 2015, 545). However, Slack et al. (2015) also note that when CSR activities are motivated by personal economic goals, employees may lack the deeper understanding of social responsibility (Slack et al., 2015, 545). On the other hand, what comes to environmental sustainability, Young et al. (2015, 700) argue that it is not necessary to change employees' attitudes to gain actual results from environmental CSR performance. Instead Young et al. (2015, 700) found that motivating employees to change their behaviour by explaining what and why new practices are needed, is more important in terms of impacts than changing employees' attitudes (Young et al., 2015, 700). Based on these statements, rewarding by financial incentives may be successful in terms of impacts if they motivate employees to change the behaviour, but it is controversial whether financial incentives lead to deeper attitude change.

In contrary, there are also several studies that state rewards not being the most efficient way to motivate employees to participate in CSR (Masri & Jaaron, 2017; Evans, Maio, Corner, Hodgetts, Ahmed and Hahn, 2012). Evans et al. (2012) found that even though rewards may motivate employees to behave according to the policy, targeting financial rewards to employees may have a negative spill-over effect in the organization. Authors (Evans et al., 2012, 3) claim there are self-interested and self-transcending reasons that motivates pro-environmental behaviour. An example of self-interested reason is financial incentives, which according to Evans et al. (2012, 3) may dilute the pro-environmental behaviour later or elsewhere. Based on the findings of Evans et al. (2012) setting the financial rewards to support the environmental CSR may lead to negative spill-over. Masri and Jaaron (2017) ranked green HRM practices that have positive and significant correlation to environmental performance in manufacturing company and found that even though rewards and compensations have a positive relationship to actual environmental performance, other HR practices, such as recruitment and selection and employee empowerment and participation are even more significant factors in terms of performance (Masri & Jaaron, 2017). Based on these findings, there should be consideration whether the rewards and compensations are supporting the overall CSR policy and emphasise organizations to focus on the most effective motivation methods.

In addition to targeting the financial incentives to the employees, the incentives may also be targeted to the organization as whole. According to Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010, 308) some employees may find motivating that organization communicates CSR by stressing the financial benefits that the organization will gain. Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010, 310) found communicating of organizational level cost-savings to be motivating in engineering-driven organization but highlighted that applying this finding to different organizational contexts demands further studies (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 310). Based on these findings, it might be up to corporate-culture how effective motivation method financial incentives, that are exposed to organization as whole, are.

Also in general, the success of reward and compensation system might be organization, industry or employee-specific. For instance, Masri and Jaaron (2017) stated that rewards and compensations might be more in use in larger organizations as motivation methods. Paying rewards and compensations might demand lots of resources, which might be too big financial burden for certain kind of companies, such as manufacturing companies in developing countries (Masri & Jaaron, 2017, 486). Also Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2013, 308-310) found that in engineer-driven organization, where money is the language that employees are interested in, highlighting the financial benefits of environmental CSR can be found motivating. In addition, employees are not a homogenous group, but consist of individuals. Individuals may be motivated by different means (Masri & Jaaron, 2017, 486) and to support that claim Slack et al. (2015) presented several studies that have categorised employees according to their attitudes towards CSR. Authors (Slack et al., 2015) explain that different employee-categories attain different kind of benefits by acting responsibly. Some employees may notice the social benefits more easily and the others may need additional practices that create benefits and thus motivate employees to act responsibly (Slack et al. 2015, 545). However, it is not stated that there should necessarily be different kind of reward system for different employees, since according to Young et al. (2015, 71) reward system is more beneficial, when it is aimed towards the majority of employees instead of just some of them. Based on these literature findings, it can be concluded that when designing involvement methods in general the diversity of and the differences between employees should be taken into consideration.

To conclude, according to studies of Masri and Jaaron (2017) and Merriman et al. (2016, 832) rewards are not currently widely used in motivating employees to implement CSR practices. Regardless, based on the studies re-viewed in this section, rewards could be used as a complementary, but not the only method to support employee involvement in CSR practices. Several studies (Merriman et al., 2016; Young et al., 2015; Masri & Jaaron, 2017; Slack et al., 2015) has indicated the importance of compensations and rewards in achieving higher CSR performance. However, using rewards as motivation method is not the most effective way to motivate employees, because financial rewards might lead to the lack of deeper understanding of social responsibility (Slack et al., 2015), have a negative spill-over effect, dilute the responsible behaviour later or elsewhere (Evans et al., 2012) and demand resources from the organization (Masri & Jaaron, 2017).



Whether rewards and compensations are sufficient, or even possible way to motivate employees, might be up to organization, industry or employees. Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) found that engineer-driven organization that speak the language of money find emphasising financial benefits an efficient way to motivate employees, whereas Masri and Jaaron (2017) stated that manufacturing companies in developing countries might be unable to use the resources for rewarding employees and rewards might in general be more applicable in larger companies instead of small or medium size ones. In addition, it might be sufficient to consider the individual preferences and differences between the individuals, when deciding about the rewards system, since according to Masri and Jaaron (2017) individuals are motivated by different means.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

There are several methodological choices that need to be made for a scientific research. This thesis aims to answer to the research questions by conducting qualitative focus group interviews in-person and online. This section reveals the reasons behind methodological choices of the thesis.

Research methodologies can be divided into quantitative and qualitative orientation (Hair, Wolfinbarger, Money, Samouel & Page, 2015, 196). Quantitative research methods aim to test hypothesis and provide descriptive information of the subject by utilizing statistical analysis, whereas qualitative aims to describe and understand human and social phenomena (Lichtman, 2014, 8). Qualitative research is especially useful if the aim is to examine human interaction in naturally occurring situations (Lichtman, 2014, 5). According to Lichtman (2014, 8) quantitative research can be better utilised if the research questions are "*how many and who*" and qualitative methods are more suitable for research questions "*why and what*". In this thesis, the research questions are formulated as "How are the employees` involved in CSR in studied case organization?", "What supports and hinders employee involvement in CSR?" and "Are employees identified with the organization?". Due to the formulation of research questions qualitative approach seems more appropriate choice for this thesis.

One main qualitative data collection method is interviews (Hair et al., 2015, 196), which can be classified according to their level of structure (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 82). The three main types of the interviews are structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Gill, Steward, Treasure and Chadwick, 2008, 291). Structured interviews include pre-planned script, standardized wording and open-ended questions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 81). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) describe that structured interviews can be utilized if the aim is to find out so called facts, such as what has happened, when and how (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 81). Semi-structured interviews on the other hand are described to be flexible, since they include outline of the topics and themes, but the wording and the order of the questions can be changed in each interview (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 82). Lastly, the unstructured interviews do not have interview sequence (Hair et al., 2015, 204). Unstructured interview may only have an opening question and the further progress of the interview is based on the responses given by the participant (Gill et al., 2008, 291). For the purpose of this thesis some level of structure is needed, since the hypothesis is that employees of the case organization are not fully familiar with the concept of CSR and without any structure the risk is that interviewees will talk about other, supposedly more familiar issues than CSR. However, highly structured interview would not be the best choice, since the aim is to learn about employees` perceptions, which is why it is valuable that interviewees are able to speak up freely of their own thoughts. Therefore, the interviews in this thesis will be semi-structured.

According to Hair et al. (2015) one of the best-known semi-structured interview type is probably focus group interview (Hair et al., 2015, 201). In focus group interview moderator has a list of topics and questions that guide the conversation, but participants are able to answer the questions in their own words (Hair et al., 2015, 201). In focus group format the interest is especially on the interaction between the participants (Peeters, De Jonge & Taris, 2014, 53) and how individuals as a member of a group discuss about the specific issue (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 512). Especially useful focus groups are when the aim is to collect different perspectives on the subject (Peeters et al., 2014, 53). The idea is that the interaction between the participants helps researcher to understand how the participants think and why they think the way they do (Nilsson et al., 2014, 2705). Focus groups are useful if the aim is to generate information of participants' collective views and their meanings (Gill et al., 2008, 293). In this thesis the aim of the group interviews is not only to understand employee involvement in CSR but also to increase the organization's internal discussion of CSR by arising the discussion and sharing the information between the employees. Therefore, focus group interviews are suitable method to respond to the aims of this thesis.

Furthermore, focus group interviews can be conducted in several ways, for instance in-person, on telephone or online ("Greenbook Research Industry Trends", 2013, 20). Traditionally, focus group interviews are conducted in-person ("Greenbook Research Industry Trends", 2013, 20), but there has also been a growing interest towards online focus group interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 513). Online focus group interviews have found to be shorter in time than the ones conducted in-person but are still able to provide good amount of relevant data for the researcher (Reid & Reid, 2005, 154). In addition, focus group interviews can be described to be effective way to collect data, since according to Bryman and Bell (2015, 513) this method saves time and costs because of avoidance of travelling. In this work, focus groups were partially interviewed online. Online focus group interviews were applied not only because their effectiveness of the methodology, but also because online discussions are a natural way of working in the studied organization and the because it was important that employees from different geographical areas were participating in the interviews.

As in every method, also focus group approach has its limitations. First limitation is that the number of observations in the focus group approach is rather small (Hair et al., 2015, 203). Focus group interviews give depth and in-sight to the subject studied, but do not produce statistically significant numerical results (Gill et al., 2008, 293) and focus groups are not likely to represent the target population fully (Hair et al. 2015, 203). Second limitation for the focus group approach is that the group chemistry may effect on participants' opinions (Hair et al., 2015, 203). If the participants are not comfortable with each others they might not be open about their opinions and feelings (Gill et al, 2008, 293). Because of the small sample and the possible effect of group chemistry, Hair et al. (2015, 203) suggest complementing the conclusions created through focus group method with another approach (Hair et al., 2015, 203). This suggestion is also supported

by Gill et al. (2008), who state that focus group is a good method to clarify and extend the data collected by other methods (Gill et al., 2008, 293).

### **3.1 Research design**

In focus group approach there are several issues that need to be decided before conducting the actual interviews, namely deciding the interview themes, choosing the number of groups and formulating the focus groups. In practical level, there is also need to test the technological solutions, such as webcams and recording devices, and to send the invitations to participants.

In focus group sessions, moderator often use relatively small number of general questions to guide the conversation (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 519). Bryman and Bell (2015, 521) explain that moderators may use different questioning strategies, that vary from open-ended approach to fairly structured questions. The questioning strategies may vary according to the interview circumstances. For instance, if the researcher knows a lot about the theme of the session, low level of structure might be feasible and on the other hand, if participants have a low knowledge of the theme, more structured approach could be needed (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521). However, it is important to remember that discussion that departs from the topic agenda may also be beneficial, because it may provide valuable information in form of unexpected insights (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521). In this thesis somewhat structured questioning is used, since the hypothesis is that participants are not necessarily familiar with the theme of the interview and because the moderator has no profound knowledge of organization's CSR dimensions. The structure of the questioning will be based on the example presented by Bryman and Bell (2015, 522), who divided the agenda of the interview in three phases, namely to introduction, discussion topics and summing up. The topic agenda and the structure of focus group interviews is presented in figure 6 below.

<b>TOPIC AGENDA</b>	
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcoming</li> <li>• Introduction of the moderator and the theme of the interview</li> <li>• Conventions (Confidentiality, recording, speak one at a time, everybody's views are valuable, no right or wrong answers)</li> <li>• Report of proceeding</li> <li>• Introduction of the participants</li> </ul>
<b>2 Discussion topics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception of CSR               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes a short description of CSR and organization's CSR given by moderator</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Participation to CSR</li> <li>• Perception of the organization</li> </ul>
<b>3 Summing up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank you for the participation</li> <li>• Reporting of the results</li> </ul>

Figure 6: Topic agenda for the focus group interviews

Topic agenda in figure 6 aims to cover the main themes of this thesis. Because the aim is to examine employee perception of and participation to CSR and perception of organization, these were also named as discussion topics of the interviews. Each of the discussion topics included 4-7 questions that were asked if the theme was not fully covered or revealed during the discussion previously. In addition, moderator occasionally asked some specifying questions and repeated some question, if the answer was not yet revealed. The aim was to formulate the discussion topics so that the participants would reveal information that is needed to answer the research questions of this thesis. The list of interview question is attached to this work and can be found from appendix 1.

When formulating the focus groups the aim is to decide who are going to participate into the interviews. This means deciding the characteristics of focus groups and the participants within the groups. In focus groups, participants have often something in common (Hair et al., 2015, 201; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 181), and in this case they all are working for the case organization. Often individual participants are picked because they have some attributes that make them relevant for the particular research (Hair et al., 2015, 201). For instance, organizational members can be organized into separate groups according to participants' location (Hair et al., 2015, 201), hierarchical position (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521; Hair et al., 2015, 201) age, gender (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 181), occupation or a length of a service (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521). In this thesis, the groups were divided according to employees' geographical location and the interview method. Because of the size of the case organization, it was interesting to study employees in different locations in order to understand

if there are some location sensitive factors that need to be considered when implementing CSR in the entire organization. In addition, case organization has a strong culture of digital interaction and therefore interviews were partially made online. The group formulation is presented in figure 7 below.

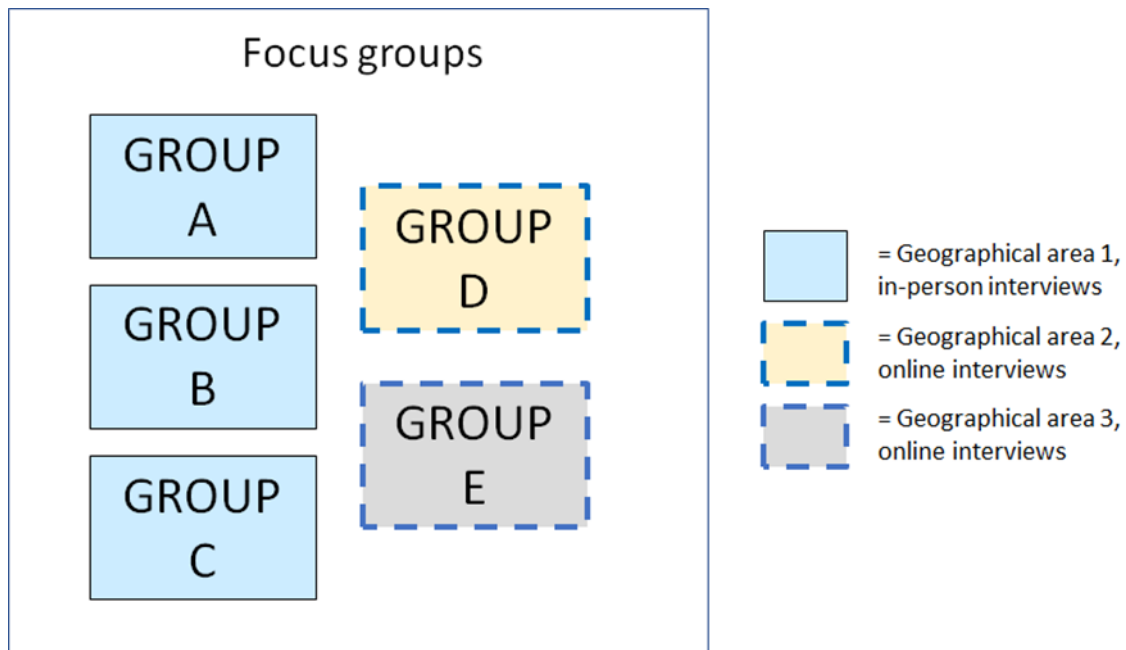


Figure 7: Five focus groups represent different geographical areas and different interview methods

Hair et al. (2015) describes that the normal number of focus groups vary in between 4-6 (Hair et al., 2015, 201). In this thesis five focus groups were formulated, and they covered different geographical areas and interview methods. As illustrated in figure 7, employees from altogether 3 geographical areas were interviewed. Geographical area 1 was divided into three groups (A-C), since it represents the area where most of the employees are located into. Geographical area 2 represent one specific area, whereas geographical area 3 had mixed participants that worked in different locations. Groups A-C were interviewed in-person whereas groups D-E were interviewed online.

After deciding the groups of interest, the next step is to decide the individuals that represent each group. According to Bryman and Bell (2015) groups can be formed through selecting participants that are unknown to each others or by utilising natural grouping (f. ex. co-workers are in the same group) (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521). Some researchers select individuals that are unknown to each others into the same group to avoid the effect of status factors or pre-existing styles of interaction (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521). Also people that know each other may use taken-for-granted assumptions, which they do not feel the need to bring to the fore (Morgan according to Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521). This might lead to misunderstandings or something valuable might not be mentioned. On the other hand, if the meaning is to study the collective understanding, it can be better to

interview people that are familiar with each other (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 521). In this thesis the groups included heterogeneous participants, who were not all necessarily familiar with each others' job descriptions. This selection was made because the aim was to diminish the effect of pre-existing styles of interaction and to increase the internal discussion and understanding of the CSR and its diverse appearance in the organization. In addition, each group included employees with different ages, occupations and varying lengths of the service. There were also some variety in participants' hierarchical positions within groups, but most of the participants were working as specialists or as mid-managers with subordinates. The literature gives different recommendations on how many individuals are included in each focus group. For instance, Hair et al. (2015) describes that the normal number of people in each group is between 8-12 participants (Hair et al., 2015, 201), whereas Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) present that focus groups most typically have 4-8 participants (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 182). In this work, each of the focus groups had 4-6 participants.

After deciding the groups, the interview invitations were formulated. Organization's employee sent the invitations to the selected individuals and the moderator and the thesis writer had no access to the names, e-mails or other personal information. This procedure was chosen because of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), which protects the natural persons regarding processing personal data (GDPR, 2019).

Data collection in this thesis is organized through executing focus group interviews, recording them and writing transcriptions of each session. Data consist of 5 interview sessions with 22 employees and the length of each session varied from approximately 45 minutes to 75 minutes. Each focus group interview had 4-6 participants, organization's CSR professional and a moderator. The role of organization's CSR professional was to listen the interviews, but not participate in the discussions. The writer of this thesis was the moderator, who, as stated by Bryman and Bell (2015), guided the sessions (Bryman & Bell, 2015, 512), asked the questions and monitored the length of the interview. Out of 5 interviews, three were conducted in-person in organization's meeting rooms and two as online interviews by using web cameras.

## 3.2 Data analysis

The data is analysed by thematic network analysis, which is an analysis method that aims to organize qualitative data into different themes and helps researcher to translate the data from text to interpretations (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 387-388). In thematic network analysis, the data is first coded into basic themes, which are then grouped in organizing themes, which again are combined to (a) global theme(s) (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 388-389). The first result of the analysis is a web-like illustration that includes the salient themes and their relationship to each others (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 388). This illustration represents the data's thematic

network (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 388), which is a tool for the further analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 393). The basic structure of thematic network is presented in figure 8, which is copied from Attride-Stirling (2001, 388).

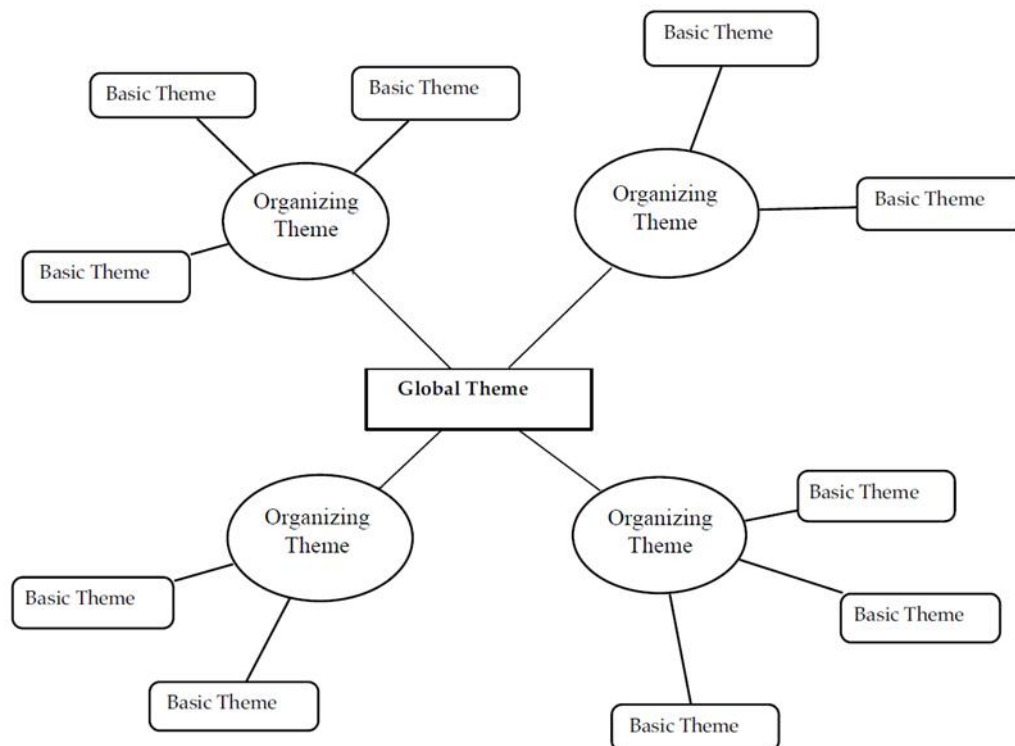


Figure 8: The basic structure of thematic network<sup>2</sup>

According to Attride-Stirling (2001) above illustrated thematic network analysis can be done by following six analytical steps, that are coding, identifying themes, constructing thematic networks, describing and exploring networks, summarizing networks and finally interpreting the patterns. Coding is a first step in thematic network analysis and is a step that according to Hair et al. (2015) and Bryman and Bell (2007) is often utilised in qualitative research (Hair et al., 2015, 302; Bryman & Bell, 2007, 593). The idea of coding is to organize the large amount of data into smaller entities (Hair et al., 2015, 302; Bryman & Bell, 2007, 585), and through this simplification find out meaningful characteristics from the data (Hair et al., 2015, 302). The aim of both coding and theme identification is to reduce the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 390-392), which again makes the further analysis possible. Thematic network, as illustrated in figure 8, is constructed by first arranging themes, then selecting basic themes, creating clusters for these themes and finally deducing global themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 392-393). After the thematic network is created, the next step is to describe the content of each

<sup>2</sup> Figure 8 copied from Attride-Stirling, 2001, 388



network and provide quotes and explore the underlying patterns (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 393). The last two analytical steps are summarizing the described and explored networks and interpreting patterns. At the final stage of interpretations, the aim is to return to the original research questions and answer those according to the patterns that have been found during the analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 394-395).

In this work the first three analytical steps of coding, theme identification and constructing the thematic network were done manually. This part of the data analysis included corrections and repeating in order to find suitable structure for thematic network. The following chapters go through the last three analytical steps of the thematic network. First results and discussions describe the network, summarize it and finally interprets the patterns. The research questions are answered in the final chapter of conclusions and are based on the patterns found in thematic network.

### **3.3 Reflecting the research method**

Besides analysing the data, it is also valuable to reflect the possible effects of chosen research method to the findings. In this qualitative case study reflection of the methodology is done because of three reasons. Firstly, the role of the researcher is highly important in any qualitative research, because researcher gathers, organizes and interprets the data (Lichtman, 2014, 6). Secondly, especially in semi-structured interview, the moderator needs to be able to manage the interviewing and analysing process, which is why it is often recommended to have an experienced interviewer (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 82). However, the writer of this thesis has not moderated a focus group interview before, which might effect to the results of this thesis. Thirdly, as mentioned by Willis et al. (2009, 131) in focus group interview the analysis can be targeted not only to the content but also the interaction between the participants (Willis et al., 2009, 131). Even though the interaction will not per se be the focus of the analysis, the effect of participant interaction to the results is discussed later in the limitations.

## 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section reveals the empirical part of this work by presenting the insights of the five focus group interviews conducted in the case organization during spring 2019. The first chapter 4.1 gives a short description of the organization and participants. The following three chapters present the results of the interviews. Interview material was first recorded and then transcribed. After that, as presented by Attride-Stirling (2001), the next analytical steps of coding, identifying themes and constructing the thematic network were done. In this section, I will explain the main results from the interviews by presenting the last three analytical steps according to Attride-Stirling (2001) by describing the network, summarizing it and interpreting the patterns.

### 4.1 Organization and participants

The organization where focus group interviews were conducted is a multinational corporation that employs thousands of people internationally. Organization has updated their CSR strategy recently and this case work is part of organization's CSR strategy implementation. Organization has described that their aim with this work is to learn about their employees' perception and participation to organization's CSR, to find out how this involvement could be supported and overall to increase the internal discussion of the responsibility themes.

Employees who participated into the interviews were from different geographical locations in two European countries. The largest share of the participants, namely focus groups A, B and C, were working in the organization's headquarter, while the groups D and E represented participants from different geographical locations. Most of the participants were working in professional of mid-management level. All of the employees were working for a case organization either with a direct employment contract or by a subcontract.

In the next sections of describing, summarizing and interpreting the network some direct citations by the focus group participants will be given, as advised by Attride-Stirling (2001, 393). The idea of these citations is to indicate and support the findings. In the following sections citations are marked with a letter (A, B, C, D, E), that indicates focus group where the comment was given in. Citations also include a number, that indicates the page number where the exact citation can be found in the transcribed material. Citation marked for instance A19 means that the citation was said by a member of focus group A and citation can be found on page 19 of transcribed material. Therefore, the citation code is not linked to any individual, but to the group.

## 4.2 Describing the network

The overall picture of the thematic network is presented in figure 9 below. The figure reveals that employees are involved in CSR through the activities and through the way of acting. Activities stand for concrete responsibility activities that are executed in the case-organization, such as reduction of paper usage and paying taxes to the country of origin. Way of acting on the other hand, stand for the idea, that things are done responsibly in the organization, for example through equal treatment between individuals and respectful and supporting culture that employees experience. As visualized in figure 9, CSR was also found to raise emotions among the employees and was connected on employee commitment to the organization.

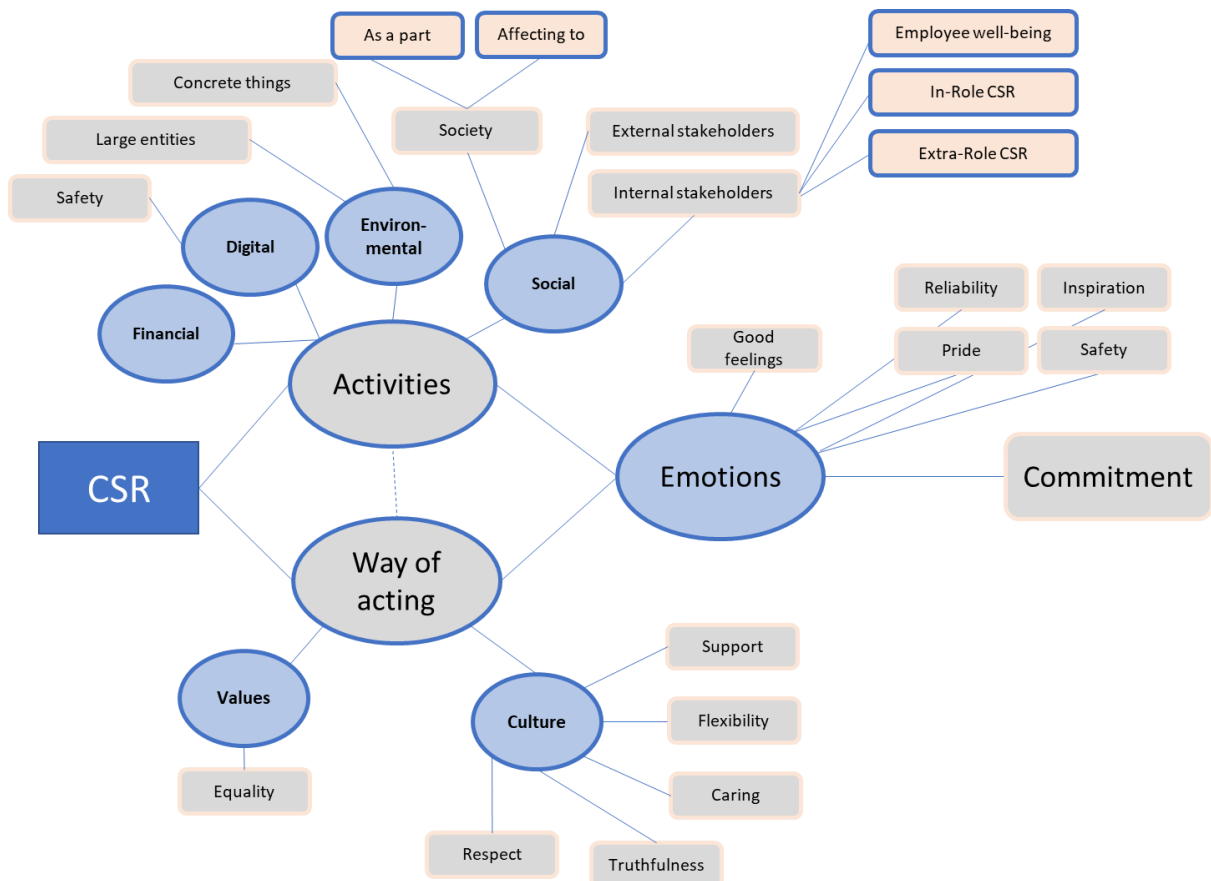


Figure 9: Thematic network reveals that employees are involved in organization's CSR through activities and through way of acting

In figure 9 above, the material of focus group interviews is organized in themes, that according to Attride-Stirling (2001) helps to translate the data from text to interpretations (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 387-388). After the coding, the basic themes were identified. Basic themes were repetitively recognized from the interview material and are marked with grey boxes in figure 9. Based on the basic

themes the clusters were created. These clusters indicate seven organizing themes (financial activities, digital activities, environmental activities, social activities, emotions, values and culture), which are presented with blue circles in figure 9. Lastly, two global themes namely activities and way of acting were identified and marked with grey circles with blue linings in the figure 9. Furthermore, the figure 9 includes the fourth level themes, that are marked with orange boxes. This fourth level is not part of the thematic network as presented by Attride-Stirling (2001), but in order to make the thematic network more describing it was selected to include this additional theme to the network. Because coding and identifying themes aims to reduce the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001, 390-392), the network itself is very simplified picture of the content of the interviews. In addition, the separation of the themes is artificial, since in reality the themes are interconnected. However, in order to create clarity and be able to identify the patterns, the themes are created and presented as somewhat independent unities in figure 9.

In this section, I will explore and describe the thematic network illustrated in figure. I will start by explaining what CSR activities employees have experienced, perceived and participated into. Following section describes how employees comprehend CSR as a way of acting. Finally, the description of employee emotions related to CSR and its linkage to employee commitment is explained.

#### 4.2.1 CSR as activities

According to the interviews, employees are involved into CSR through the concrete activities that are done in the organization. These activities were divided into four organizing themes, that were financial, digital, environmental and social. Financial activities represent the idea that the services and products that organization provides are valuable for the society and help stakeholders to improve their responsibility. In addition, financial responsibility also included taking care of the financial performance of the organization. These perspectives were articulated by employees from groups B and A, who stated:

*B16: "We are doing meaningful business. Business itself is such that it brings value to the society."*

*A5: "We carry our responsibility of that the financial metrics are going into the right direction"*

Digital activities, that are in core of case organization`s business, was one additional dimension identified from the interviews. Employees described digital responsibility especially through digital safety, that includes safe and responsible handling of data, but also safe use of digital services that organization provides. Employees for instance discussed about keeping different customer groups

aboard and educated in digitalization and development of software and tools that hinder negative effects of digitalization, such as sexual harassment and hate speech online. While discussing about digital responsibility, the scope of responsibility seemed to handle different units of supply chain, starting from the production of digital devices and ending up to stakeholder`s responsible use of the organization`s services. The responsibility of organization was understood to include the things that services enable, as stated by an employee from group B:

*B28: "When we provide these services, so could we also develop something that would improve the safety of young people. For example, some training or what now then could be..."*

Environmental activities varied from small concrete things to large entities. Employees described that they notice the existence of CSR in small things, such as how organization supports the use of porcelain cups instead of disposable paper cups and how the paper usage has been reduced in the office. On the other hand, employees also discussed about the things that are supposed to have large environmental impact, such as company-wide energy usage and incorporating environmental factors in the decision making, for example through procurement processes.

The social activities were probably the theme that was the most discussed about during the interviews. Social activities could be divided into three basic themes, namely to activities related to society, activities related to other external stakeholders and activities related to internal stakeholders. Activities related to society could be further divided into how organization is acting as a part of society (for instance through paying taxes, compliance and working with the cooperation with authorities) and on the other hand how organization is affecting to the society (for instance through campaigns that aim to raise public awareness). Responsibility was visible in the interaction with external stakeholders for example through contracts with business partners or as a safe and responsible handling of customer data. Lastly, social responsibility was also present in the interaction with internal stakeholders, namely employees themselves. The activities related to internal stakeholders could be divided into activities related to employee well-being, in-role CSR and extra-role CSR. Employee well-being consist of the activities such as, ergonomics, employee safety and teleworking possibilities. Following sentences describe how an employee from group B explained that responsibility activities are also targeted to employees:

*B14: "Organization is responsible for its employees. That our employees do well and we take care of our own people too. So that is also part of it, of course."*

In addition to being the targets, employees were also involved in CSR through participating into the CSR activities. These activities were either in-role (meaning that activities are part of employees' own work) or extra-role (meaning that activities were external part of employees' own daily tasks as presented by Glavas, (2016,1)). Based on the focus group interviews some employees found that they were participating in in-role CSR (f.ex. through working for campaigns, taking care of employee well-being or participating in the CSR reporting), while others found it challenging to connect CSR activities to their own work. Following answers given by different employees demonstrate how differently employees see their participation to in-role CSR.

*A6: "I feel like I am constantly dealing with CSR issues."*

*E86: "It is hard to distinguish it from this own work"*

*C41: "I somehow see my own work as such, that I find it very hard to come up with good and concrete examples..."*

Employees, who participated in in-role CSR often had one dimension of CSR that was more embedded in their own work. Therefore, employees found that the presence of other dimensions of CSR could be reminded, as noticed by an employee from group E:

*E87: "Emphasizing these four dimensions on some way, so that could be a good reminder for self, that it is not only about heating and energy, but that this is also about social side for example, or digital side."*

For some employees in-role CSR seemed to be hindered because of the lack of the natural connection to own work. On the other hand, employees also noted that through increasing the awareness, the connection to daily work could be supported, as stated by an employee from group B:

*B26: "... we would understand just that how that own action is part of that responsibility and how it is visible here every day. That I self feel like... that it is just like disconnected, that responsibility. And one does not always think that it's always present and how it is... maybe increasing such awareness could be in place."*

In addition to in-role CSR, employees were also participating in CSR activities as extra-role. Extra-role CSR means CSR activities that are exclusive from employees' own job tasks (Glavas, 2016, 1), which in this case work were such as volunteering and other charities organized by an employer. The existence of extra-role CSR was found important, since it is a concrete way how employees regardless

their job tasks can participate in CSR initiatives. The participation to extra-role CSR seemed to generate positive emotions among employees as described by an employee from group C:

*C37: "It was somehow really wonderful, that it was through employer, that I got a chance participate this kind of volunteering work. I was there couple of hours and I got insanely good feeling about it. I would have probably stayed there otherwise as well, but even more, that I got there through my employer in a way, so I got really, really good feeling."*

An interesting note was that employees seemed to appreciate the opportunity to participate in extra-role CSR despite their own actual participation. The existence of these kind of extra-role CSR activities, such as volunteering, was raising the positive emotions among employees, which is supported by an employee who stated:

*A7: "I agree, I got kind of good feeling, that we are doing volunteering. Even though, to be honest, I have not self participated."*

This finding of positive emotions linked to extra-role CSR in these focus group interviews is in line with the past study of Jones (2010), who found that corporate volunteering programs positively effect on employees and may even lead to identification with the organization (Jones, 2010, 857). Even though the positive emotions linked to volunteering possibilities in case organization, employees also noted that their extra-role participation is hindered because of lack of time, since volunteering work tend to take entire workday.

As pointed out by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), in qualitative study it is important not only to study what was said, but also what was not said during the interviews (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 176). Therefore, it might be valuable to point out what did not exist in this part of thematic network, namely the administrative side of CSR. During the interviews, employees were asked to describe if they have heard about CSR strategy and if they could elaborate what it includes. However, employees were either not that familiar with the existence of CSR strategy, they did not remember what it was all about or they just did not feel like describing what it includes. However, even though employees did not describe the strategy itself, they still noted the existence of CSR in practice as stated by an employee in focus group E:

*E79: "Even though I am not directly familiar with the strategy, I still recognize it."*

Another point related to strategy was that in the eyes of employees CSR seemed to be a such a large phenomenon that it is difficult to comprehend CSR as a separate strategy as stated by two employees from groups E and A:

*E87: "It is so integral part of ordinary day of life, so it is hard to think that in the perspective that this is...is part of our strategy."*

*A3: "I am thinking that should we have any specific strategy for it. It is supposed to be integral part of everything else, I mean all activities."*

Based on the findings of this part, employees as a group are involved in CSR through activities, which mean the concrete, mostly environmental and social activities that are conducted in the organization. Employees may self participate in CSR activities as in-role and extra-role. The level of participation differs between employees, since some feel like they are constantly working with CSR, while others find it difficult to connect the CSR activities as part of their own work. Through extra-role activities participating in CSR is possible for all sort of employees. The existence and participation to extra-role activities seemed to raise positive emotions among employees. Overall, employees as a group seemed to comprehend CSR through many activities related to different dimensions of CSR. However, maybe because of this comprehensive view, employees did not conceive, remember or know about CSR strategy, but rather perceived how CSR exists in practice. The importance of this practical side is also present in past study by Glavas (2016), who state that CSR should be embedded into practice as much as possible (Glavas, 2016, 7).

#### **4.2.2 CSR as way of acting**

In addition to activities, employees were also involved in CSR through way of acting. In this thematic network these two segments are presented separately, but in reality, this separation is artificial, since way of acting is present in the activities. For example, when focus group participants talked about the responsibility that exists in the interaction with customers, it was pointed out that responsibility can be concrete activities (f.ex. responsible handling of customer data) and way of acting (f.ex. every customer is treated equally). Therefore, in this network as illustrated in figure 9, way of acting could be connected to every other theme, but for the sake of clarity there is only one dashed line between activities and way of acting. The interconnection between these different segments is however important to note, since in reality employees do not separate these segments and their perception may be based on the interconnection of these segments.



Responsibility as a way of acting was present thoroughly in employees everyday work, even though it was not always recognized to be part of CSR itself. The comprehensive existence of responsibility is described by an employee from focus group D:

*D70: "It's present, we don't think about it. But there is like... things we do. We have like... this is like way of thinking, I guess. I can't tell you that... at the meeting that "okey, this is an issue of corporate responsibility". It's in our own cells, in every cell, in every decision that we make."*

Especially one value that represented the organization's way of acting was pointed out by employees several times in different associations and that value was equality. Equality was described to be present in the internal interaction and it was found to ease internal communication between different organizational levels. Some employees found that organization treats employees equally for instance by providing equal opportunities for employees to develop. Others found that there is also room for improvement in this section, especially what comes to equal treatment of different employee groups with unique characteristics (f.ex. employees in different geographical locations, in shift work and agency workers). In addition to internal existence of equality, this value was also present in the interaction with stakeholders, such as customers.

Organization culture was described broadly in the interviews and even the employees who were not participating in in-role CSR activities, found that CSR is present in their work through organization culture. Employees described that they either practice or experience for instance respect, caring, support, flexibility and truthfulness in their daily work.

To conclude, employees are involved in CSR through way of acting, which means that the things are done responsibly in the organization. For employees, CSR is therefore presence for instance as equal treatment of different stakeholders and shared respect between the members of an organization. When employees comprehend CSR as a way of acting it is then very difficult to separate it from any activity and employees view CSR as integral part of their and organization's work.

#### **4.2.3 Emotions**

In the previous sections two global themes of activities and way of acting were presented. In figure 9 of thematic network these global themes are linked to an organizing theme of emotions. During the interviews, employees were asked what kind of emotions CSR raises among them. For many employees CSR raised positive emotions, such as pride, good feelings, safety, reliability and inspiration. An employee from group C explained that responsibility created the feelings of pride:

C36: *“Yes, I also have feelings of pride, that I can stand behind my own employer and behind the things that are being supported here.”*

As presented previously in section 4.1.2 one specific activity, namely volunteering, seemed to raise positive emotions among employees. The positive emotions were raised because of employees` own participation, opportunity to participate and co-workers participation. The positive employee emotions linked to corporate volunteering is in line with the previous study of Jones (2010), but differs from the findings of Glavas (2016), who found that volunteering may have negative effect on employees because they may find it disingenuous (Glavas, 2016, 4-7). In these focus groups interviews the response for volunteering was positive, however some employees also stated that lack of time hinders their participation to extra-role activities and would rather want CSR to be present with “natural connection” so as in-role. However, in general, positive emotions seemed to be raised because of the overall CSR work and not that much because of a specific activity or value that organization promotes.

The emotions that CSR created and that employees disclosed, were positive. These emotions seem to be raised mainly because employees recognize how comprehensively CSR is present in the organization, through activities and way of acting. Only one certain activity seemed to raise positive emotions independently and that was the possibility to participate in volunteering. Negative emotions linked to CSR functions themselves were not brought into the fore. Negative emotions were raised only towards the terminology and some described CSR to be bureaucratic and stiff. This finding might be linked to what was earlier said about employee comprehension of CSR as a strategy, which employees found challenging to describe. Based on these findings, employees seem to rather view CSR as a concrete and emotional matter than as a management concept.

#### **4.2.4 Commitment**

In this last section of exploring the network, I will present employees perspective on what their employer means to them and explain how CSR was found to be linked to employee commitment.

During the interviews, participants were asked to describe what their employer means to them. Employees gave variety of answers. Some described the organization to be “*at least a place to work for all of us*”, “*place for development*” and “*enabler*”, while quite many also stressed that their organization was more than just a place to work. Organization was for instance contrasts to be “*way of living*”, “*like a good friend*”, “*another family*” and the relationship with an employer was described to be like the relationship of “*old married couple*”. An employee from group D described belongingness to a case organization by saying

*D74: "When I walk around the house, I know that these are like my people."*

The focus groups interviews did not directly reveal what were the factors that lead to above described connection and belongingness with the organization. It is very likely that this connection is built because of many reasons. However, CSR might be among them because of its connection to employee commitment. Namely, employees described that CSR is related to their commitment to the organization. CSR was found to be important for employees and many of them mentioned that if their employer was not be responsible, they would not work here anymore. Employees also told that CSR was not the reason why they came to work for an organization, but that it has formed to be the reason to stay. Therefore, CSR was connected to employee commitment, which is the last basic theme in this network. This commitment was visible for instance by an employee from group A, who stated how getting to understand CSR has affected to him/her:

*A6: "It strengthens and confirms the image of how good employer (organization`s name) is and strengthens my willingness to work here"*

This finding that CSR is linked to employee commitment is also recognized in the literature. For instance, Kim et al. (2010, 565) described that employee involvement in CSR is linked to higher commitment and Jones (2010, 870) found involvement to be connected in employees` intention to stay in the organization. According to the authors (Jones, 2010; Kim et al., 2010;) these connections were built because of organizational identification, which is a term that refers to individual perception of oneness and belongingness to an organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, 104).

To conclude, for some participants, case-organization was described to be a meaningful part of their life and a place where they belong to. This belongness and connection might be linked to CSR, since employees also described CSR to be related to their commitment to employer. Especially CSR was described to be one reason, why employees have stayed in the organization and without responsibility some employees would not want to work for an organization.

#### **4.2.5 Summarizing the network**

In this section, the summary of a network and the main results are shortly presented. Figure 10 reveals the simplified picture of thematic network.

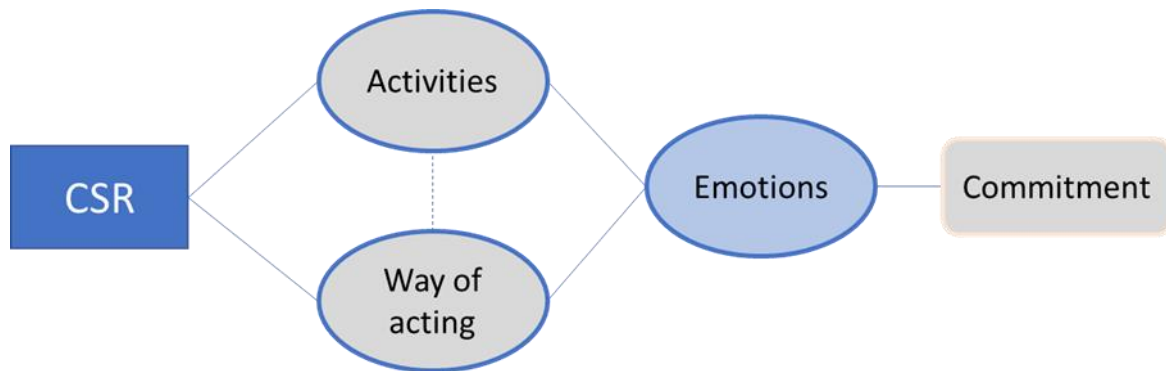


Figure 10: Summarized picture of thematic network

According to the five focus group interviews, employees as a group are involved in CSR through different activities and through way of acting. Activities represent concrete financial, digital, social and environmental practices that employees identified to be linked in the corporation's responsibility. For example, reduction of paper usage, safe handling of data, compliance and providing teleworking possibilities are some of the activities that employees identified belonging to CSR. Employees may be participating in implementing these activities either in-role or extra-role or they might perceive or be the targets of the activities. In addition to concrete activities, employees were also involved in CSR through way of acting, which means that the values and organization culture exist in the organization. Together these segments raised positive emotions among employees as they described that CSR raises f.ex. pride, good feelings and reliability. In addition, CSR seemed to be connected to employee commitment to the organization. According to the results of this thesis this commitment was created because of employees' overall view of CSR, including different concrete activities and way of acting that employees are involved in.

The finding that employees as a group view CSR through several activities and way of acting, creates a comprehensive picture of how employees are involved in CSR. This finding of comprehensive view may seem to somewhat differ from the findings from previous studies. Some studies have stated that employees often have low knowledge of basic CSR concepts (Coutinho et al., 2018, 37) and lack of knowledge of CSR issues that are beyond their own work responsibilities (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 384). However, the results of this thesis are based on the group level discussions, which might explain the different findings. Even though the main results of this thesis consider employees as a group, diversity of individual employees is recognized. While talking about employees as a group, it is important to point out, that each individual is different (Glavas, 2016, 8) and employees are not a homogenous group of people. In this context the heterogeneity of the employees means that different employees may perceive, participate and experience CSR differently. This is also supported by Raubenheimer and Rasmussen (2014) and Garavan and McGuire (2010), who acknowledge that CSR does not necessarily mean the same thing to everyone (Garavan & McGuire, 2010, 490; Raubenheimer & Rasmussen, 2014, 38). Also Masri and Jaaron (2017) stated

that individuals may be motivated by different means (Masri & Jaaron, 2017, 486) and for some employees the benefits related to CSR may be easily recognizable than for the others (Slack et al. 2015, 545). This heterogeneity was also visible in the focus group interviews, where employees had different knowledge of the concept of CSR, different perception of how CSR is linked to their own work and individual employees may have stressed some dimension of CSR over others. However, as a group, employees were able to describe the different dimensions of CSR comprehensively and the perception after each interview was that the overall picture of CSR was very broad. During the group interviews the interests and expertise were shared and therefore it seemed to raise the awareness and knowledge of entire group. Therefore, the results presented in this section reflect the participant's collective views, which according to Gill et al. (2008) is the aim of focus group interviews (Gill et al., 2008, 293). It is however possible, that if employees would have been interviewed independently, the results would have been different. However, because this work aimed also to increase the internal discussion of the CSR issues in the organization, focus group interviews were a suitable method to use in this work.

### **4.3 Interpreting the patterns**

The last analytical part in the of thematic network is to identify the patterns from the network (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Even though the patterns are already there in the figures 9 and 10, this is the section where the patterns and the meaning of them will be more closely discussed about. The three following patterns that are illustrated in figure 11, were identified, namely comprehensiveness, visibility and identification. The meanings of these patterns will be interpreted in the following chapters. The overall picture based on the patterns is that CSR in case organization is comprehensive, and it needs to be visible in order that employees can recognize it and identify with organization through it.

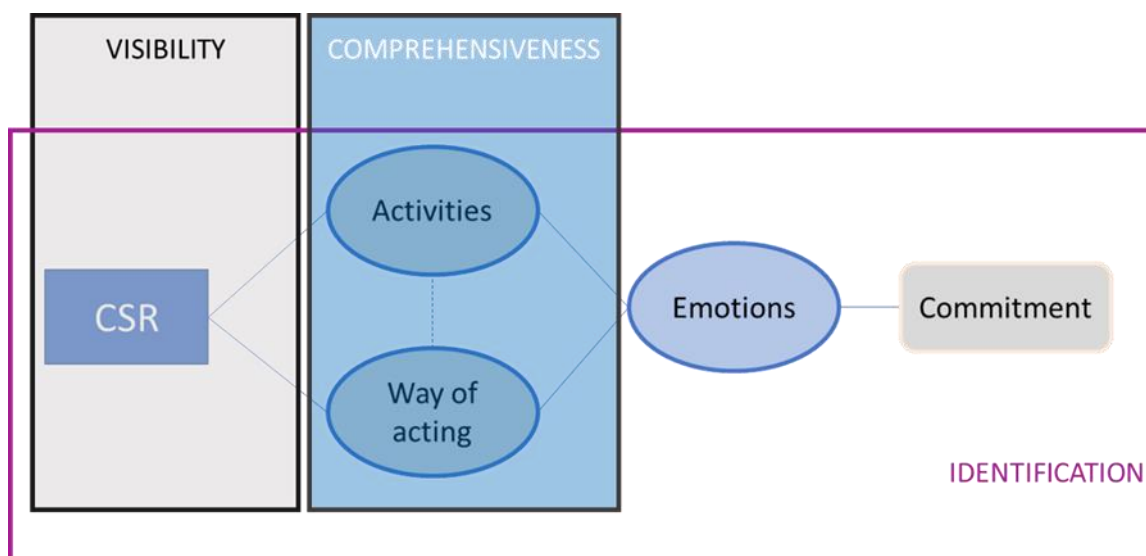


Figure 11: The patterns of visibility, comprehensiveness and identification.

#### 4.3.1 Comprehensiveness

The first pattern that was identified from the network, is the comprehensiveness of the employee involvement in CSR. Employees as a group formed a comprehensive view of CSR including different CSR activities and responsible way of acting. Employee groups are comprehensively involved in CSR because of their tripartite role in the implementation of CSR and because of different individual perceptions and experiences. In this section the comprehensive nature of employee involvement is recognized and interpreted by first explaining how employees are the targets, perceivers and participants of CSR and secondly explaining how individuals are involved in CSR differently. It is also explained that this comprehensiveness is recommended to be taken into account while developing employee involvement in CSR.

Comprehensive CSR involvement of employees is first of all based on the tripartite role of employees in CSR work. Like presented in the theoretical background in this work, also the focus group participants were identified to have tripartite role in the implementation of CSR. Employees roles are visualized in figure 12, which presents three pictures of thematic network, that illustrate how focus group participants are the targets (yellow), perceivers (blue) and participants (green) of CSR.

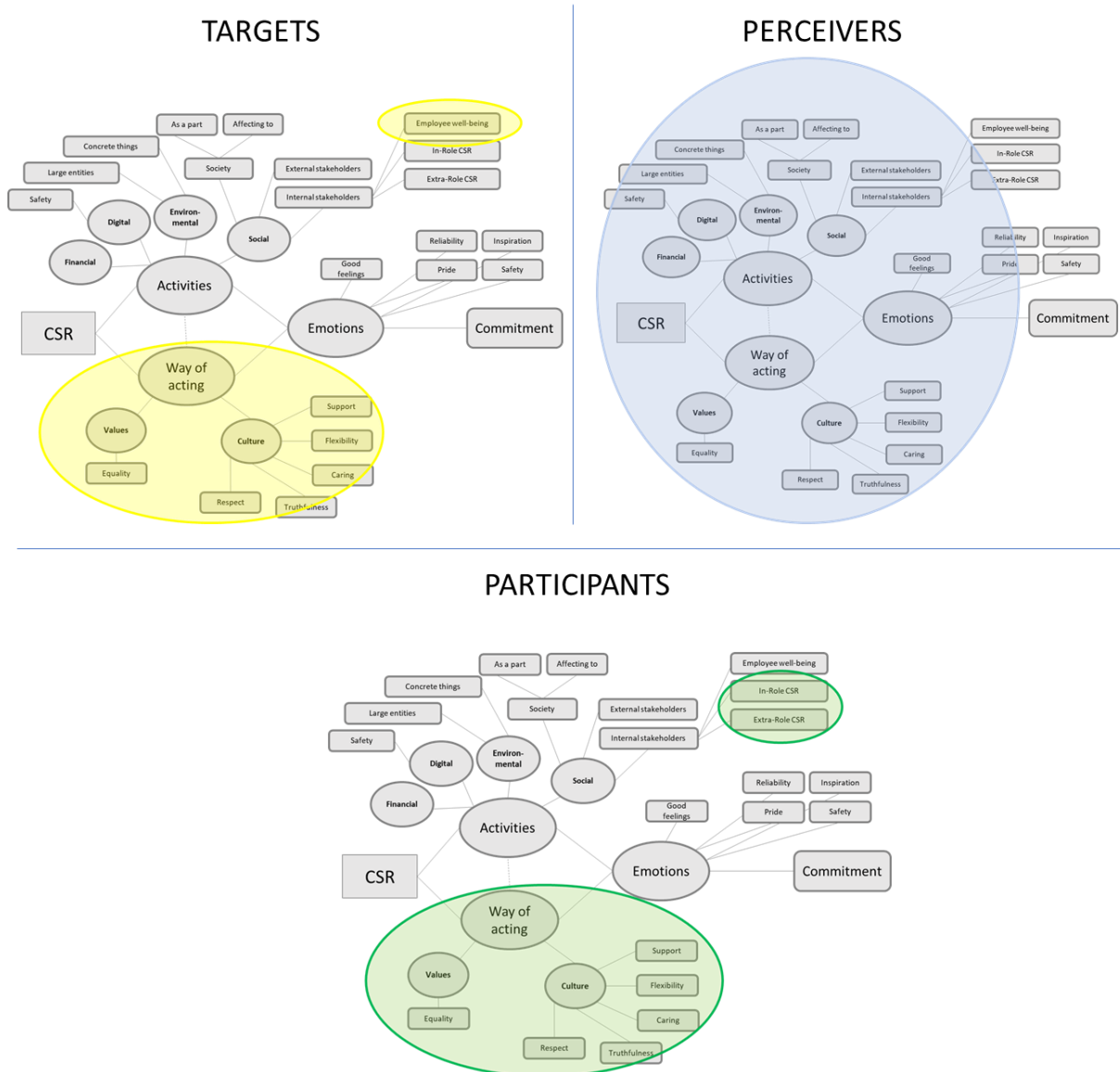


Figure 12: Tripartite role of employees in thematic network

First of all, employees were the targets of CSR through specific activities and responsible way of acting as presented in the figure 12 with yellow markings. Employees identified responsible activities that are aimed to improve employee well-being, such as taking care of ergonomics, employee safety and providing teleworking possibilities. In addition, employees were the targets of CSR through responsible way of acting that they experienced in the organization for instance in a form of equality, truthfulness and respect. Secondly, employees were the perceivers of CSR as illustrated in figure 12 with blue markings. Perceived CSR means that stakeholder form a perception of how organization impacts on the well-being of stakeholders in general and natural environment (Glavas & Godwin, 2013, 17). During the focus group discussions, employees perceived CSR to be present as financial, digital, environmental and social activities, such as how organization works as a part of society and how organization aims to reduce the

use of natural resources. In addition, employees also perceived that CSR is present in the interaction with stakeholders through responsible way of acting. Lastly, employees participated in CSR through in-role and extra-role activities and through their own way of acting as presented in the figure 12 with green markings. Some employees acknowledged that they are participating in the in-role CSR activities, which stands for the activities that are part of employees' own work, for instance through working for campaigns, taking care of employee well-being or participating in the CSR reporting. In addition, employees participated in CSR as extra-role, when activities were external part of employees' own daily tasks, such as volunteering work organized by their employer. Therefore, it can be concluded that employee groups are involved in CSR comprehensively because of their tripartite role as being perceivers, participants and targets of CSR in the case organization.

Employees comprehensive CSR involvement is secondly based on different individual perspectives and experiences. Finding of this work suggests that employees as a group form a comprehensive picture of CSR, because individual employees are involved in CSR differently and when they share their perspectives, the broad picture can be formed. Figure 13 gives an example of what it means that individual employees may be involved in CSR differently. The dots in figure 13 illustrate an example of how employees are connected to CSR differently and emphasize the importance of different segments. In figure 13, each colour of the dots represents an example of individual employee and the aspects of CSR that employee may be connected to. However, since the aim of this thesis was not to study individual employees but rather employees as a group, the illustration in figure 13 is an example used to explain the phenomenon and does not indicate the exact perspectives of any individuals within the focus groups.



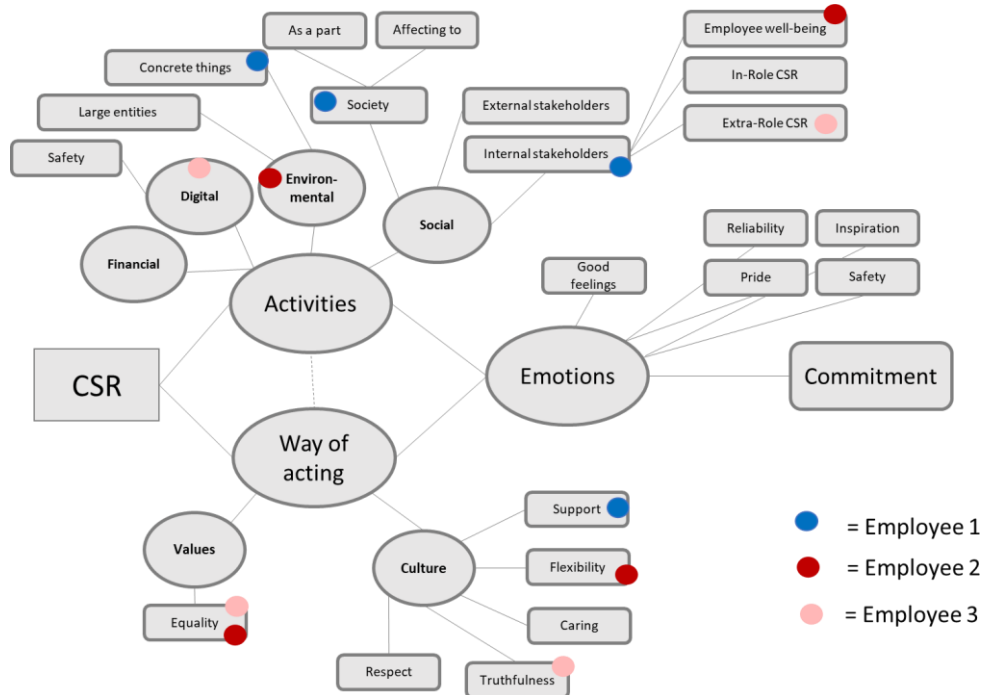


Figure 13: Individual employees are involved CSR differently

As illustrated in figure 13 the picture of CSR is comprehensive for employees as a group, but the involvement in CSR may vary between individual employees. This means that some employees may stress one dimension of CSR and the others may see that CSR is mainly about truthfulness integrated in the actions. This perspective that employees are heterogeneous group and may perceive CSR differently, is also supported by the literature. For instance, Glavas (2016) talks about individual differences among employees (Glavas, 2016, 8), Slack et al. (2015) conclude employees to have different views of CSR (Slack et al. 2015, 546), Bolton et al. (2011) describe employees to represent different political, economic and social landscapes (Bolton et al., 2011, 71) and Raubenheimer and Rasmussen (2014) and Garavan and McGuire (2010) found that responsibility does not mean the same thing to everyone (Raubenheimer & Rasmussen, 2014, 38; Garavan & McGuire, 2010, 490). To conclude, employees as a group were comprehensively involved in CSR work, because of different individual perspectives and experiences.

The results of this case study also showed that CSR can raise positive emotions among employees and even be linked to employee commitment to the organization. In this case work the positive emotions and commitment seemed mainly be raised because of the comprehensiveness of CSR, which means that the positive responses seemed to be rather based on the overall CSR and not so much on individual activities. Since employees as a group are involved in CSR comprehensively, the involvement can be supported by consistent CSR work. This means that while employees have different perspectives and may be involved in CSR work in different roles, it is important that the same responsibility message is consistently transferred through different segments and dimensions, so that as

many employees as possible can develop the positive emotions and increase their commitment to the organization. The importance of consistency is also supported by past studies. For instance, consistency in a form of fair treatment of different internal and external stakeholders reinforce employee perception of CSR (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1162) and CSR can strengthen the employee identification, when employees have positive external and internal image of their employer (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 23). In addition, the comprehensiveness of CSR is not only important for employees, but it might also be beneficial in maintaining other stakeholders-relationships. Because if employees see that CSR work is consistent, it might also be consistent in the eyes of external stakeholders. This is because employees represent different landscapes (Bolton et al., 2011, 71) and external stakeholders seem to view employees as credible source of information (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 301).

Even though employee groups were involved in CSR comprehensively, they did not actively think about the existence of CSR, even though they seemed to value it. Employees as a group were the targets, perceivers and participants of activities and way of acting, but employees were not that much involved in CSR through its administrative side. Employees were either not that familiar with the existence of CSR strategy, they did not remember what it was all about or they just did not feel like describing what it includes. Also, the terminology related to CSR was found to be somewhat distant and bureaucratic. Even though employees were not that familiar with the strategy, they still noted the existence of CSR in practice through describing how it is present in the activities and as way of acting. Also previous literature support the promotion of practicality when implementing CSR in employee level. For instance, Glavas (2016) state that CSR should be embedded into practice as much as possible (Glavas, 2016, 7) and Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) recommend CSR related communication to include practical messages (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307). The finding that employees are not very interested in strategic dimension, does not mean that the strategy is not needed, but rather that strategy is something that may be valuable to translate to employees in practical terms. Therefore, it can be concluded that in order to develop employee involvement it is recommended to take into account this comprehensiveness by implementing CSR in different segments and rather stress the practical implementation than the strategic one.

To conclude, employees as a group are involved in CSR comprehensively, because of their tripartite role in the implementation of CSR and because of different individual experiences and perspectives. This formation of this comprehensive involvement is illustrated in figure 14, which combines the different roles (as illustrates in figure 12) and individual perspectives (as illustrated in figure 13) and therefore creates the comprehensive view.

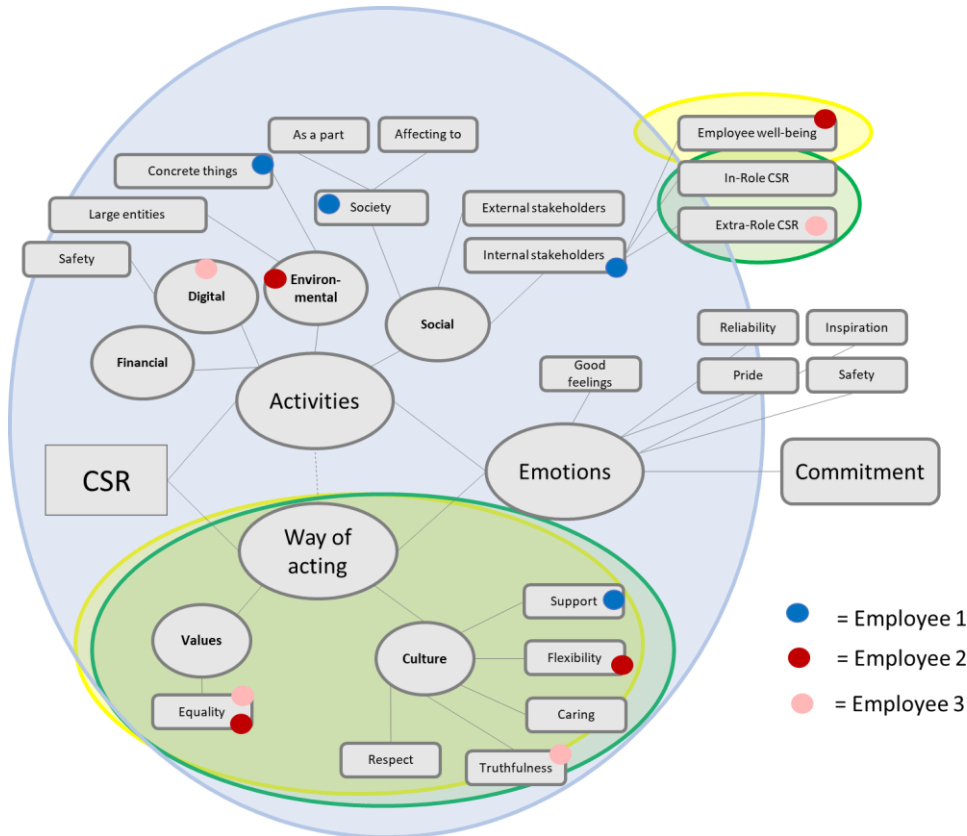


Figure 14: The overall involvement of employees as a group

Comprehensive nature of CSR can be considered by consistently transmitting the similar message through different segment so that the positive emotions and commitment may be created among employees with different perspectives, backgrounds and level of knowledge and despite their role in the implementation. Even though the view of employee groups is comprehensive, employees do not always think about that comprehensiveness. Also, the strategic dimension of CSR was found somewhat distant. Therefore, in order to reinforce the involvement, it might be more valuable to rather stress the practical implementation of CSR that the strategic one.

#### 4.3.2 Visibility

Another pattern that was noticed in the thematic network, is the visibility of CSR. Employees can only be involved in CSR and create the positive emotions through it, if they know about the existence of CSR and if it is visible for them. As stated by the previous chapter, employees as a group were comprehensively involved in CSR, through different segments and dimensions. When the view of CSR is comprehensive, the visibility is also recommended to be promoted comprehensively through different channels so that the same responsibility message can be transferred to as many employees as possible. In this chapter it is first explained

how CSR was visible for employees during the focus group interviews and how this visibility was not necessarily as strong as it could be. Secondly it will be presented how visibility could be supported through reinforcing the perception and participation of employees.

During the focus group interviews CSR was visible for employee groups in many forms. Employee groups recognized the existence of CSR in the financial, digital, environmental and social dimensions as well as the way of acting. Employees pointed out that CSR was visible for them for instance through communication with CSR contact persons, by participating in in-role and extra-role activities and by experiencing equal treatment in the workplace. There were however differences between employees how they perceived CSR to be visible for them. For some, CSR was integral part of their daily work while others found it challenging to describe the connection between CSR and their own work. Even though employees recognized and valued the comprehensive existence of CSR, many participants did not actively think about it. Therefore, the comprehensive picture that participants were able to form, does not necessarily mean that the CSR would already be visible enough for all the employees in the organization. This is because the results consider employees as a group, and the effect of research setting to the findings. Research setting of this study may affect on the findings in at least two ways, namely through the voluntarily and educational nature of the discussions. Because the participation to interviews was voluntary, it might attain employees who already are interested in and have knowledge of responsibility issue. On the other hand, the discussions themselves were quite educational. When each employee shared their own views of the responsibility, the shared understanding of the comprehensiveness of the CSR seemed to be visible for the participants as well as for the moderator. The educational nature of interviews was noticeable, when employees got impressed by organization's CSR work when they heard about it from the other participants. Employees seemed to be surprised how comprehensively responsibility issues are considered in the organization. Employees also brought up the need to make CSR more visible for employees, because they also self perceived that the knowledge may rise the feelings of pride and overall effect on employee-image. The need for CSR visibility was pointed out by an employee from group C, who stated that everyone should know about the organization's CSR work:

*C33: "And I think that each employee is good to know how good we are in it."*

To conclude, CSR was visible for employees as a group, since the comprehensive picture was formed. However, CSR seemed to be more visible for some than the others. Because employees were impressed of the comprehensiveness of CSR work and self brought up the need to increase the visibility, it can be identified

that there is room to increase the visibility among employees in the case organization.

Visibility of CSR could be promoted through increasing employee perception and participation to CSR. One way to reinforce employee perception is to develop communication (Glavas & Godwin, 2013, 23; Kim et al., 2010, 565). Participation on the other hand can be supported by reinforcing employees in-role and extra-role CSR, for instance through corporate volunteering programs (Kim et al., 2010, 566). In addition, the general visibility of CSR can be reinforced by utilizing sustainable HRM, for example in a form of recruiting or rewards and compensations.

During the interviews, employees recognized that the CSR issues could be more visible for them, for instance through communicating about the CSR related achievements. Employees seemed to be positively surprised when learning how comprehensively CSR is taken into account in the organization and what kind of CSR achievements have been reached. Also the literature recommends different kind of communicational improvements, that could increase the knowledge of employees (e.g. in Glavas & Godwin, 2012; Haugh & Talwar, 2010; Kim et al., 2010; Merriman et al., 2015; Siano et al., 2017; Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010). For instance, employees in general are recommended to be among the ones, who receive CSR communication (Kim et al., 2010, 565), that is transferred by simple and practical messages (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307) and includes an explanation of practices and why they are needed (Young et al., 2015, 700). Literature also recommends information to be provided by additional means than just internal newsletters and GRI reporting (Glavas & Godwin, 2012, 24) and instead recommends f.ex. informal meetings (Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 307) and CSR contact persons in different organizational units (Siano et al., 2017, 33; Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010, 308) as ways to transfer the CSR related information internally. The need for simple and practical messages as recommended by Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka (2010, 307) is also in line with the findings of this case work, when employees seemed rather be interested in the practical side of CSR than the administrative one.

In addition to reinforcing the perception, the visibility could be improved through promoting the employee participation to CSR. As previously presented, there were differences among focus group participants on how integrated part of their daily work CSR is. For some, CSR was so visible that it was almost impossible to exclude it, while others found challenging to describe concrete visibility of CSR in their own work. However, based on findings of this case work every employee can participate in CSR through extra-role activities and through the responsible way of acting. Promoting these possibilities to participate could improve the visibility of CSR to employees who feel like they are not naturally connected to the CSR by their own work tasks. Also literature acknowledges that employee participation can be supported through extra role activities, such as corporate volunteering programs (Kim et al., 2010, 566). Employees in case or-

organization however mentioned that their participation to extra-role CSR is hindered by the lack of time, even though the opportunity seemed to be important for them. Current volunteering opportunities provided by the employer seemed to take a whole working day and many employees found it hard to fit into their tight schedules. Considering volunteering, literature gives couple of recommendations. The first is to limit the number of volunteering hours, since according to Jones et al. (2017) small hours (1-12h) of volunteering can positively effect on employees, but high levels of volunteering may do the opposite and become a burden for employees (Jones et al., 2017, 11). The second recommendation considers the development of job-related skills while volunteering. Jones (2016) found that volunteering could be designed to develop work related skills of employees, which might make volunteering experience simultaneously beneficial for employers, employees and causes they served (Jones, 2016, 1). These work-related skills that could be developed while volunteering were for example leadership, project management, public speaking and time management (Jones, 2016, 1). The recommendations are however somewhat controversial, since work related skills were developed with 20-35h of volunteering work (Jones, 2016, 12), which is above the recommended voluntary working hours of the other study and may create also negative reactions among employees (Jones et al., 2017, 11). Maybe these different kind of volunteering possibilities could be then treated as different "products" and organization might provide less time-consuming possibilities for employees who are busy and more profound volunteering options for the ones who want to develop their job-related skills simultaneously.

In addition to larger volunteering programs, participation could be supported through small concrete actions, that employees can self participate into. During the interviews, employees also self pointed out that participation to everyday CSR actions could be supported more to increase the visibility of CSR. As an example, employees gave a very concrete example that every employee could participate in reduction of corporation`s food loss by measuring the bio waste in the cafeteria. The importance of this kind of individual participation is found to be important in the literature, since according to Russell, Evans, Fielding and Hill (2016) employees have the largest impact on CSR performance, when they have individual responsibility (Russell et al., 2016, 8).

Finally, visibility of CSR could also be reinforced through sustainable HRM. Sustainable HRM means utilization of HRM practices and strategies to achieve CSR goals (Ehnert et al., 2016, 90). There are number of HRM practices that could be utilized, but this work has only examined some of them, namely recruiting and rewards and compensations. Based on the focus group interviews, employees were not considering the responsibility of the organization while applying the job from their current employer. However, according to studies, including CSR information to recruiting process may benefit organization. CSR information combined to job advertisement may increasing the competitive advantage through attracting larger application pool (Jones et al., 2014, 401) and attracting employees whose values fit to the organization values (Jones et al., 2014, 400-401; Puncheva et al., 2018, 650-651) and therefore have a high interest

to participate in CSR initiatives as future employees (Puncheva et al., 2018, 650-651). Other example of sustainable HRM practice presented in this work is the utilization of rewards and compensations to increase employee involvement to CSR. Utilising this practice in CSR has found to be controversial. Some studies found it to support behavioural change (Young et al., 2015, 701), have positive effect of CSR performance (Masri & Jaaron, 2017) and overall to increase the employee participation to CSR (Slack et al., 2015, 545). On contrary others studies found rewarding not to be the most effective way to support employee involvement (e.g. in Evans et al., 2012; Masri & Jaaron, 2017) for instance because rewards may have negative spill-over effect and dilute the responsible behaviour later or elsewhere (Evans et al., 2012, 3). Based on the literature, utilization of rewards and compensations can not be directly recommended. However, if the case organization finds that money is the language employees are interested in, highlighting the financial benefits of CSR work could be something to communicate about. In general the implementation of these sustainable HRM practices, that aim to combine the strategic CSR goals to specific HRM practices (as interpreted from Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 487) may increase the visibility of CSR to employees and therefore its applicability could be investigated more. These tools created through sustainable HRM could help in the translation of CSR strategy to employee level. Since based on the focus group interviews employees were mainly interested in practical side of the CSR, HRM practices could be a sufficient tool to make CSR strategies more visible for employees.

To conclude, because employees were comprehensively involved in CSR, for them as a group, CSR was visible. However, CSR seemed to be more visible for some than the others and despite the recognition and valuation of CSR, employees did not always think about the existence of CSR. Therefore, there is also room for improvement of the visibility in the case organization. The visibility of CSR could be improved through employee communication, reinforcing participation and through developing sustainable HRM practices. Employee communication is recommended to be especially designed to employees and be practical and transferred through many communicational channels, so that the responsibility message can be delivered to participants with different perceptions and experiences. The participation to CSR could be supported by developing the extra role CSR programs, emphasizing that everyone can participate through their own way of acting and designing concrete and integrated ways for employees to participate in daily basis. Lastly, the visibility of CSR could be improved by combining strategic CSR goals to specific HRM practices (as interpreted from Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 487) to translate the CSR strategy to employees. While developing the visibility of CSR by improving the employee perception and participation, it is important to recognize the consistency and that employees are also the targets of CSR.

### 4.3.3 Identification

The third pattern that was identified from the thematic network was the pattern of identification. This is the pattern that can be interpreted from the network when reflecting the results of the case work to previous literature and examining the traces of identification from the interview material. In the following sections, I will present the pattern of identification by first explaining how this pattern was identified and then explaining what the existence of this pattern means.

As presented previously in this thesis, organizational identification refers to individual's perception of oneness and belongingness to an organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, 104). It has also found to be a mediating factor between employee involvement in CSR and variety of organizational outcomes (e.g. in Benn et al., 2015, 504-505; Branco & Rodrigues, 2006, 121; De Roeck et al., 2016, 1159; De Roeck et al., 2014, 101-103; De Roeck & Deloppe, 2012, 397; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017, 47; Jones, 2010, 857; Kim et al., 2010, 564-565) The results of the work show that while employees are involved in CSR through activities and way of acting, positive emotions, such as pride and reliability are created and employees are committed to the organization. Results of this case work and the previous literature of organizational identification reflect the similar kind of pattern, which previous studies have found to be mediated by organizational identification. In addition to similar kind of pattern, there were also traces of identification in the focus group interviews. Even though employees were not directly asked if they feel like being identified with the organization, employees revealed things related to identification by contrasting their employer to close real life relationships (family, spouse, friend) and sharing their feelings of belongingness to the organization.

Focus groups interviews did not directly reveal why employees felt connection and belongingness with the organization. It may be that this connection is built because of many reasons. However, when reflecting the identification pattern of this work to previous studies, it can be predicted that CSR involvement is related to the identification. This is because during the interviews, employees described that CSR involvement have affected to their commitment to the organization and according to previous studies CSR involvement affect on commitment (Kim et al., 2010, 565) and employees' intention to stay in the organization (Jones, 2010, 870) and is mediated by organizational identification (Kim et al., 2010; Jones, 2010). Therefore, it can be interpreted that employee involvement affect of organizational identification and create commitment among focus group participants.

To conclude, reflecting the theory to findings of this case study, organizational identification seems to exist among the focus group participants in the case organization. This however does not mean that theory necessarily exists among all of the participants, but rather that there is a possibility to increase this identification among other employees as well. The overall results of to this work suggests that the identification can be supported by consistent CSR work, that is made visible and takes into account employee comprehensive involvement in CSR. The identification among different kind of employees can be supported



through consistent CSR work, so that the same responsibility message is transferred to employees through different activities and way of acting and that the work is visible, so that employees can perceive, participate and experience CSR in the organization.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

This case work aimed to investigate employee involvement in CSR in case organization. This final section of the work includes overall conclusions, answering to the three research questions, recommendations aimed towards the case organization as well as the limitations and ideas for the future research.

Studying employee involvement is important for academical, organizational and employee related reasons. For academia, employee involvement creates information of processes that may explain the contribution that CSR have on organization`s financial performance (Jones et al., 2017, 12). For organization and its employees improved involvement may lead to many benefits, for instance improved reputation (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161) and higher employee commitment (Kim et al., 2010, 565). This case work studied employee involvement in CSR in multinational corporation. The study was conducted as qualitative research that consisted of five focus group interviews among the employees of the case organization.

The main findings of this work consider the comprehensive involvement of employees and the reactions that CSR generates among them. Employees as a group are found to be comprehensively involved in CSR through activities and way of acting as targets, perceivers and participants of CSR. Comprehensive view is based on the individual differences among employees and their job descriptions. When employees interact together, as they did in the focus group discussions, the overall involvement of employees as a group was found to be comprehensive. Even though employees as a group see that CSR is present comprehensively, they do not always think about it. The comprehensive involvement of employees creates reactions, which in this case were positive emotions and employee commitment. When contrasting this pattern to past studies, it can be interpreted that commitment is mediated by organizational identification, which as stated by Mael and Ashforth (1992) express employees' feelings of belongingness and oneness to the organization (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, 104). Organizational identification exists among the focus group participants, but not necessarily among all of them. Therefore, if these positive reactions are something that organization wants to support, and these reactions were created not because of any individual practice but rather because of the comprehensive CSR work, it is recommended that this comprehensiveness is taken into account while developing employee involvement in CSR. Also, because employees do not necessarily always think about the comprehensive existence of CSR, supporting the visibility of CSR may promote employee involvement.

Comprehensive involvement of employees may simultaneously be an opportunity and a challenge for an organization. The comprehensive involvement of employees is an opportunity, since through understanding employees' different perspectives, organization can simultaneously gain a broader picture of ex-

ternal stakeholders` reactions to organization`s CSR. This is because through employee involvement, the concerns of external stakeholders are better represented (Bolton et al., 2011, 71). Also, according to other micro-CSR studies understanding stakeholder reaction in general is important, since positive reactions have found to contribute to higher financial performance (Jones et al., 2017, 12). However, this comprehensive nature of employee involvement creates also challenges for an organization since in order to support the involvement, CSR work need to be and be communicated thoroughly and consistently, since different employees value and perceive different aspects of responsibility. The solution of this challenge may be on the systematic approach to the involvement, that takes into account the organization`s CSR strategy. Even though employees found CSR strategy distant, the existence of strategy is highly important for the effectiveness of this management concept in the organization. The key thing in the improvement of employee involvement is therefore to translate the CSR strategy to employees, which is suggested to be done through three recommendations. These recommendations are developing CSR communication that is targeted to employees, designing in-role and extra-role CSR and developing meaningful integration of CSR and HRM.

After giving this overall view of the conclusions, the next sections represent more detailed information of the research findings by answering to the three research questions that were presented in the introduction. After the research questions are answered, the recommendations that are aimed to case organization are presented. Finally, I will also discuss some limitations and ideas for the future research.

## 5.1 Answering the research questions

Research question 1: *How are employees involved in CSR in studied case organization?*

The first research question handles employee current involvement in CSR in case organization. Employees as a group are involved in CSR comprehensively because of their tripartite role in the implementation and because of different individual experiences and perceptions.

Employees as a group have tripartite role in CSR involvement, since they are the targets, perceivers and participants of CSR activities and responsible way of acting. As targets employees experience activities that are aimed towards increasing employee well-being and overall responsible way of acting that eased communication and cooperation within the organization. Employees also perceive how responsibly their employer treats others, both through specific activities as how the values and organization culture is present in the interaction with stakeholders in general. Employees also self participate in the implementation of CSR either by acting responsibly self or by attending to in-role or extra-role CSR activities. Individual employees are involved in CSR differently. The results of

this work are based on the group interviews, and the comprehensive involvement is based on the finding that individual employees stress, value and experience different aspects of CSR. When these individuals are interacting, as they were in the group discussions, the comprehensive overall picture can be formed.

Even though the overall involvement of employees as group is comprehensive the strategic dimension of CSR is not very familiar or interesting for employees. Employees however recognize the existence of the strategy, but they rather are involved in CSR through practical connection.

*Research question 2: What hinders and support employee involvement in CSR in case organization?*

The second research question handles the things that hinder and support employee involvement in CSR. Based on the focus group interviews lack of knowledge and lack of time may hinder employee involvement in CSR. Based on that, employee involvement in CSR could be supported through increasing the visibility.

Employees as a group are comprehensively involved in CSR and therefore CSR is at some level visible for them. However, there are employees to whom CSR is more visible than for the others, and therefore there is also room for improvement in the overall visibility. Employees as a group were able to form the comprehensive picture, but they also pointed out that CSR is not necessarily something that they often think about, even though they value and recognize it. To support the overall existence of CSR, the visibility could be supported, since the increased visibility could reinforce employee involvement in CSR and create positive reactions among them.

The visibility of CSR could be improved through CSR communication that is targeted to employees, reinforcing participation and through developing sustainable HRM practices in the organization. Employee communication is recommended to be especially designed to employees and be practical and transferred to heterogeneous employees through many communicational channels, so that the responsibility message can be delivered to participants with different perceptions and experiences. The participation to CSR could also be supported by developing extra role CSR programs, such as volunteering. Even though in general employee positive reactions were created because of the overall CSR that employees were involved in, volunteering opportunities were an exception, since they seemed to create positive reactions independently. Therefore, developing and sustaining the volunteering opportunity is found important. Another way to increase the visibility through participation is to design concrete and integrated ways for employees to participate in daily basis. Lastly, the visibility of CSR could be improved by combining organization's strategic CSR goals to HRM practices (as expressed by Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 487). The aim with these sustainable HRM practices is to translate the CSR strategy to employees. The need for this kind of translation exists in the case organization, since employees prefer

practical dimension of CSR rather than strategic. The more exact description of recommendations to increase the CSR involvement of the employees in case organization is presented in section 5.2.

Research question 3: *Are employees identified with the organization through CSR in case organization?*

The third and last research question handles employee organizational identification based on the CSR involvement. According to the analysis, organizational identification exists among the focus group participants.

The pattern of organizational identification is that employees who are involved in CSR, identify with the organization and therefore create organizational outcomes, such as higher job satisfaction and commitment (e.g. in Kim et al., 2010; Jones et al., 2010; De Roeck et al., 2016). The results of this work execute similar pattern, when it was found that employees are involved in CSR through activities and way of acting, which create positive emotions and effect on employee commitment to the organization. In addition to similar kind of pattern, there were also traces of identification in the focus group interviews. Employees revealed things related to identification by contrasting their employer to close real life relationships and by sharing their feelings of belongingness to the organization. Therefore, it is concluded that employee involvement in CSR seemed to be connected to organizational identification and create commitment among focus group participants.

Even though the pattern of identification was recognized from the research material, these results do not suggest that every focus group participant is identified with the organization through CSR. The result means that the theory of organizational identification exists in case organization among some employees. In order to support employee identification and to form these additional organizational outcomes, organization could work towards making CSR more visible for employees and simultaneously considering that responsibility is consistently present in the activities and way of acting that employees are being targets, perceivers and participants of.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The recommendations of this work are based on the findings of the focus group interviews and are aimed towards the case organization. However, also other organizations may find these recommendations interesting since employee knowledge and involvement might be something that many organizations aim to develop. That being said, it also needs to be noted that different organizations may have different challenges in terms of CSR (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 393), which may affect on the implementation of these recommendations in other organizations.

The recommendations based on this case work consider supporting employee involvement in CSR through making CSR more visible for employees. Increasing employee involvement is important, since it may effect on organizational identification and through that create organizational outcomes, that are beneficial for the organization itself, but also for the employees (e.g. in Kim et al., 2010, 565). In addition, employee involvement may also affect on organization CSR performance (e.g. in Benn et al., 2015, 505) and improve the internal and external reputation of the organization (De Roeck et al., 2016, 1161). Recommendations to increase the visibility of CSR to employees are:

1. *Develop and intensify the CSR communication to employees*
2. *Design in-role CSR and extra-role CSR*
3. *Develop meaningful integration of HRM and CSR*

Overall this work recommends case organization to take the full benefits out of its comprehensive CSR work, which employees of the organization seem to value. Because employee involvement in CSR has shared benefits to organization, its CSR performance, reputation and employees themselves, the development of involvement is recommended to be done in the interaction with CSR, HRM and communicational professionals and employees themselves. The next sections describe shortly the three recommendations aimed towards the case organization.

### **5.2.1 Develop and intensify CSR communication to employees**

The first recommendation is to further develop and intensify the CSR communication that is targeted to employees. How this targeted CSR communication will be designed is up to organization`s preferences, but some common recommendations can be given. In line with the recommendations of Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010, 307) CSR messages are recommended to be practical and simple. The reason for simple and practical messages is that employees tend to be busy and they seemed to view CSR rather as practical and emotional thing than as a management concept. Messages could include information of CSR achievements, since they seemed to create feelings of pride among employees. Special focus of communication could be in the activities that employees can self participate into, which may help them to recognize their role in the implementation of CSR. Because employees are different and perceive and experience CSR differently, it is recommended that communication of CSR is done by utilizing different communicational channels (also in Glavas & Godwin 2012, 23), so that as many employees as possible can reach the message. Also, communication of CSR could emphasize the existence of CSR in its four dimensions (financial, digital, environmental and social) to support the comprehensiveness of CSR also for employees whose work CSR is strongly embedded through one dimension.

### **5.2.2 Design of in-role CSR and extra-role CSR**

Second recommendation is to support the participation of employees by designing extra-role and in-role activities that bring CSR more concretely visible also for those employees whose work CSR is not embedded in. The finding that employees are involved in CSR through way of acting means that employees implement CSR daily basis through their own behaviour. The role of overall existence of CSR could therefore be supported by further designing the concrete and integrated ways for employees to participate in CSR daily basis in-role. Employees may also self contribute to the invention of these practices, since they are the experts of their own work. Recommendations for extra-role CSR is to design two types of extra-role CSR activities, the ones that are shorter in time and the others that are simultaneously designed to develop employee job related skills, such as project management.

### **5.2.3 Develop meaningful integration of HRM and CSR**

Last recommendation is to define the areas where the integration of the two management practices of CSR and HRM can best add value to the organization. In practice this means utilization of sustainable HRM, which aims to combine organization's strategic CSR goals to specific HRM practices (as expressed by Masri & Jaaron, 2016, 487). Developing this meaningful integration between CSR and HRM means that the expertise of both management practices is used to design the visibility and therefore the involvement of employees in CSR. This work touched the applicability of sustainable HRM lightly by investigating HRM practices of recruiting and rewarding in theory. The recommendation related to sustainable HRM is to include CSR in job advertisement and communicate to the job applicants how values are implemented in employee level. On the contrary, utilization of rewards and compensation to increase the visibility of CSR is controversial and the applicability of this practice should be considered carefully.

## **5.3 Limitations and ideas for the future research**

The final section of this work considers the limitations of the study and the ideas for further research. Even though this work was able to fulfil its goals by answering the research questions and increase the internal discussion within the case organization, there are several limitations that may affect the applicability of the findings. The limitations consider the boundaries of the work and the details of applied research method.

This case work studied employee involvement in CSR in large multinational corporation by interviewing 22 employees within five focus group interviews. These boundaries may limit the generalization of the results. As stated by Haugh and Talwar (2010) different organizations may have different challenges

in terms of CSR (Haugh & Talwar, 2010, 393). Therefore, the findings of this case study might differ from the findings of other organizations, that differ for example in size, branch and location. Even though the number of interviews and participants in each interview was sufficient for focus group interviews, 22 employees represent small share of large corporation's employees, which may limit the generalization of the results within the organization. Because participation to focus group interviews was voluntary, it might be that employees who already are interested and relate positively to the subject, agreed to participate and therefore the less positive perspectives were not present.

Another larger entity that may limit the usability of the findings is the details of applied research method. Firstly, in qualitative research the role of the researcher is important, since researcher gathers, organizes and interprets the data (Lichtman, 2014, 6) and often in semi-structure interview it is recommended to have an experienced interviewer that is able to manage the interviewing and analysing process (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, 82). Therefore, the individual characteristics of the writer of this thesis may affect to results. Secondly, interview structure included a short description of CSR and organization's CSR given by the moderator in the middle of the interview. This description may have helped employees to form a more comprehensive picture of CSR. However, on the other hand description supported the goal of the work to increase the internal discussion of CSR. Thirdly, in focus group interview, analysis can be targeted not only to the content but also the interaction between the participants (Willis et al., 2009, 131). Even though the effect of interaction is not analyzed, it is recognized. Interaction may have affected to the results, since focus group participants supported each other views and developed them further by interacting together. Because of this, results reflect the groups shared perspectives rather than purely individual ones. Fourthly, during the interviews, the organization's CSR contact person was present by listening the interviews, taking care of the technical issues and making personal notes. This might have some contribution to the results, even though the effect of it is hard to define. The final aspect related to applied research method is that the interviews were partially conducted in-person and partially online. However, how interviews were conducted did not seem to have any clear effect on the flow of the discussion, which might be due to the fact that employees in the case organization are familiar with the online-meetings.

Based on the findings and the limitations of this case work, there are several ideas how micro-CSR processes could be further studied in the case organization. First of all, since micro-CSR may explain the contribution that CSR have on organization's financial performance (Jones et al., 2017), it would be interesting to study the involvement of other stakeholders with similar kind of methodology in case organization, to reveal the possible conformity of internal and external perspectives. Another suggestion for future studies is to study purely individual employees and their involvement in CSR. As this work suggested, employees as a group are comprehensively involved in CSR, since individuals perceive and experience CSR differently and form a comprehensive picture while



discussing together. It would be interesting to examine how an individual describe own involvement in organization CSR without the interaction with other group members. Lastly, future research could also consider quantities, since even though the results of this case work revealed patterns related to employee involvement in CSR, it is possible that some, maybe less comprehensive, more indifferent and negative perspectives were not revealed. Therefore, studying the quantities by a survey aimed to members of the organization could reveal more information of the scale and the generalization of these findings.

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## APPENDIX 1 Interview questions

### Perception of CSR

Have you heard term corporate social responsibility and how would you explain by your own words what corporate responsibility is?

What kind of thoughts or emotions corporate social responsibility awakes in you?

What kind of things do you integrate to corporate social responsibility?

Have you heard that (*name of the organization*) would be having a corporate social responsibility strategy?

Why does this kind of strategy exist and what does it include?

*Description of CSR:*

- *CSR is a broad concept with several definitions*
- *Organization carries its responsibility of economical, social and environmental effects that its operations have. In addition, CSR can include promotion of organizational values*
- *CSR can create many benefits for an organization, such as higher financial performance, competitive advantage and improve risk management, stakeholder relationship and corporate reputation*
- *Explaining case organization`s CSR with two sentences and showing the picture of it*

Quite many of the definitions are linked to stakeholders, which are any groups or individuals that affect to an organization or that are affected by an organization. A stakeholder can for instance be a customer or an employee. Have you experienced that corporate social responsibility exists in the cooperation with (*name of the organization*) and its stakeholders? How?

### Participation to CSR

Is corporate responsibility somehow present in your daily work?

Have you participated in some corporate social responsibility activities, for instance in responsibility training?

Do you regularly discuss about corporate social responsibility with your colleagues or during your team meetings?



Would you like to participate on corporate social responsibility work? How would you like to participate?

What would support your participation to corporate social responsibility?

If you would like to participate in corporate social responsibility, do you know how you could do that?

Do you have some ideas how to improve corporate social responsibility?

### **Perception of the organization**

What does (*name of the organization*) mean to you?

Is it important to you that (*name of the organization*) implements corporate social responsibility? Why? Why not?

When you applied a work from this organization, did you pay attention to corporate social responsibility issues?

Do you have any further comments you would like to add?