

MANAGING FOR CSR AND BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY IN CHINA

BY HUANG LEI

中国式企业社会责任和可持续发展管理



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List of acronyms and abbreviations

AD Anno Domini

ADB Asian Development Bank

APEC Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

ASEAN Association of South East Asian Nations

BC Before Christ

BCIM The Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Forum for Regional

Cooperation

BRICS Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

CASS Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

CCCPC The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China

CCP Chinese Communist Party or Communist Party of China

(CPC)

CFP Corporate Financial Performance

CPCIC The China Petroleum-Chemical International Conference

CSC9000T China Social Compliance 9000 for Textile & Apparel Industry

CSR Corporate Social Responsibility

CSRC China Securities Regulatory Commission

ES&H Environment, Safety and Health

ESG Environmental, Social and Governance

EVA Ethylene vinyl acetate

G-20 The Group of Twenty Finance Ministers and Central Bank

Governors

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GFI Global Financial Integrity

GMC Global Market Certificate

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HSE Health, Safety, Environment

ILO International Labour Organisation

IOSC Information Office of the State Council, PRC
ISO International Organization for Standardization

ISO 14000 Environmental Management System

IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural

Resources

KPI Key Performance Indicators

NDRC National Development and Reform Commission, P.R. China

NGO Non-governmental organization
OEM Original equipment manufacturer
PRC People's Republic of China

PU Polyurethane

R&D Research and Development
RMB Ren Min Bi(the Chinese yuan)

ROI Return on investment

SA8000 Social Accountability International
SAI Social Accountability International

SASAC State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commis-

sion

SEZ Special Economic Zones

SHAPE Safety, Health, Attitude of management, People and Environ-

ment

SOE State-Owned Enterprise
SRI Stanford Research Institute
ST Shoetown Footwear Co. Ltd.

TBL Triple Bottom Line

tce ton of standard coal equivalent

TEEB The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity Business Coa-

lition

TPU Thermoplastic Polyurethane

TVE Township and Village Enterprise

UNCED United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNGC United Nations Global Compact

USD US Dollar

VOC Violate, organic, compound

WB The World Bank

WBCSD The World Business Council for Sustainable Development

WCED World Commission on Environment and Development

WEF The World Economic Forum

WRAP Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production

WTO World Trade Organization
WWF World Wide Fund for Nature

Preface

The management theories of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainability originated in the Western world and were introduced into China during the early 1990's. Over time, the management of CSR and Corporate Sustainability has become an important strategy for business firms seeking a competitive edge in global markets.

Although Chinese academia and business have had an ongoing focus on these theories over the last 25 years, the understanding and application of these critical management opportunities within China are at their infancy and well below the sophisticated level of understanding adopted by the Western world. For example, there has been insufficient quality research in China that recognizes China's uniqueness when compared to western cultures and approaches. As a consequence, there has been limited innovation in relation to the application of these theories and practices within the Chinese context, as well as an imbalance between the extent of theoretical and practical research with most research focusing on theory rather than application.

The consideration of CSR and Sustainability necessarily also involves the consideration of stakeholders. These are the people impacted by an organization's policies and actions.

Many scholars and practitioners have defined CSR, Sustainability and Stakeholder theory from their own perspectives, standpoints or belief systems resulting in both divergence and convergence of views. Nevertheless, there is much common understanding and agreement about the core ideas and subject matter embodied in CSR, Sustainability and Stakeholder theories which have been applied in many organizational settings throughout the world and which take account of local economic, political, cultural and business circum-

stances.

Through comprehensive literature review of CSR, Sustainability and Stakeholder theory, and the complimentary study of a large Chinese business that has been successful in applying these concepts within the Chinese context, the author has confirmed the importance of dealing with the context-based features of these concepts when applied within China. Critically, the author also found that implementation cannot be piecemeal but requires an approach that embraces the whole management, leadership and operating systems of the organisation.

Whilst CSR, Sustainability and Stakeholder theory can be confused phenomena if these theories are merely imported from the West without critical appraisal as to suitability within the Chinese context, these theories do offer the potential for significant rewards when it comes to organisational success. In addition, these fields of endeavour offer a grand space for those who research and apply these theories and practices and innovatively seek out custom-tailored solutions for individual Chinese organisations based on their unique economic, political, cultural and operating circumstances. The author argues that scholars and organisational practitioners should be critically sceptical of all established ideas and perspectives in regard to the application of CSR, Sustainability and Stakeholder theory. At the same time, it is important that these scholars and organisational practitioners recognise that the rewards can be substantial when tailored, innovative, consistent and people-centred implementations occur.

The research for this book has been included a substantial case study of how the Shoetown Footwear Co.Ltd.situated in Quingyuan City, Guangdong Province, China continues in its successful journey of implementing CSR, Sustainability and Stakeholder theories.

Shoetown is a large-scale privately owned footwear manufacturing business. The company is the first contracted supplier for Nike in mainland China, and is one of Nike's global contract factories and strategic partners. About twenty thousand people are employed at Shoetown making basketball and

football shoes for the global market.

Shoetown has achieved much business success and public recognition for the exemplary way it conducts business and interacts with society. Shoetown's leadership and its supportive staff have integrated CSR, Sustainability and Stakeholder management within its management, leadership and its operating systems. Shoetown applies the "Triple-Bottom-Line" approach to profit, planet and people. Management and staff are justifiably proud that Shoetown is a "people-centred" organisation.

Many contextual factors have been explored within this book with a particular emphasis upon the cultural, especially the traditional Chinese harmonious culture. The emphasis on maintaining a harmonious culture is a decisive factor in Shoetown's success.

My exploration of context led to a study of the relationship between CSR and Sustainability and related trends throughout Chinese history. The book examines the doctrines of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism concluding that these doctrines provide supporting foundations for successful CSR and Sustainability initiatives in China. The spiritual values and civilizations of Chinese people have been well nurtured and maintained for thousands of years and are consistent with CSR and Sustainability goals.

The main economic, political, technological and environmental challenges facing contemporary China have also been discussed to help illuminate the unique phenomenon of the nature of the Chinese context.

This work is sourced from my PhD thesis, completed at the Business School of the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia. I express my gratitude for the guidance and support of my supervisory panel of professors Suzanne Benn, Thomas Clark, Sharon Moore and Dr. Ian McGregor. My friend professor Patrick McCarthy has been an important business mentor during the course of my PhD studies. My thanks go also to the Australian government for its support of my education, to the University of Western Sydney and to the University of Technology Sydney, which offered me full scholarships to complete my PhD studies in Australia. My Fulbright SIR

experience in the United States of America resulted in many unique insights in the fields of CSR and Sustainability.

The generous support provided by the management and staff of Shoetown Footwear Co.Ltd, which provided a solid and practical foundation for this book is very greatly appreciated. Special thanks go to Mr.Ron Chang, President of the Evervan Group and owner of Shoetown and Mr.Ben Lee, Vice President of Shoetown, and to the excellent team from Shoetown.

The support and love of my family provide the most valuable foundation and inspiration for me in both life and work. No words can express my sincere love to them.

Thanks go to Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, my university which has encouraged and supported me in turning my research into a book.

For me, CSR, Sustainability and Stakeholder theories are as splendid as a beautiful ocean, which is borderless in depth and width. The content of this book may be only a tiny drop of water within the possibilities this magnificent ocean has to offer. I hold that CSR and Sustainability is a process of involvement of different stakeholders in the achievement of multiple corporate and social objectives rather than merely profit maximisation strategies. The core element of this process is a human centred harmonious organisational culture driven by visionary leadership who give s weighty consideration to both the micro and macro business contexts in which the organisation operates. A sustainable business should be a harmonious sub-society, which must also strive to balance its economic objectives with the requirements of human beings, including the requirements of the ecology. All stakeholder needs can only be met when these concepts are progressed in a thoughtful, human centred systems oriented way.

Huang Lei

From the Foothills of Baiyun Mountain, Guangzhou, China

前言

企业社会责任(CSR)和可持续发展理论滥觞于西方世界,于 20 世纪 90 年代引入中国。随着全球化进程的不断深入,CSR 和可持续发展管理已经成为当代企业获得竞争优势不可或缺的途径。面对全球化的浪潮,中国企业在积极参与全球生产体系的同时,也必须遵守国际间日渐盛行的企业社会责任和可持续发展准则和理念,这是中国企业进入国际市场无法回避的选择。

如今,CSR 和可持续发展管理理念和实践在中国已呈燎原之势,成 为学界和企业界的普遍趋势和共识。然而,一个不争的事实是,中国在 这些领域的研究和实践仍处于起步阶段,与西方社会仍然存在着很大 的差距。比如,国内对企业社会责任和可持续发展的研究成果数量和 质量明显欠缺,理论和实践创新不足,应用研究和理论研究脱节、缺乏 平衡。

与 CSR 和可持续发展理论一样,利益相关者理论的定义和概念也是不胜枚举。至今,专家学者和实践家尚无法取得共识。不过,这些理论的核心观念和内涵在一定的程度上存在一致的倾向,并以不同的方式和手段在各种经济、文化、政治和商务环境中进行实践。

本书通过 CSR,可持续发展理论和利益相关者理论的对比研究,确认了这几个理念的"情境基础"(Context-based)特性。在这些理念上之所以众说纷纭、各执一词,其原因大抵与解读者不同的背景有关。这些背景包括但不局限于政治、经济、社会、文化和商务范畴。这现象令人纠结,但是,却也给研究者和实践者提供了一个广阔的空间。既然不存在一个放之四海而皆准的 CSR 和可持续发展管理原则和模式,那么,不同经济、政治、社会和文化地域的学者和实践者大可根据自己所处的具体"情境"(Context)设置自己的研究和管理策略。因而,成功的 CSR和可持续发展研究和管理必须根植于操作者的具体情境,依赖大胆

创新。

为此,无论是研究者还是实践家,都应该有勇气摆脱对现有理论的依赖和迷信,也必须对国内外学者的不同观点大胆臧否置喙。与众多的中外学者一样,作者坚信,建立中国特色的 CSR 和可持续发展管理理论和体系是一种无法回避的选择。而在操作层面上,涉及的企业尽管共性若然,但是特色和差异化几乎可以说是企业与生俱来的性质。树叶看起来都是相似的,但是,没有哪一片真正相同。对于 CSR 和可持续发展管理,在遵循一般原则的基础上,个体企业只能按照自己特定的情境来设置规则。不同的企业,也应该拥有自己对 CSR 的理解和定义,辨析自己独一无二的利益相关者,设置自己的企业社会责任范畴和可持续发展目标。

本书案例来源于中国广东清远市广硕鞋业有限公司。这是一家大型的中外合资制鞋企业,也是 Nike 在中国大陆的第一家签约工厂。公司如今已经跃身为 Nike 公司的全球战略伙伴,由原来单纯的下游制造商参与到价值链上游的创新和设计流程。

广硕鞋业的成功是多维度的。单就企业可持续发展角度来看,它游刃有余地平衡了经济利润、环境和社会三条底线原则,在多方面获得政府部门和社会团体的认可和表彰,成为当地的明星样板企业。但是,最吸引作者目光的,乃是广硕鞋业独特的管理理念。自成立伊始,广硕集团公司就开始实行"人性化管理",始终把人放在第一位,视员工为公司的宝贵资产,努力创造公司、客户、员工"三赢"的局面,让员工在一个充满爱与关怀的氛围里快乐地工作和生活。也因为这个原因,作者将本书的研究核心放在了文化因素上,其中,又将中国传统和谐文化的"情境"因素视为研究的焦点,以探索中国传统和谐文化对广硕鞋业实施企业社会责任和可持续发展管理的深刻影响。

因此,作者在本书中也对中国传统文化特色的发展和形成过程进行了探究。毋容置疑,数千年来,以儒、释、道为主体的中国传统文化与众多的民间信仰一道,构成了中国文化的完整谱系,滋养和维系着中国传统社会的精神价值和道德生态,也成为传统走向现代的基本文化资源和精神纽带。作为几千年来中华民族的精神和文明的大本原、大传统,儒、释、道思想也一定会在将来对中国思想文化中发挥作用,为当代

中国文化"软实力"构建及文化战略供给丰富、有效的营养。研究表明,发轫于西方世界的企业社会责任和可持续发展理论和观念,无一不可以在中国传统文化中找到相同的基因。可以说,企业社会责任和可持续发展理念与中国传统文化一脉相承,是一种穿越时空、历史与时代观念的完美耦合。在这方面,传统中国文化中的和谐因素无疑就是其中精髓。

在文献和案例研究的基础上,本书还对西方流行的一些 CSR 和可持续管理模式进行当地化优化处理,如 McNall et al.的"可持续企业特征模型"和本苏桑的"可持续发展阶段模型"等。本书提出了和谐式 CSR 和企业可持续发展管理理念,目的在于深化这两个概念的 context-based 内涵。在期待西方学者进一步了解中国式 CSR 和可持续发展管理的同时,也希望中国企业家能够根据自己企业的实际环境(context),制定和实施切实可行的 CSR 和可持续发展管理战略。

本书是在作者的博士论文基础上改编而成。衷心感谢本人在澳大利亚悉尼科技大学商学院博士导师团队在本书的写作过程中,一直对作者的关注和支持,以及他们无私分享的那些有益的思想和建议。他们是 Suzanne Benn 教授、Thomas Clark 教授、Sharon Moore 教授和 Ian McGregor 博士。我的朋友 Patrick McCarthy 教授也对本书的问世提供了很多建设性意见。感谢澳大利亚政府、西悉尼大学和悉尼科技大学为本人博士研究提供的全额奖学金。期间在美国一年的富布赖特驻校学者经历也给自己的 CSR 和企业可持续发展管理研究带来极大的增值。

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企业社会责任、可持续发展和利益相关者理论犹如一个美丽的海洋,拥有无限的深度和广度,作者本书所能涵盖的,不过是其中一粒细

沙、一滴水珠,而且由于本人水平有限,他们不一定能够充分反映整个海洋的深邃与瑰丽。我坚信,企业社会责任和可持续发展是一个多方利益相关者互相参与、最终赢取各种企业和社会目标的征途,而不仅仅是对利润最大化的求索过程。其中的核心理念应该是以人为本,通过具有强烈愿景的领导者驱动。可持续企业必须有能力对企业运作的内部和外部环境进行充分考虑,同时,也必须能够担负起和谐社区的角色,有效平衡经济利益、人类需求以及生态环境保护的目标。这些观念只有通过缜密思考、根据公司的情境(context)、在一种和谐文化环境中实施,才能满足公司和其他利益相关者的不同诉求。

黄 磊 识于广州白云山麓

Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability theories are all context-based and originated from the Western world. Nonetheless, similar ideologies can be found in the traditional Chinese culture, which is embodied in doctrines such as Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism with harmony as the core value.

CSR, sustainability and stakeholder theories have often been implemented in Chinese business without adequate consideration of the Chinese context. This book explores the successful implementation of CSR and sustainability at Shoetown Footwear Co., Ltd, and how this has been achieved. The Guangdong based Shoetown is one of Nike's global contract factories and strategic partners. Shoetown is an example of a large-scale Chinese private enterprise operating within a global value-chain.

The Shoetown case study illuminates a holistic system of sustainability management through a focus on people, community and harmony, which results in high-quality thinking, skill development, teamwork and enhancement of discretionary effort at every organisational level. The management approach at Shoetown utilises a skilful mix of eastern and western business theories embedded within the Chinese business context. This approach has resulted in sustained commercial success, technical innovation, high-quality environmental management and social sustainability. Shoetown's management practice has a strong focus on CSR and Sustainability with a harmonious approach, which has been strongly influenced by traditional Chinese culture. It concludes that the harmonious approach is a key ingredient for Shoetown's success in its implementation of CSR and sustainability. A more appropriate Sustainability Phase Model for the Chinese context is proposed which in-

cludes enhancements to assist in implementing CSR and Sustainability. The author recommends that this Sustainability Phase Model for a Chinese context be tested in further research in other Chinese organisations.

Key words: CSR; Corporate Social Responsibility, sustainability; sustainable business; triple bottom line; Chinese business; business sustainability; sustainability management; sustainability phase model; stakeholder theory; harmonious culture; Chinese context; stakeholders; Confucius; Confucianism; Daoism; nature-man-oneness; Chinese culture; Chinese history; made in China; made by China; Shoetown Footwear; Nike