

Call for Papers
Organization & Environment

Special Issue on
Collaboration and Confrontation

Dynamic Interactions between Corporations and Non-Governmental Organizations over CSR and Sustainability

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Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability opportunities and challenges appear to be increasing in frequency and intensity in the 21st Century. In this special issue we focus on the dynamic interactions between corporations and non-governmental organizations over CSR and sustainability to stimulate research on connections between management of organizations and dimensions of CSR and sustainability.

Introduction

As the neat separation between the political and the economic sphere has become blurred in the process of globalization, the national context of governance is eroding. State systems are sometimes claimed to fail in regulating the economy when it comes to dealing with transnational social and environmental problems, providing public goods, administering citizenship rights, addressing pressing environmental problems or serving the public interest. At the same time, negative side effects of globalization, environmental degradation and the severe contemporary global economic and financial crises demonstrate the limitations of the capitalist system and challenge the legitimacy and role of big corporations as the main protagonists of this system. Under these conditions, various global social movements that operate beyond the regular political institutions have emerged and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society groups, and private businesses have stepped in to fill the void and respond to governance gaps and legitimacy challenges, addressing issues of CSR and sustainability.

Dynamic Interactions

Interactions between business and a variety of organizations rooted in social movements and civil society are receiving more and more attention. Both types of organizations have gained significance in public policy and global governance. Many organizations in civil society, often referred to as NGOs or a variety of related terms such as civil society organizations, secondary stakeholders or activist groups, target not only public authorities but often pressure private firms with campaigns and boycotts so that these firms take responsibility for public concerns. In this special issue we opt for a broad conception of the term NGOs to include this variety of organizations. Today, many multinational business firms have started either proactively or reactively to regulate their activities or to produce global public goods, answering calls for more attention to issues of CSR and sustainability. The dynamic interactions between corporations and NGOs are central in this special issue.

While it is widely acknowledged that firms and NGOs can engage in both collaborative and contentious relationships, in this special issue we want to highlight the dynamics between these relationships. Collaboration may turn into confrontation, and confrontation may turn into collaboration while oftentimes using a mixture of both can be strategic. This special issue aims at highlighting the dynamic nature of the interaction between firms and NGOs in the domain of CSR and sustainability. To do this, we divide our guiding questions in two main themes: how do strategic interaction processes between firms and NGOs unfold and how can we explore the outcomes of such interactions?

Possible questions include, but are not limited to:

Interaction processes:

- Looking at links between NGOs and firms, how is collaboration turned into confrontation (and vice versa)?
- In which ways can firms and NGOs co-shape their interaction processes? What are possible limits of such interactions?
- How do culture and values influence social and environmental sustainability-related processes and outcomes?
- How can spaces for contestation between firms and civil society be organized or disorganized?
- What are the roles of confrontation and conflict in the interaction between corporations and civil society? How do conflicts help or hinder interaction?
- What is the role and significance of NGOs in these interaction processes?

- What can be learned from the emerging forms of cooperation between business firms and NGOs (e.g. with respect to private-public-partnerships)?
- How do NGOs influence each other in these interactions in different national settings?
- What role can organization studies play in unraveling these interaction processes and what can CSR and sustainability studies learn from organization studies?

Interaction outcomes

- What are the implications of collaboration and confrontation for the legitimacy of firms and civil society actors?
- What are the (positive and negative) consequences of these interactions between NGOs and business in terms of sustainability?
- How do collaboration and conflict, both with counterparts and with businesses, impact the functioning of NGOs?
- How do collaboration and conflict mutually influence one another in these interactions?
- How do tactical innovation and adaptation affect the outcomes of interaction?
- What strategies of corporate counter-mobilization, repression and social control of protest are being used and how effective are they?
- How can we distinguish between channeling, cooptation and collaboration?
- How can we determine how sustainable the outcomes of such interactions are?
- What are the outcomes when business firms use the conflictual tactics usually used by NGOs?
- What role can organization studies play in unraveling these interaction outcomes?

About the journal

Organization & Environment recognizes that advancing the capabilities of managing all types of organizations to achieve and maintain long-term quality of life values (our short-hand definition of sustainability) is an increasingly urgent and relevant societal goal. To this end, *Organization & Environment* is encouraging all sustainability management, policy, and social and related science researchers to develop and submit theoretical and empirical articles, essays, and reviews to focus on where we have

been and where we are going and to suggest ways for us to move forward in the future. Our main intent is to encourage rigorous explorations and analyses of the connections between the management of organizations and any of the relevant dimensions of sustainability.

Submissions

Please submit submissions to this special issue through *Organization & Environment's* site at Manuscript central (<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/oe>), indicating that the submission is for this special issue. Please prepare manuscripts according to the guidelines shown at the journal website (<http://oae.sagepub.com>). All papers will be blind reviewed following the journal's normal procedures. For further questions about the call for papers, please contact the guest editors.

Guest editors

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