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Conceptualizing Strategic CSR and its Organizational Outcomes: A Review of Literature and Research Agenda

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Abstract

The strategic management literature has accorded significant attention to the construct of corporate social responsibility, and the literature on the construct is relatively rich. The literature is, however, faulted for its limitations in the provision of consistent guidelines to business practitioners on how Corporate Social Responsibility can be integrated with operational, business and corporate strategies for achievement of competitive advantage. This paper reviews extant conceptual, theoretical and empirical literature and raises a variety of issues that present a case for a new theoretical model suitable for the expansion of the current understanding of employment of strategic corporate social responsibility and its resultant outcomes. The paper proposes an integrated theoretical model for linking Strategic corporate social responsibility and organizational outcomes while acknowledging the significance of value creation focus and environmental dynamism in the context of the twenty-first-century business operating environment.

Keywords: Environmental Dynamism, Firm Performance, Shared Value, Strategic CSR, Value Creation

1.0 Introduction

Review of strategic management concept in the 21st Century reveals that the phenomenon has not only evolved over time, but it has also passed through divergent phases and semantic contexts. Over time, strategy in general and strategic management, in particular, has acquired an indispensable status in leadership and management of organizations since strategy addresses the connection between the inner world of the business and its external environment (Mainardes, Ferreira & Raposo, 2014). In the face of a turbulent business operating landscape that is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity on one side and scarce resources and competing priorities on the other side, strategic management has become the foundation upon which organizations are built. To deal with environmental turbulence and remain competitive, organizations have had to revitalize their strategic management processes through dynamic, relentless learning and adaptability in taking advantage of emerging opportunities. To maintain dynamism and operate at a higher level than competitors, organization's leadership is forced to think in a distinct manner that promotes creativity. Strategic thinking as an innovative, ingenious, and

right-brained process has encouraged openness to ideas and solutions obligatory to meeting often unpredictable challenges faced by businesses today (Haycock, Cheadle & Bluestone, 2012). Strategic thinking requires not only intuition and creativity but also an innate ability to create value by enabling a creative yet provocative dialogue necessary in addressing the future direction of the organization on the basis of anticipated environmental changes (Mintzberg, 1994).

The hallmark of strategic thinking is the ability to analyze the operating environment and come up with creative, strategic options that not only advance the organization's agenda but also build capabilities necessary for survival (Haycock et al., 2012). One of the key capabilities that an organization can build is the ability to successfully manage stakeholder relations without injuring the interest of the shareholders through corporate governance and responsible corporate citizenship (Dubach & Machad, 2012). How well an organization relates with the society in general and stakeholders in particular can be a key determinant of organizational success or failure. Over the last couple of decades, CSR has grown from the very narrow and marginalized notion of corporate philanthropy of 'doing good for goodness sake' to a multifaceted component of both business and corporate strategy (Afrin, 2013). CSR is no longer viewed as a mere philanthropic venture by an organization. It is viewed more or less as a corporate strategy that focuses on stakeholders with the hindsight of helping the firm achieve its objective in the long run (Pant & Piansoongnern, 2017). Strategic CSR, therefore, becomes a strategic option with a dual purpose of furthering public good while enhancing the core business opportunities with minimal social risks (Li & Guo 2018). To meaningfully assess the contribution of CSR to strategic management and subsequent corporate performance, one, therefore, needs to review the conventional wisdom that not only pressurizes business to view CSR generically but also pits business against the society (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Due to the growing prominence of CSR in practice, the strategic management scholarship needs to embrace its attributes that offer the potential for mounting relevant, viable strategic options suitable for providing a balance between profit-oriented concerns and those for long-term sustainability (Salvioni, Gennari & Bosetti, 2016). A number of scholars have begun to raise this call with a view to integrating CSR into the mainstream strategic management literature (Yuan, Bao & Verbeke, 2011).

2.0 Problem Statement

Though there are emerging calls for the integration of CSR into the mainstream strategic management literature, the extant literature on CSR has been criticized and faulted for several reasons. First, there lacks a consensus not only on how to generally define CSR but also on the key constructs, components, and characteristics of CSR (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir & Davídsdóttir, 2019). Secondly, despite the general acceptance of CSR in both corporate and academic spheres, there lacks a clear set of well-defined frameworks, models and agreement on how to make CSR work for both the business and the society from a 'win-win' point of view (Pant & Piansoongnern, 2017; Brooks, 2005; McWilliam & Siegel, 2006; Militaru & Ionescu, 2006; Porter & Kramer, 2006). The extant literature has neither contributed significantly to the understanding of how CSR impacts firm performance nor provided a compelling framework for the strategic management of CSR. After more than three decades of research on the relationship between CSR and firm financial performance, the results are mixed, at best; some studies show a positive relationship between the two; others, a negative relationship; and still others, no relationship (Husted & Allen, 2006). Such inconsistencies that have stood in the path to a consolidated set of empirically verified and validated scientific knowledge need to be addressed so as to solidify the gains so far made while tapping into multidisciplinary based literatures that help in addressing the reasons for the inconsistencies.

Thirdly, despite the presence of extensive literature on CSR, there has been limited attention paid to strategic CSR and how business managers and scholars can integrate CSR into their operational, business and corporate strategies to improve their competitiveness and achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Husted & Allen, 2006). Whilst the literature on CSR is extensive and rich, it is yet to be fully and purposively integrated with the mainstream strategic management literature since CSR is generally discussed within the context of ethics and the rule of law but rarely from the strategic management perspective. The existing theoretical and empirical literature on strategic CSR is so fragmented and disjointed from business strategy that the benefits and opportunities that lie in corporate and societal relations are obscured leading to the two constructs being viewed separately instead of cooperatively (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

Fourthly, we observe that an important aspect of organizations along which firms may differ in their adoption of CSR touches on value creation. Extant theoretical models on value creation processes have taken biases towards profit-oriented concerns. However, given the increased adoption of CSR among firms, we view the aspect of value creation as a possible intermediate outcome that offers an avenue towards the integration of Strategic CSR in the strategic management literature. This, however, faces a number of challenges that need to be addressed. For example, there has been limited research addressing the relationship if any between value creation focus, strategic CSR, and the moderating effects of the environmental dynamism. As Husted and Allen, 2006, Haksever et al., 2004 and Pant and Piansoongnern, 2017 notes, research is yet to crystalize and clearly conceptualize how the value creation and CSR relate against a backdrop of environmental dynamism to influence the firm's performance. The extant literature provides very scanty details on how CSR can be pursued from the value creation perspective to not only improve the fortunes of an organization in the short-run but also to set up the organization on the path of sustainability.

Lastly, while the extant literature is vast on a number of constructs that may be linked to a phenomenon arising from the deployment of CSR as a strategy, it is observed that each of the diverse constructs has been discussed on a stand-alone basis further leading to a scarcity of literature from a multi-disciplinary perspective. There is, therefore, a call for a multidisciplinary approach in building a conceptualization of the construct of CSR by not only relying on strategic management theories but also borrowing from other known disciplines that have underpinned the organizational studies such as economics, organizational theory, behavior, and sociology.

In view of the above, the study seeks to extend and enrich the current state of knowledge on the concept of CSR by exploring how various aspects of strategic CSR bring about organizational outcomes in the context of organizational operations. Given the scanty nature of literature and inherent inconsistencies, the authors identify the need to consolidate the extant literature with a view of suggesting a relevant model that seeks to demonstrate how the deployment of strategic CSR in a value creation system may yield desirable outcomes for both the shareholders and stakeholders. Thus, the paper addressed three objectives: reviewing extant conceptual, theoretical and empirical literatures to provide an understanding of the construct of Strategic CSR and its accompanying outcomes in organizations; identifying the phenomenon emerging from the deployment of Strategic CSR as a strategic option; and proposing a suitable theoretical model modelling the relationships among identified constructs in the emergent phenomenon.

We consider this undertaking to be of great value to the strategic management literature in several ways. In the first instance, we recognize the immense potential of strategic CSR from the view point of practice. A large number of organizations are progressively adopting this constructs and slowly pushing it to the nerve center of corporate decisions as is evidenced from the high number of organizations establishing foundations to champion the causes that go beyond philanthropic interests. Under such a move, literature is needed to inform the practice of how such moves can be better undertaken from a proper understanding of the as corporate strategists. Secondly, given the current state of theoretical and empirical literature, we recognize the need to consolidate diverse pieces of knowledge from a multi-disciplinary based perspective. From this basis, we see a benefit accruing to both researchers and theorists who are interested in identifying the cause of the empirical inconsistencies that may be conceptually, contextually, and methodologically explained. Lastly, the paper proposes a way forward in that it not only conceptualize strategic CSR but also highlighted its intermediate and ultimate outcomes within the context of the operations of organizations. In the proposed model, a clear understanding of a phenomenon and its components have been provided. This goes a long way to not only provide a new theoretical model but also offer a stepping stone for the direction for future research.

3.0 Conceptual Review

In response to the objectives of this study, the authors undertook to review the extant conceptual literature on the construct of strategic CSR so as to highlight its nature as well as the outcomes resulting from its deployment in a firm's environmental context. The paper first reviews the literature on the constructs and identifies constructs in the phenomenon that need consideration.

3.1 Strategic CSR

To achieve the objectives of this study, the salient concepts explaining the construct of strategic CSR are discussed. To understand the concept, it is not only paramount but also essential, to begin with, the construct of CSR. Despite lack of consensus among scholars on how to conventionally and universally define CSR, the construct can be generally and loosely defined as an acknowledgement of the fact that businesses have obligations that go beyond shareholders and that all stakeholders who include suppliers, customers, employees, the state and community at large who affect and can be affected by the corporation's decisions deserve to be treated ethically and in a manner that promote their wellbeing and uphold human dignity. We identified several perspectives to the understanding of strategic CSR in the literature. First, CSR is viewed and understood as a series of interactions between corporations and stakeholders that is facilitated by voluntary integration of social and environmental initiatives incorporate strategies and practices with an intention of promoting community wellbeing and social progress through upholding ethical business practices (Pant & Piansoongnern, 2017). This view is shared by Gazzola and Colombo (2014) who view CSR as an integration of ethics and principles of environmental and social care into the organization's way of doing business.

Secondly, CSR is viewed from corporate citizenship perspective by Ntiamoah, Eyyiri, and Kwamega (2014) who posit that organizational long term success is dependent on favorable corporate citizenship that creates higher standards of living and good quality of life in the societies where they operate through prioritization of ethical, legal and economic responsibilities. The view is further reinforced by Brooks (2005) and Mikolajek- Gocejna (2016) who observe that a company's obligation is to maximize its positive impact without augmenting its negative impacts by providing solutions that tend to the societies long run needs. More critical views of CSR have a tendency to focus on the economic view and business perspective of the construct. In this sense, CSR is defined as corporate actions that serve the society with the hindsight motivation being either pure social concern, the bottom-line, or both (McWilliams & Siegel, 2011). To augment this view, Smith (2007) further reiterates that, while CSR has the stakeholders interest at heart, it is a great source of sustainable competitive advantage that is derived from a culture that successfully combines and executes a series of initiatives such as intelligence gathering, stakeholder involvement, and incorporation of social action in strategic planning with an intention of competitively positioning an organization.

Thirdly, CSR is viewed from voluntarism and proactivity perspective. This view observes that, explicit CSR is voluntary, strategic and deliberate and consists of organizational policies, strategies, programs and incentives motivated by and anchored on stakeholders' expectations while implicit CSR is an undeliberate, involuntary reaction to societal reflection and perception of a corporation's institutional environment that is defense rather than offense-oriented (Matten, 2008; Porter & Kramer 2008; Hoffman, Moon & Wu, 2017). This view is further advanced by Reinhardt and Stavins (2010) who view CSR as either voluntary or reluctant. They allude that while voluntary social responsibility is CSR in its purest form, reluctant CSR is involuntarily motivated and forced by societal expectations and market forces. From the varied definitions discussed, CSR can, therefore, be defined as (i) largely voluntary; (ii) provision of public good using corporate, private means; (iii) with an intention of not only promoting and enhancing stakeholder relations but for the purposes of enhancing corporate brand image and competitive advantage. From the literature explored, while the definition of CSR is largely agreed upon, albeit immaterial variations, the unquantifiable nature of CSR is of great concern.

From the literature explored, we point out that the various scholars have been able to define and discuss various aspects of CSR. This attempt has, however, been done generally without being specific on how it may be applied in a strategic management context and setting to enhance value creation and success of the firm. The current paper builds on this state attained in the literature to extend the scope of the understanding of CSR in strategic management perspective through the concept of strategic CSR. CSR is a key component of both business and corporate strategy. The 21st-century business operating environment is not only dynamic but also volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. In pursuit of CSR, corporate citizenship and social responsibility, the firm's challenges are compounded by the prevalent regular tendencies of pitting the society against businesses. The relationship between the society and business, however, should be viewed as collaborative rather than adversarial since the two are more interrelated and symbiotic than the pundits would want to admit (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Stakeholder relations and CSR, therefore, are an important component of business and should be strategically

handled just like other business activities. The strategy is about being different by deliberately choosing what to pursue and how to pursue it in a manner that creates a unique and valuable position in the market (Porter, 1996). For success, businesses can no longer pursue social responsibility traditionally. Traditional CSR, in this case, has given rise to strategic CSR.

In our review and presentation of literature on strategic CSR, our focus was drawn to bringing out the varied definitions of strategic CSR, its facets and how strategies can be built around the components for achievement of desirable strategic benefits to a firm. Strategic CSR can therefore be defined as responsible initiatives that help organizational leaders to execute value-creating strategies from a social concern perspective through alignment of environmental, economic and social performance with long term business goals, objectives and values with an intention of garnering favorable publicity, enhancing organizational brand image and achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Pant & Piansoongnern, 2017; Brooks, 2005; Gazzola & Colombo, 2014). To strategically manage CSR, firms need to make trade-offs by analyzing their social responsibility prospects using the same frameworks they use to analyze their core activities, choosing initiatives that benefit both the business and society in the long-run and consequently creating a strategic fit between social good for the stakeholders at large and profit maximization and increasing shareholders value (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

Strategic CSR can be further described as a practice that allows the firms to achieve sustainable competitive advantage through the provision of public good privately (McWilliam & Siegel 2011). It is a form of social capital embedded in a network of significant stakeholder relationships and packaged in a manner that enhances the brand image and increases loyalty (Brooks, 2005). Strategic CSR takes a holistic view of CSR, corporate strategy, and integration of social responsibilities with day-to-day business operations. When viewed from the strategic perspective, CSR, therefore, becomes less of a constraint, cost and charitable deed and more of a source of growth, opportunity, innovation and competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2006). In the views of Li and Guo (2018) what differentiates strategic CSR from traditional CSR is its ability to create competitive advantage by supporting the core business and should, therefore, be executed in conjunction with the core business functions. A prerequisite for the sustainability of strategic CSR is finding the balance between economic and social responsibility priorities, the ability to find synergy between CSR, external environment and core business and the ability to build strategic advantage around CSR (Li & Guo, 2018).

CSR exhibition is not only multifaceted, but it is also multilayered. Both Carroll (1991) and Medis, Yong, Khatibi, and Azam (2016) agree that CSR adopts the four levels of economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic with the economic being the most basic level. They further posit that profitability is the most basic form of economic responsibility and the foundation upon which the other three levels are built. Companies are expected to not only respect the rule of the law and operate within the confines of the law but are also obliged to do what is right, ethical fair, and just. At the top of CSR pyramid is the philanthropic responsibility. The communities in which businesses operate expect companies to embrace the concept of good corporate citizenship through active engagement in the promotion of communal goodwill, human welfare and philanthropic activities that reflect the organizational caring values towards the community (Carroll, 1991). According to Mwangangi (2018), CSR takes the form of or can be classified into employee, customer, community, and government relations. Corporate- employee relations expect organizations to organize themselves in a manner that promotes staff welfare through the respect of labor laws, promotion of a learning culture through training and development as well as adherence to operational and workplace safety that guarantee safe working spaces for the staff. While corporate-customer relations are best nurtured through quality assurance, customer care, and proper communication and feedback channels, organizational-communal relations are promoted through projects and charity endeavors that address community development needs and agenda. CSR is incomplete in the absence of legal and regulatory framework on waste management and general sensitivity towards environmental issues and causes. From the pyramid perspective, while customer relations and community relations are purely economic and philanthropic responsibilities respectively, employee and government relations transcend through ethical and legal responsibilities since they exhibit qualities dominant in both legal and ethical considerations (Mwangangi, 2018; Carroll, 1991).

The strategy is about being different and an ability that allows an organization to create a fit among its activities and operations in a manner that makes it distinct and different (Porter, 1996). For organizations to employ CSR as

a strategy capable of generating competitive advantage, they need to deploy CSR initiatives from four strategic vantage points and perspectives of employees, customers, community and the government as the key stakeholders without whom the goal of shareholder wealth maximization would be elusive. The four vantage points are considered to be the main areas along which strategic CSR is built. A firm's capability to successfully manage stakeholder can be an intangible resource capable of generating a competitive advantage that is sustainable in the long run (McWilliams & Siegel, 2006). To succeed in managing the stakeholders, every organization must build a strategy around each of their salient stakeholders. While the employee relation strategy focuses on how to attract and retain a talented workforce through training, remuneration, and provision of the safe work environment, the customer relations strategy focuses on building customer loyalty through the delivery of quality products, superior customer care and transparency in information dissemination. In engaging the community, a business must embrace a strategy that reflects their respect for the dignity of the society in which they operate through genuine care of the communities and their needs. The regulatory strategy, on the other hand, seeks to align the organizational activities with the precepts and dictates of the law on matters of environmental conservation.

The discussion on the nature of Strategic CSR brings out two implications that the study finds relevant in the understanding of how its deployment will shape organizational strategic positioning through a reconceptualization of CSR as a strategy and a force to reckon with in enhancement of brand image, customer loyalty, and attainment of competitive advantage. First, as value creation entities, firms' chances of success are dependent on their ability to differentiate themselves in the market on the basis of the superiority of value provided to the customers. While value creation can be pursued by any firm, it is only within the context of strategic positioning that a firm can be able to create economic value for shareholders without compromising the needs of other salient stakeholders through shared value concept (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Secondly, the strategic thinking orientation underscores the role of the external environment whose developments avail both opportunities and threats that need to be responded to and shape the interactions between strategic CSR and corporate performance. Of particular concern is the manner in which the speed and direction of change and the resources provided by the competitive environment shape the direction of corporate social strategy in redefining the key social priorities capable of giving an organization a competitive edge (Husted & Allen, 2007; Luxmore, Tang & Hull, 2012). The study, therefore, suggests that the constructs of value creation focus and environmental dynamism need to be considered in the attempt to explain how the deployment of strategic CSR contributes to organizational outcomes along the value chain. The value chain has its focus on transformation to bring about outcomes that can be analyzed at several stages of the process. We are of the view that understanding these outcomes enables scholarship in strategic management to understand the emergent phenomenon and the key constructs that feature in the phenomenon at both the intermediate and ultimate states.

3.2 Value Creation Focus

The cardinal economic responsibility of a company is to fulfill its financial obligation to the shareholders and the investors. This responsibility is a prerequisite for organizational success since businesses exist principally to create value. Definitions of value and value creation are as varied as the research. Like many academic concepts, unanimity and consensus in conceptualizing and defining value and value creation are not only impossible it is also elusive. From the economics perspective, Adam Smith and Alfred Marshall define value as resultant equilibrium price when marginal utility equals marginal cost while Michael Porter takes a strategic management view to define value as what buyers are willing to pay for any good or service in the offing (Porter, 1985; Haksever et al., 2016). Value is, therefore, the consumer's perception of a product's ability to deliver its promise in meeting a need. Value creation on the other hand is a fundamental business function that allow firms to use and combine their capabilities, processes and core competencies in pursuit of their day-to-day operations with the ultimate goal being creation of goods and services that deliver superior value to the customers, economic profits to the business and consequent competitive advantage that is relevant for corporate survival (Herrala, Pakkala & Haapasalo, 2011). Value creation can, therefore, be defined as the process through which organizational distinctive competencies and resources are combined to deliver competitive advantage through the delivery of comparatively superior products.

Value creation is best understood by taking a birds-eye view of the organizational operations through the value chain perspective that views an organization not as a whole but as a collection of systematic and strategically

relevant units necessary in the achievement of organizational objectives (Porter & Kramer, 2006). The whole idea of the value chain is premised on the view of looking at the organizations from the perspective of systems and subsystems that comprise of inputs, outputs, and transformation processes. Value chain as a determinant of costs and profit depends on how value chain activities are managed, and this is best understood through the performance of value chain analysis. Value chain analysis is a way of not only conceptualizing activities necessary for the creation of products and services, but it is also relevant in narrowing organizational focus towards satisfying the needs and wants of end-users who are the consumers (Ensign, 2001; Howieson, Lawley & Hastings, 2016). The significance of value chain analysis to value creation lies in three main areas namely: formulation of competitive strategies, outlining of business activities relevant in value addition and in understanding the core competitiveness of an enterprise through specification of customer value, identification of relevant value chain activities, analysis of activity value and cost as well as matching of activities with competitive abilities (Zhang, Wang & Lee, 2011; Howieson, Lawley & Hastings, 2016; Ensign, 2001).

In Wheelen and Hunger (2010) opinion, value chains are key in not only identifying the profit margins of each activity but also in the determination of the firm's center of gravity. The center of gravity is further defined as the firm's original activities that gravitated the firm toward competitive advantage, and it is the focal point that determines what is retained as a core activity and what is outsourced in an attempt to further competitiveness through cost management. Value creation focus from strategic management perspective involves understanding the uniqueness of the industry in which a business operates and developing and customizing the value chain in a manner that allows the company to gain a competitive edge over its rivals. The key to creating differentiation on the basis of the value chain, therefore, lies in the company's ability to identify the key value drivers that are relevant in setting the organization apart from its rivals. Value chain analysis, therefore, facilitates identification of major components of internal cost structures to isolate the various aspects of the business that are key in generation of competitive advantage and that leads to significant differentiation of a firm about its competitors (Thompson, Petraf, Gamble & Strickland, 2018). Ensign (2001) argues that linkages in a firm's value chains can be reorganized and redefined to facilitate the gaining of a competitive edge against rivals. Organizational management is constantly faced with decisions that have an impact both positive and negative on both the relative competitive position and profitability. These are decisions of strategic importance because they not only determine the fate of the firm, they also determine its survival. For the attainment of competitive advantage, therefore, the firm must differentiate its self from the rivals on the basis of value creation by either performing its activities in ways that deliver superior benefit to the customers or superior value to the firm through lowering of the costs.

While the constructs of both strategic social corporate responsibility and value creation have been assessed, their relationship and interrelatedness have not been explored. So, what is the intersection point or the convergence zone between strategic social corporate responsibility and value creation? According to Porter and Kramer (2006), too much time and resources have been spent pitting businesses against society and leaders both in the civil society and business have focused too much on the friction rather than on the points of agreement. The mutual interdependence between the corporations and societies, therefore, needs to follow the concept of shared value instead of pursuing the restricted pathways of economic value and society value separately. We, therefore, propose adoption of the construct of shared value as the component drawn from CSR to provide the balance between societal concerns and shareholders concerns. This way, adoption of this construct extends the traditional focus biased towards shareholder wealth maximization perspective of economic value. Thus, under strategic CSR, firms will focus on generating systems with competencies or capabilities for generating not only economic value but also shared value.

Shared value is the framework that enables corporations to generate a surplus by addressing societal concerns through re-conception of products and markets and redefinition of productivity along the value chain (Windsor, 2017). Shared value creation is the process of adopting operating practices and policies that boosts and enhance organization's competitiveness while simultaneously advancing the economic interests of the companies and social conditions and concerns of the communities in which they do business and operate (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Thus shared value in this perspective does not just serve corporate philanthropic or mere sustainability interests but goes further to support essential strategic concerns or interests for a firm in that it offers a brand new way of achieving the double faceted success that allows both the corporations and communities to thrive. In this strategic role, it is

expected to play, and it provides a required capacity suitable to reshape the relationship between capitalism and socialism and further provides a way of legitimizing business gain through providing a convergence zone between corporate performance, economic value creation and societal concerns (Porter & Kramer, 2006, 2011). In this convergence we see an opportunity to further address growing concerns for the integration of the stream of theoretical work in organizational studies on the one hand focusing on internal conditions in the firm and on the other hand focusing on the external conditions of the firm which pits the RBV against the institutional theory and resource dependence theory respectively (Meyer et al, 2009)

3.3 Environmental Dynamism

Owing to the nature of strategic decisions and thinking, the adoption of strategic CSR as a strategic option invites the external environment into the decision analysis or process. One of the justifying points is the need to strike a balance between the internal conditions of the firm and the conditions prevailing on the external environment. The external environment is of interest to the strategist due to the dynamism exhibited by the constituent element that has the potential for business opportunities or environmental threats.

To survive and thrive, organizational leadership not only needs to acknowledge the role the environment plays in organization's management and administration, but it also needs to be conversant with the nature and impacts of firm-environment interactions. Firms operate within both internal and external environments. The actions and intentions of organizations are therefore shaped by influences emanating from the environment that is continually experiencing one form of change or another. To successfully manage organizations and their interaction with the environment, leadership needs to pay attention to both resources and the nature and velocity of change in the operating environment. Environmental dynamism as a component of velocity refers to the level of environmental predictability manifested by the degrees of variance in levels of industry and market change and uncertainty about prevailing forces that are beyond the control of individual corporations (Baum & Wally, 2003). Dynamism is expressed as the degree of stability or instability, and it measures the rate of change in the environment (Luxmore et al., 2012). Environmental dynamism is viewed more or less as the degree of difficulty in predicting events external to the firm that have the ability to both influence and affect the competitive environment (Husted & Allen, 2007).

Scholarship in organization theory has given considerable attention to the construct as an imperative to the study of organizations. There seems to be a convergence between scholarship in strategic management and organization theory on what the focus should be in studying the construct of environment namely the aspect of change or dynamism in the environment (Ansoff & McDonnell, 1990; Robins, 2004). Environmental dynamism is best understood from the trio perspectives of changeability, predictability, and munificence (Mwazumbo, 2016; Dess & Beard, 1984). Changeability can be defined as the firm's adaptability to environmental mutable nature as far as the surrounding and prevalent forces are concerned while predictability refers to the rapidity of change. Changeability exhibits itself in two dimensions of complexity and novelty. Complexity deals with the extent to which the environment presents a variety of conditions and influences such as legislative requirement, socio-political dimensions, and globalization while novelty is the degree or the extent to which the environment introduces new situations that need to be dealt with (Lynch, 1990). Predictability is the rapidity of change that exhibits its self in the rate of change and visibility of the future. Rate of change is best understood when evaluated in the light of the organization's ability to respond to the change occurring in the environment while the visibility of the future refers to how well a firm is able to predict the future on the basis of available information (Lynch, 1990).

3.4 Firm Performance

The ultimate goal in the deployment of strategies is influencing performance. Firms performance as a study construct is one of the most frequently used dependent variables in the strategic management research and literature. Just like many other academic concepts, firm performance as a concept has evolved over time through a metamorphosis of the prevailing perceptions. The definition has grown from the 50's, 60's and 70's view of equating performance with efficiency, productivity, flexibility and adaptability of limited resources in achievement of organizational goals to the post 80's definition of performance as an organization's ability to effectively combine

resources and capabilities in delivering superior value and building competitive advantage (Taouab & Issor, 2019). The post 90's ushered an era that critiqued financial measures as a sole reflection of organizational performance and advocated for a holistic view of corporate performance through tools like Balanced Score Card and Triple Bottom Line.

Despite its relevance and preeminence there hardly exist any consensus regarding its definition, measurement, and dimensionality leading to not only research advancement limitations but also lack of an operational definition enjoying a majority scholarly backing (Taouab & Issor, 2019; Selyam, Gayathri, Vasanth, Lingaranja & Marxiaoli, 2016). While this paper neither seeks to end the consensus debate nor provide a universally accepted definition, it intends to define the construct by assessing it through multiple dimensions of financial, stakeholder, and sustainability perspectives. We consider this as an important contribution to the continuing debate on what entails performance as a construct widely used in strategic management as the measure of the impact of applied strategies. Most of the attention has been given to objective measures that are of financial dimension in nature. This, however, has limitations in that most strategies bring about consequences that go beyond financial indicators still of interest to management. In addition, with rapidly growing concerns, for organizations to pay attention to sustainability, it becomes imperative for a scholarship to respond to this growing concerns by integrating models that underpin the emerging concerns and thereby provide a host of indicators that go beyond the financial dimension.

Although sole reliance on financial statement driven ratios as measures of performance has been criticized for failure to tell the firm's story in its entirety, the financial macro-metrics derived from the financial statement continue to be widely accepted in both the academic and business circles to reflect and capture the contemporary value creation activities of the firm (Smith, Hillon & Liang, 2018). In critiquing the narrow and simplistic nature of defining performance by use of financial metrics, Selyam et al. (2016) argue that firm performance ought to be evaluated from not only the limited financial but also from non-financial dimension. They assert that the firms' performance can only be exhaustively defined and sufficiently measured if an all-inclusive model of the nine dimensions namely growth performance, profitability performance, customer satisfaction, market performance of the organization, employee satisfaction, environmental, corporate governance and social performance is adopted. The view of defining firm performance from a holistic view point of financial, non-financial, tangible, and intangible measures. Firm performance, therefore, becomes the organizational ability to fulfill not only the tangible and intangible goals but also to satisfy the financial and non-financial reasons of its existence. Mere attention and focus on the traditional measures of firm performance does not provide a holistic view of how organizations impact the stakeholders. Firms not only improve their competitiveness through improved environmental, and social performance, they also boost their performance by complying with the regulatory framework requirements (Roni, Jabar, Muhamad & Murad, 2016). In view of this discussions, the authors propose that a more balanced view of the construct of performance with regard to the antecedent factor of strategic CSR would require performance dimensions to reflect financial, stakeholder and sustainability indicators. The financial indicators mostly used in scholarship are profitability margins, return on investment, earning per share, and dividend per share.

4.0 Theoretical Review

While the conceptual discussion has attempted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the construct of strategic CSR from its historical roots and the possibility of a phenomenon growing out of its deployment, it becomes necessary to underpin such understanding of the phenomenon on the appropriate theoretical grounding. As the paper undertakes to advance a case for a scholarship based on strategic CSR and its organizational outcomes, the phenomenon needs to be anchored on the postulates of relevant theoretical literature. The paper considered arguments arising from stakeholders, shareholder, RBV, stewardship, social contract, triple bottom line, and resource dependence theories.

4.1 Stakeholders Theory

Stakeholders theory provides a key foundation upon which SCR propositions and arguments are built. The theory posits that, stakeholders who are commonly defined as any group of individuals who affect or can be affected by the achievement of organization's goals, actions, policies and objectives (Freeman, 1984) play an integral role in the achievement of organization's objectives and goals. Insensitivity to the stakeholder's needs and failure to satisfy

them make the shareholder's profit maximization goals not only unachievable and unattainable but also unworthwhile (Pant & Piansoongnern, 2017). The theory further posits that, while organizations are more or less a constellations of competitive and cooperative interests, they provide frameworks for stakeholders' connections in pursuit of their objectives that always fall in a continuum between competition and cooperation (Haksever et al., 2004). The theory continues to argue that, an integration of CSR, corporate citizenship, sustainability, and stakeholder management is not the only key for business-societal relations but also for value creation which is the fundamental reason why corporations exist (Windsor, 2017). The main strength of this theory is its ability to obtrude responsibility on firms beyond mere regulatory and legal requirement, therefore, depicting organizations as more caring and less greedy. The paper is of the view that the arguments of this theory are suitable for underpinning strategic CSR, value creation, and shared value, which informs several constructs in the emerging phenomenon.

4.2 Shareholders Theory

The shareholder's theory is the foundation upon which the majority of criticisms and arguments against CSR are built (Castello, 2013). The theory argues that the only social responsibility of a business is to utilize the resources at its disposal and engage in activities aimed at increasing profits as long as the said activities are pursued within the confines of the rule of law and the rule of the game. The theory takes the traditional view of corporations and postulates that, the sole duty of a company is to maximize shareholder's wealth by delivering maximization of returns through growth in profits and share value as well as good dividend payouts. Therefore, management not only have an ethical duty and responsibility to shareholders to generate value, they also have no right to act on their own inclinations or make discretionary decisions on resource utilization for other purposes such as social benefit initiatives that have no economic value to the achievement of the company's financial goals (Saint & Stanton, 2007; Castello, 2013). The authors are of the view that the arguments of this theory are suitable to underpin the constructs of strategic CSR and value creation focus in a situation that brings about a phenomenon resulting from the deployment of Strategic CSR.

4.3 Resource-Based Theory

The resource-based theory offers another rationale for the explanation of arguments on the effect of strategic CSR on organizational performance. According to this theory, firm performance is significantly influenced by the physical, organizational, and human resources available to management. Organizations, therefore, develop strong competitive advantages by accumulating or controlling unique and inimitable bundles of resources and dynamic capabilities that not only integrate and build but also reconfigure internal and external competencies to address rapidly changing business operating environment (Barney, 2001). According to this theory, the firm's resources can either be tangible or intangible, and the firm's ability to outdo and outperform its rivals lies in its ability to have a unique and distinctive interplay of organizational physical and human resources. An organization's ability to successfully manage stakeholder relationship, as well as its capacity to care for the environment genuinely, can be an intangible resource capable of generating a competitive advantage that is sustainable in the long run (McWilliams & Siegel, 2006; Ntiamoah et al., 2014). While resource base theory has the advantage of being the main driving force in strategic management literature, it also complements the stakeholder theory in that firm competitiveness requires effective and efficient management of both organizational resources and stakeholder relations (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmer & Colle, 2010). We find that the arguments of RBV are relevant to the construct of CSR and that in its deployment as a form of strategic option, RBV will consider it a resource out of which organizations may derive value in line with the VRION Framework and ultimate performance.

4.4 Stewardship Theory

Stewardship theory posit that, while organizations are driven by profit or achievement of goals, most organizations do not view themselves from the simplistic and narrow perspective, but they consider themselves as a part of something bigger. The theory argues that ownership does not really own the company but merely hold it in trust, thereby intersecting with stakeholder's theory on organizational purpose or reason of existence. Managers should, therefore, be stewards whose collectivistic behavior is of higher reverence than self-serving and whose moral imperative is 'doing the right thing' without being consumed with excellence in financial performance (McWilliams & Siegel, 2006). The theory posits that, the driving force behind the board and management performance should be the desire to pursue organizational goals in an excellent and an honorable manner that not

only inspire confidence but also lead to relational reciprocity and long term relationships beneficial to all stakeholders (McWilliams & Siegel, 2006; Donaldson & Davis, 1991). We are of the view that the arguments of this theory support a strong case for the adoption of corporate CSR as a viable strategic option not only for non-profit but also for profit-oriented concerns.

4.5 Social Contract Theory

The social contract theory postulates that, all business operate under a hypothetical and unwritten contract with the society in whole and the society expects responsible conduct that is beneficial (Byerly, 2013). The theory argues that companies as legal persons consent either tacitly or explicitly some of their rights and freedoms to society in exchange of the protection of their right to do business and transact with the society. According to Mwangangi (2018), social contract is not only a relationship but it is also a mutual trust entrenched in company-stakeholder relationship management with an intention of defining an organization's explicit responsibilities such as generating returns for the investors, humane treatment of its employees, job creation for the society, respect for the rule of law as well as honoring tax obligation to the government, genuine care for the environment and honoring of supplier contracts. Companies not only need to seek favor and license to operate in the societies where they conduct business, but they also need to have a good working relationship with both internal and external players as they seek to provide products that inspire trust and loyalty in the market. The social contract theory strength lies in its recognition of the multiplicity of societal factors that promote good firm performance through a collection of contacts with stakeholders (Mwangangi, 2018; Byerly, 2013). The authors are of the view that the arguments of this theory form a strong basis for the support of the concept of shared value.

4.6 Triple Bottom Line Model

The TBL framework is generally defined as an accounting and reporting framework that goes beyond the traditional measures and metrics of return on investment, dividend per share, shareholder value and profitability to include both social and environmental dimensions and perspectives thereby giving more comprehensive and inclusive results of business activities along the people, planet and profit perspectives (Slapper & Hall, 2011). In line with the stakeholder theory, TBL acknowledges that the responsibilities of corporations go beyond shareholders to include other stakeholders who affect or are affected by the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives. TBL argues that companies' responsibilities and duties lies not only with the shareholders but also with the stakeholders and organizations should, therefore, be channels that coordinate stakeholder's interests while pursuing shareholder's need for profit and wealth maximization. TBL advocates for incorporation and adoption of three perspectives of performance, namely environmental, social, and financial. The TBL provides not only the basis upon which sustainability model is built but also backs up the cherished views of CSR that considers care for both environment and the people who include community, customers, and employees to be key in the promotion of organizational goals and in assuring longevity and competitive advantage that is sustainable. In this perspective, we are of the opinion that TBL offers an opportunity for broadening the scope of the dominant approach used in the measurement of the construct of performance so as to include dimensions going beyond objective indicators reflecting societal concerns.

4.7 Resource Dependence Theory

The theory postulates that an organization's behavior and action can be explained on the basis of its dependence on resources provided by the environment. The ability of an organization to bring about desired results and outcomes is constrained by the environment in which it operates and to understand its actions, you must be conversant with its ecology (Niehueser, 2008; Bondy 2008). The theory posits that; organizations depends on resources originating from the environment but are in the hands of other organizations. Organizations are therefore forced to depend on each other since the organization controlling the resources wields power. RDT focuses on the three environmental constructs of munificence, dynamism, and complexity that are built on the foundation of resource and uncertainty perspectives (Yeager et al., 2014). The environment is assumed to be comprised of scarce and valuable resources necessary for organizational survival and firms, therefore, strive to either minimize their dependency or maximize the rival's dependency through acquisition and control of the said resources. This theory is key since organizations do not operate in a vacuum or in isolation but are rather interacting with the environment constantly. Environment provides the context and the backdrop against which the organizations can be studied and

evaluated and is used assessment of the interplay between businesses and the salient stakeholders since the partnerships are controlled more or less by the party that holds more power irrespective of the role they play in value creation (Yeager et al., 2014; Bondy, 2008). Thus, the arguments of this theory underpin the construct of environmental dynamism by providing the theoretical framework upon which the discussions of the interplay between strategic CSR, value creation focus, and firm performance is built.

5.0 An Emerging Case for a New Theoretical Model

So far, this paper has covered a significant portion of the literature on Strategic CSR from both conceptual and theoretical standpoints. The essence of undertaking theoretical work is deemed necessary in scientific research in pursuit of knowledge as a discipline advances from its current state to new frontiers of knowledge. We regard this as key to advancing knowledge in strategic management in an attempt to integrate an otherwise neglected yet essential component of strategic management touching on CSR. However, while the literature contains sufficient arguments to justify a case for the integration of CSR in informing corporate-level strategy, we find it necessary to advance such a case through the route of a theoretical model. The development of new theories plays an important role in knowledge advancement. We are persuaded by the convictions drawn from the stream of researchers leaning towards the approach on theory before research advanced by Karl Popper and given prominence in the literature in scientific research in the social sciences (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2004; Kerlinger & Lee, 2000)

In the first attempt to provide the justification for a theoretical model, we point out from the literature reviewed what is emerging as is indicated by the nature of strategic CSR. It is emerging as a viable strategic option that firms can apply. Upon deployment, however, it brings the potential for possible outcomes of interests in strategic terms. The literature argued that due to its nature, it would have consequences that have implications on organizational capabilities and multiplicity of performance dimensions which may be conditioned by aspects of environmental dynamism. In this logic, it highlights the possibility of the emerging phenomenon with both theoretical and empirical implications (Murray, 2003; King & Zeithaml, 2001)

The second point the authors identify from the reviewed literature is what would constitute elements of the emerging phenomenon. A typical phenomenon requires a clear set of constructs with an understanding of their nature and appropriate indicators in a real-life situation. The reviewed conceptual and empirical literature has brought out a broad set of constructs, including CSR, strategic CSR, value creation focus, environmental dynamism, and firm performance. Within arguments of the conceptual and empirical literature, appropriate indicators are identified, which further enhance the possibility of modeling the phenomenon emerging from the deployment of strategic CSR. Thirdly, in modelling a phenomenon, theorizing requires identification of the constructs in a phenomenon and a clear indication of roles each is expected to play based on the reasoning advanced by Cooper and Schindler (2008), Sekaran (2003) and Nachmias & Nachmias (2004). Accordingly, a theory is described as a premise or a set of hypotheses for which there are deducible empirical consequences that have the capability to challenge the extant knowledge within the limits of essential bounding assumptions.

Based on this, the authors are of the view that since adoption and deployment of strategic CSR breeds a phenomenon of interest to both scholars and practitioners, proposing a theorem based on deployment of CSR reflecting its intermediate and ultimate outcomes as well as the contingent factors that condition the behavior of the phenomenon is necessary. The case is much more compelling, considering the growing need for strategic management to integrate societal concerns and reflect those concerns in the manner in which performance is measured. The reviewed literature has provided indicators drawn from a broad range of conceptual and theoretical literature that offer a balance between profit-oriented concerns and stakeholder-based concerns.

Lastly, developed theories require validation through empirical work. The emerging phenomenon stands to mark a journey of empirical interest to scholars. Even though debates continue pitting deduction on the one hand against induction on the other, we observe that in spite of the debates theories continue to play a critical role in the advancement of scientific knowledge in a discipline. Thus, proposing a new theoretical model goes a long way in

not only informing future empirical work but also in advancing authentic scientific knowledge in the area of strategic management involving the deployment of strategic CSR.

6.0 Proposed Conceptual Model

In line with the theoretical and empirical gaps identified in the review, the study proposes the following theoretical model to assess and explain the impact of strategic CSR on firm performance. The model is premised upon the four constructs of strategic CSR, value creation focus, environmental dynamism, and firm performance. Every construct studied played a salient role in building the phenomenon under study. The authors propose a new model that links strategic CSR, value creation focus, and firm performance against a backdrop of environmental dynamism. The model is summarized in figure1.

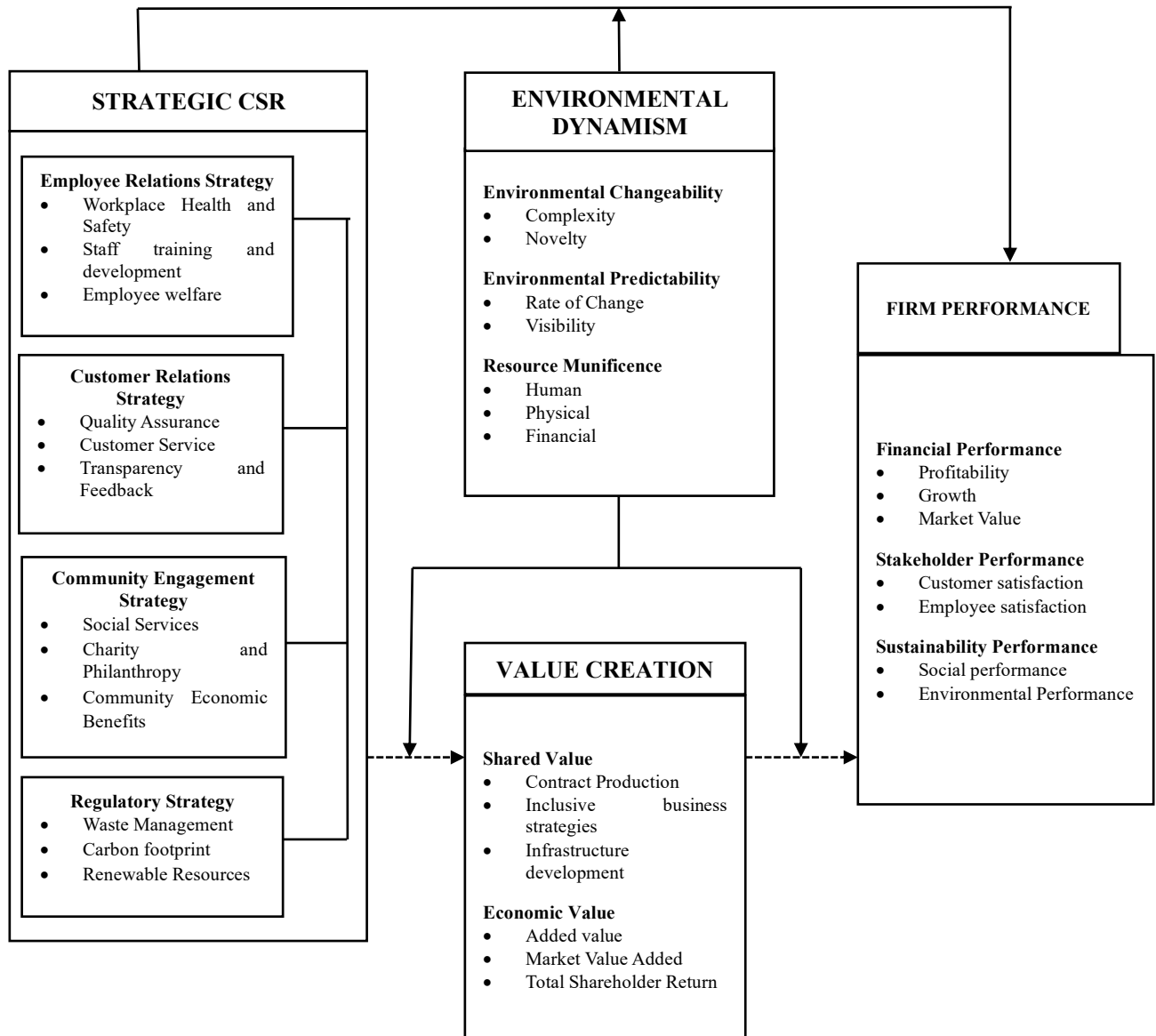


Figure 1: Theoretical Model linking Deployment of Strategic CSR with its Outcomes in Environmental Contexts.

6.1 Strategic CSR and Firm Performance

Execution of strategic CSR as a business strategy enables organizations to balance the interests of salient stakeholders who impact and are impacted by the achievement of organizational objectives and goals thereby creating an environment of peaceful co-existence and cooperation that leads to superior performance. We foresee the possibility for the existence of a relationship between the varied components of strategic CSR and firm

performance. Workplace health and safety, training and development, and employee welfare as embodied in the employees' relation strategy improve the morale and the motivation of the employees leading to improved performance (Mwangangi, 2018). Customer relation strategy in the form of quality guarantee, improved customer service, transparency, and feedback fosters customer loyalty and brand recognition, and subsequently improved performance. Respect for life, human dignity, the rule of law and the societies in which organizations operate leads to growth and development of cordial relations between corporations, the state, and societies in which those corporations do business. Good corporate-communal relations are foundations upon which better performing organizations are built. These relations not only become a crucial part of an organization's portfolio, but also a value creation leveraging capability and a bundle of resources relevant in long-term delivery of customer value and sustainable superb performance (Zubac, Hubbard & Johnson, 2010). Owing to the findings of previous research whose findings showed a relationship between some components of CSR and performance (Mwangangi, 2018; Al-Najjar, 2016; Pant & Piansoongnern, 2017; Husted & Allen, 2006), the authors, therefore, propose that:

Proposition 1: Execution of strategic corporate social responsibility will positively affect various dimensions of firm performance.

6.2 The Role of Value Creation Focus

Even though Strategic CSR presents the potential to influence the various dimensions of performance, the conditions under which such influence is exerted and sustained need attention. Under the reasoning of the RBV, Strategic CSR can be thought of a resource with attributes of strategic assets such that when deployed in an organization under normal circumstances will give rise to some intermediate state of capability as the strategy works on the systems to account for any variation in performance. We import this reasoning into the logic underpinning the cardinal responsibility of an organization of being to fulfill the financial obligations to the shareholder or investors by giving them a return on their investment. We observe that even though meeting shareholder obligations is key, yet the sustainability of this noble goal is dependent upon the value created and delivered to society. Corporations exist principally to create value and value is created for both the shareholders as the principal stakeholders and the other stakeholders who are affected by the organization's act of executing its strategies and achieving its objectives (Haksever et al., 2016). Value creation is, therefore, the act of combining organizational capabilities, competencies, and processes with the intention of delivering superior value to customers and economic profits to the organization. It is a catalyst and a competence that allows organizations to employ and combine resources at their disposal to not only satisfy their customers' needs but also build capabilities required for future success and longevity (Zubac et al., 2010)

Value created can either be economic or shared (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Wheelen & Hunger, 2010; Windsor, 2017). Economic value targets the shareholder as the key stakeholder and results in value addition to the organization and its standing in the market with the subsequent implication of guaranteeing the shareholder's long term financial security through increased shareholder return and wealth growth. Shared value is created as a result of organization generating surplus through addressing social issues of concern through the re-conception of products and markets along the value chain (Porter & Kramer 2006). Shared value, therefore, becomes the process of adopting operation practices and procedures that boost and enhance organizational competitiveness while advancing the economic interests of the company. Shared value creation purposes to create benefits to all the stakeholders benefiting the shareholders with stock appreciation and wealth growth, delivering quality and durable products to the customers, nurturing long term and mutually beneficial relationship with the suppliers, guaranteeing job security to the employees and promoting community success through job creation and corporate philanthropy. As a result of the findings of the previous research that has demonstrated a positive relationship between value creation, strategic CSR and firm performance (Husted & Allen, 2007; Talebenya et al., 2014; Gounder & Venkateshwarlu, 2017), the authors, therefore, propose that:

Proposition 2: There is a correlation between the CSR strategy deployed by a firm and value creation focus.

Proposition 3: Even though the deployment of CSR strategies affects firm performance, the degree of its effect is dependent on the nature of value creation focus adopted by the firm.

6.3 The Role of Environmental Dynamism

The emerging phenomenon so far described attracts typical characteristics of strategic thinking. A defining feature of strategic decisions is the attention given to the role of the external environment. Even though more recent scholarship has turned attention to the internal aspects of the firm through the RBV lens, calls have been made accompanied with evidence for the integration of environment focused theoretical approaches and with an internal focus on the firm (Mwazumbo, 2016; Kilika, 2012). The justification for the external environmental focus is due to the fact that Environmental dynamism has a bearing both on uncertainty and risk. Environmental stability-instability is a key determinant on the levels of uncertainty in the business environment that further determine the levels of risk that organizations can take or accommodate (Luxmore et al., 2012). Organization's ability to navigate the complex changes arising in the environment and to adapt to various scenarios it finds itself in determines how well it can execute strategies and conduct its operations. The environment is further complicated by the nature and level of resources available and at the disposal of the firm. Resources influence the managerial ability to exercise discretion and the organizational risk appetite. The higher the environmental dynamism, the higher the risk and managers in munificent environments have a higher appetite for risk making the relationship between munificence and dynamism to be inverse. The environment, therefore, determines strategic stance an organization will take and how well they will succeed. Use of strategic corporate social responsibility as a strategy for enhancement of competitive advantage and subsequent superior corporate performance will be dependent on the configurations of the environment and resources. Pursuant to the findings of the past researches that have showed a relationship between dynamism, strategic CSR and organizational outcomes (Baum & Wally, 2003; Goll & Rasheed, 2004; Luxmore et al., 2012), the authors thus propose that:

Proposition 4: Environmental dynamism mediates the relationship between CSR strategies adopted by a firm and firm performance

Proposition 5: The mediated effect of value creation on the relationship between CSR and firm performance will be moderated by the level of environmental dynamism.

Proposition 6: The relationship between CSR strategies deployed and value creation focus adopted is moderated by the extant level of environmental dynamism.

7.0 Conclusion

The purpose of the paper was to review extant conceptual, theoretical and empirical literature so as to provide an apprehension of the construct of Strategic CSR and its resultant outcomes in organizations and propose a fitting theoretical framework suitable for modeling the relationships among identified constructs in the emergent phenomenon. The construct was found to have a place in strategic management as a strategy that can enhance a firm's performance and competitive advantage. Strategic CSR, when combined with value addition through shared value, accords a firm a rare opportunity of simultaneously pursuing business goals and issues of social concern. The authors argued that the pursuit of profit maximization goal for shareholders does not have to be in isolation or competition with the needs of other salient stakeholders. The paper further highlighted the role played by the environment in governing the relationship between strategic CSR, value creation focus, and sustainable firm performance. The paper dispensed the conceptual understanding of each of the construct by identifying the relevant indicators as well anchoring each of the constructs on a theoretical framework premised on Stakeholder theory, RBV, Social Contract theory, Triple Bottom-line model and resource dependence theory.

In their presentation of this paper, the authors, however, are cognizant of certain limitations and constraints. First, though the literature was extensive, it was drawn from a few relevant disciplines considered to be key in the enhancement of the comprehension of the strategic management phenomenon in organizations. The paper, therefore, makes an invitation to the extant body of knowledge from a multidisciplinary approach with the intention of fortifying and enriching the ongoing discussion on the deployment of strategic CSR and its emergent outcomes. Secondly, the propositions the study makes are yet to be empirically validated. The authors therefore call on future researchers to consider the need for adoption of contexts upon which future studies can be based as well as translation of the proposed theoretical framework into an appropriate conceptual framework relevant in guiding

empirical studies that use the indicators of the constructs so as to validate the claims made by the propositions using factual data.

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