

CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY: ONLINE DISCOURSE PRACTICES IN THE JORDANIAN ENERGY SECTOR

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Abstract: *Over the recent years, and like many other countries in the world, Jordan interest in the concept of corporate environmental responsibility have been increased. And a lot of companies in the country are directly or indirectly involved in one or more environmental responsibility activities. This paper intends to examine the leading Jordanians energy companies' CSR practices focusing on the environmental dimension in order to determine to what extent they are fulfilling their responsibility toward the environment. A desk-based research conducted with the intention to use content analysis as a research tool to assess the web site, and the online CSR communication of the three biggest oil companies in Jordan, Total Jordan, Manaseer Oil&Gas and the Jordan petroleum refinery companies were licensed in 2016 and will each receive a third of the imported fuel and companies will sell fuel directly to consumers through fuel stations across the kingdom of Jordan. We found that the energy business organizations specifically the oil companies in Jordan are aware of their responsibilities towards the environment and committed to their environmental responsibility within their CSR framework as manifested in charitable and philanthropic work through the partnership with the official institutions, especially the municipalities, universities, schools, moreover, the Environmental aspect represented only a small part of their CSR activities compare to the other dimensions. Further, the impact of these CSR practices, including the environmental initiatives, ends with the end of the event or activity, what makes them take the character of advertising and propaganda, rather than environmental initiatives aimed at achieving long-term impact and create sustainable value. Also the three companies failed to introduce social reporting systems which measure not only Economic success but also environmental performance. In addition, the limited number of activities, incomparable with the message of commitment to the environment presented by the company's, the websites.*

Keywords: *corporate environmental responsibility; Jordan; energy companies; CSR.*

JEL classification: *Q01; Q56; Q49; Q53.*

1. Introduction

Over recent years there has been an increased interest in the concept of corporate environmental responsibility (CER) (Holtbrügge and Dögl, 2012) as a response to Pressure from shareholders and NGOs to local community groups, media, influencing companies decision makers to pay more attention to environmental impact of their working operations, and as (Hume and Olarn 2013) mentioned that problems are closely related to the energy industries, as an oil leak will threaten natural resources. Thus, as far as the energy business organizations are considered

to have high environmental impacts, it makes this sector particularly relevant for such a study.

In the Jordanian context, Hadadin. (2007) stated that "A rapidly expanding population, industrial pollution, Jordan's absorption of hundreds of thousands of people has resulted in the over-exploitation of many of its natural resources". Also According to the country profile in Agenda 21 (Johannesburg Summit 2002); "Jordan is highly dependent on its poor environment, ensuring that environmental resources-water, soil, plants and so on- are used in a sustainable manner is one of the most urgent obligation to the principles of sustainable development confirmed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992".

In light of this situation the government implemented a legal framework to support its efforts to protect the environment, The Ministry of the Environment established in 2003 under the Environment Protection Law No. (1) Of 2003, a step forward to achieve environmental performance on a better scale and in confronting environmental problems. With the passage of time, it came up with a variety of specific environmental laws, policies, strategies, monitoring and enforcement and by mainstreaming environmental concepts into all national development plans. Now, it seems that Jordan is on the right track. Where Focusing on the environmental aspect of business organizations is becoming more important than ever, and there is an increasing trend by the private sector towards acquiring international environmental and quality control certificates, such as the ISO 1400, HACCP and OHSAS 18001 (Al-Dmour, 2011).

This paper focuses on CER activities of big oil companies in Jordan, The three companies analysed in this paper operate in the same sector, therefore are governed by the same sector specific regulations. One by One, they were licensed and will start importing fuel, The three companies will be engaged in improving services and competing in the market, The first one is Manseer Oil & Gas a local private sector owned company, the second one is the Jordan petroleum Refinery Company a state-owned Enterprise, and the last one is TOTAL-Jordan which is multinational company which operates in Jordan.

Through this paper, we will discuss theoretically the concepts of the environmental responsibility as one of the main dimensions of social responsibility, as well as reviewing the drivers that motivate companies to implement CER programs and finally will answer the main question of this paper which is: to what extent are the oil companies in Jordan committed to the environmental dimension of their social responsibility?

2. Methodology

The goal of this paper is to understand, the current status, of the environmental responsibility practices among Jordanian oil companies, a desk-based research conducted with the intention to use content analysis method of the CER communication, available online in the year 2016, the website content of the selected companies and other associated sites were explored and analysed. Other information has been collected from different articles published in different journals, periodicals, conference paper thus it's limited to the information provided through various online platforms.

3. Literature review

3.1. Defining Environmental Responsibility (CER)

Cunningham (2009) stated that “CER (a sub-category of the broader concept of corporate social responsibility), will be defined as practices that benefit the environment (or mitigate the adverse impact of business on the environment) that go beyond those companies that are legally obliged to carry out”.

The corporate environmental responsibility. (CER) defined in different ways. According to Vogel (2005) is “complex and multi-dimensional”. CER Vogel says CER deals with a company’s relationship with the environment. “Encompasses corporate practices ranging from natural resource management and use to waste generation and disposal, recycling, the marketing of environmentally friendly products, and pollution prevention, and control”.

3.2. Environmental and Ecological aspects of CSR

According to (Baker, 2010) “CSR means that “the company is taking responsibility for the effects of its operations on people, the Environment and business; it is about how companies manage the business processes to produce an overall positive impact on society”. Also the European Commission green paper, define CSR as” a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis “. Thus, the Business’s impact on the environment within the framework of the role of business in society, is what we called the environmental dimension of corporate social responsibility. In addition, Porter & Kramer (2006) argued that social and environmental responsibility of organizations has become an inevitable priority for business leaders in every country. The environment protection becomes one of the core elements of corporate social, responsibility, it is a high profile and important dimension of this concept. In the Jordanian context, According to. Al-Dmour (2011), “in terms of environmental practices he found that the foreign companies working in Jordan were more concerned with environmental stability and for solutions for a cleaner environment” also a study conducted by the vision institute for civil society in 2014 shows that a total of four hundred and forty four social activities was implemented by the business sectors in Jordan.

3.3. Drivers and Challenges of CER:

Literature revealed different factors drive an organization’s effort to delivering its environmental obligations, the table below (table) presents some drivers behind implementing CER activities

Table 1: Drivers and Motives behind CER implementation

Driven by	Description	Literature
That climate change	That climate change is likely to become a major business driver over the next few years as organizations come under intense pressure to decarbonize their activities.	McKinnon <i>et al.</i> , (2010)
The media	Organizations whose managers perceived that environmental issues	Halkos & Evangelinos (2002)

Driven by	Description	Literature
	could affect their organization's public image were more likely to implement an environmental management system	
Government polices & regulation	It is very clear that the dominant driver for CER is government legislative policies	KEL DUMMETT.2006
Competitive pressure	Develop the environmental technologies necessary to compete effectively in the global environmental market.	Gunningham2009
Pressure from customers	Customers have become more environmentally conscious about organization's activities, products and services	Robecosam, 2013;
Stakeholders and NGOs	Pressure from shareholders and NGOs is considered among those factors that drive organizations to initiate CER practices.	Porter & Kramer, 2006).
Voluntary agreement	Voluntary environmental programs (VEPs) are institutions for inducing firms to produce environmental goods beyond legal requirements	Potoski & Prakash (2005

Source: Authors' survey of literature on CER

While, Energy Companies in Jordan committed to their environmental responsibility within their CSR framework as presented in their website, a recent study of Elian (2014) which is based on a purposive sample of large companies out of 190 public shareholding companies registered at the Amman Stock Markets shows that CSR driving forces in Jordan included, in descending order; cultural ethics, company by law, customary rules, country law, Instructions by Associations political pressure, competitors, and NGO pressure, No companies consider customer pressure as a driving force, also stated that "SCR in Jordan is a mixture of ethical voluntary actions and legally binding through political and legislation pressure"

4. Energy Sector in Jordan

According to the ministry of energy and mineral resources, annual report, 2012, the energy sector is one of the most important sectors supporting the economy, contributing 21% of the GDP in 2012. While in 2011 97% of oil used in Jordan was imported and the country relies on oil imports for energy sources, efforts are being made to transform Jordan's energy mix to decrease reliance on oil from 82.2% to 40% by 2020. Oil shale, natural gas and renewable energy are projected to increase in percentages to make up much of the difference. The report of 2015 facts and figures issued by the ministry of energy and mineral resources showed the country production and consumption of petroleum products as presented in tables 2&3.

Table 2: Petroleum Products Consumption (Thousand ton)

Years	2012	2013	2014
Oil products			
LPG	377	368	371
Gasoline	1147	1161	1187
Jet Fuel	379	357	339
Kerosene	81	63	49
Diesel	3103	2810	3274
Fuel Oil	1578	1679	2041

Source: Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (2015)

Table3: Local Production of oil& natural gas (Thousand ton)

Years	2012	2013	2014
Oil Products			
Crude Oil (000 Toe)	1.1	1	1
N.Gas (Billion CF)	5.8	5.3	4.6
Total (000 Toe)	122	112	97

Source: Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (2015)

As a result, the country heavily depends on import to fulfil its domestic energy needs, and there is an almost complete reliance on foreign oil imports. In 2016 the Jordanian Petroleum and oil products, markets were opened up to competition an important move to develop the energy sector in Jordan and a major step towards more competition between the oil companies, ended the JPRC (Jordanian petroleum refinery company) decades of monopoly, and, according to the government officials reported by the Jordan times “The National Energy Strategy calls for competition to enhance the quality and quantity of oil derivatives and we believe it will be reflected in the prices,”. The three fuel distribution companies operating in Jordan were licensed and will start importing fuel (www.jordantimes.com), however The Jordanian oil companies expected to accept their responsibility to do no harm to the environment and to seek ways of reducing the environmental impact to air, soil and water from their business operations in addition.

5. Analysis of the company's web sites

In the rest of this paper, we will analyse the online communication of the environmental responsibility practices of the selected companies. The websites, contents available on-line will be explored and checking the following elements: Company website includes a section for environment reponsiplity. The company produces a report for sustainability including the environmental aspect in download format; Company provides information about company-initiated environmental projects, Company web site actively communicates progress in Environmental responsibility activities, Company has a an environmental strategy and policy in download format, clarifies the company web site topics Visual elements and the narrative type with update information provided, identify the topic relevance to the company values, mission, vision, and if the Company provides contact information and framework for exchange ideas and conversation.

5.1. Manaseer Oil & Gas

A local private sector owned company established in 2012 which is the first company in Jordan to manage a chain of fuel stations with contemporary and impressive designs, The website of the company does have a CSR section, its visible and easy to navigate, where The corporate logos appear on every page as (news events, station location, fuel prices....etc.) and occupies the same space on the home page, the company introduced its identity through a slide show for its vision, mission, social values, expertise and its brand name. It's openly declared values of the company with internal policy document attached which refer to the alignment of the company to environmental standards. Narrative statements are most often used in the CSR page, accompanied with Visual elements, at the Below of the home page the section which is dedicated to environmental health and safety, plain abstract, and, business-like language stated that the company have HSE Policy, HSE management and HSE objective but all are not accessible, At the main CSR section, we can observe first the company declaration of its commitment to corporate responsibility and to the highest standard of performance, also, its include The core values of the Manaseer Group and its believe in behaving ethically with sensitivity toward social, cultural, economic and environmental issues and stated that their focus for over the past years will be on education and fighting poverty. Where the environment issue is not on the top of the list, In Addition the Company provides information about company-initiated CR projects through its both recent comments and the site archives sections. Regarding the main indicators in implementing CR practices it shows that the company web site doesn't have a team dedicated for CR with contact information for CR inquiries. Also No Presence for a sustainability report or a clear policy or strategy toward environment in a download format also without a recognized framework for collaboration with NGOs in CR initiatives. The company agenda of environmental responsiplity, includes an Initiative called" dread for homeland" use its own vehicles to open the roads that were closed due to snow accumulation.it sheds light on the role of the company as part of the development team of the community, the company initiatives implemented within a limited circle of partnership and not goes beyond the government bodies to the whole civic society institutions, however the limited number of activities is incomparable with the message of commitment to environment presented at the website the web site also provide information about awards and certificates obtained in the field of CSR and certificate's related to environmental initiatives. Like ISO14001 and OHSAS 18001 also granted a certificate by the Jordanian Environment Society as the best supporter of the environment in 2015. which present its continues efforts and its commitment to the environment, in addition, it shows the company contribution to the community development through financial donations and voluntary efforts also express its willing for a partnership with local institutions in a way or another to present itself as members of a society team, Furthermore the company implemented some projects with new technology to reduce the effect of its operation on the environment with support from government bodies with intention to gain customer loyalty.

5.2. Jordan petroleum Refinery Company

The second one is a state-owned Enterprise located in the Jordanian market for more than sixty years, since 1958, and considered to be the country's oldest company in the oil market with its commercial arm the Jordan Petroleum Products Marketing Company handles the marketing and distribution of oil in the country; it owns and operates several gas stations.

The homepage of the company declared its values, and introduced the company identity through a slide show for its vision, mission, key figures and its brand. The website of the company doesn't have a CER section. Only the term of sustainable development is used at the homepage and announces 4 main topics (environment, community, health and safety and Technology & Development), The environmental section is visible and easy to access as other sections and mostly without Visual elements, Opens with a narrative statement which is a plain abstract, and, business-like language, a general description of the company's commitment toward environment, and contained the company policy toward environment where, it seems as more a matter of legal constraints and compliant with laws and regulations rather than a commitment towards responsible environmental behaviour. Also, there is a lack of updated information on company sustainable activities, for instance, all the financial numbers mentioned in the community topic for supporting of educational institutions and charitable, religious and municipalities in the kingdom, are out dated and belongs to the year 2013 and The budget allocated for these projects amounted to 327.600 \$ for 2013. without a full detailed description of the implemented activities, in addition, it shows the company contribution to the community development through financial donations within a frame of a partnership with government bodies, the company willing's for a partnership with local institutions' aims to represent itself as members of a community team,

The company uses the text Description to deliver information about its environmental responsibly without a relative balance between the image and the text,, it shows its commitment to its environmental policy by using key words like, Comply with, Constant pursuit, to ensure, reduce pollution, as well as it presents the cost of a project called sulphur recovery unit which is 17 million Euro without any further details.

All the information has been provided by the web site considered to be a uni-direction and without a detailed presentation of all implemented CR activities, the web site also with no information about awards and certificates obtained in the field of CSR and certificate's related to environmental initiatives as well as no ads for environmental campaigns targeting the audience for participate in the company activities. The webpage declared values of the company and stated that The Company is aware of its responsibilities towards the environment. With no contact information for CR inquiries or a team dedicated for CR initiatives. Also, there are no sustainability reports available online, as well as No clear policy or strategy toward environment in download format and the web site don't have a recognized Framework for collaboration with NGOs in CR. Furthermore the Company doesn't provides updated information about company-initiated CR projects., the company declared, it is seeking to launch independent programs and projects contribute to the environment through donation, as part of its corporate philanthropy framework, and for charitable causes therefore, after they make their profits, fulfil their tax duty, and then they will donate a certain share of their profits to charitable causes.

5.3. Total - Jordan

Total Jordan, is part of the global company, "Total" that is present in 130 countries around the world- Total Jordan has a network of more than 170 service stations across the country

The company's website devoted visible section for CSR including the environmental topic with a clear message on the page stated that "In all our operations, Total Jordan considers respect for the environment as one of its top priorities". As well as, introduced the company identity through a slide show for its vision, mission, its products and brand name. In line with the vision and objectives of the Global total which does not separate community service and responsibility in the development of any of its business and orientations. It seems that much of the practice only applies to the larger company rather than operations in Jordan, In its CER agenda, a Narrative statements are most often used in the page, accompanied with Visual elements, also provide information about awards and certificates obtained in the field of CSR and certificate's related to environmental initiatives it shows its commitment to the road safety as one of its top priorities through traffic awareness campaigns and Road Transport Improvement program, where its mentioned the number of beneficiaries and the cities its covered with no time schedule or budget presented for implementation, In addition, the CER agenda includes cleaning the city and planting trees through campaigns implemented with a partnership with government bodies like, the campaign (Amman is our mother) launched in partnership with the Greater Amman Municipality, which aims to raising awareness against dumping with no budget presented for implementation as well as using words like successful to describe its work with no evidence of real evaluation process and use a sentences like (You are in charge,) (Amman is our mother) "(Your Safety is Important to Us,) as a heading names for its campaign which related to its values and sheds light on the role of the company as part of the development team of the community, the whole agenda seems to some points like a public relation campaigns or a marketing tool for the company own interest, so it ends with the end of the event or activity furthermore all these initiatives implemented within a limited circle of partnership and not goes beyond the government bodies to the whole civic society institutions, however the limited number of activities is incomparable with the message of commitment to environment presented at the website. The company web site doesn't have contact information for CR inquiries or a team dedicated for CR initiatives, and the web site don't have a recognized Framework for collaboration with NGOs in CR activities, where it has been noticed that none of the activities instituted by the company launched by the dedicated team of total, Also the Company shows its interest in the public safety and environmental conservation rules by treating vapors with multilayer flexible pipes designed for oil and cisterns designed to pump oil derivatives, including environmental protection techniques, it seems as more a matter of legal constraints and compliant with international standards regulations as a global company rather than a commitment towards responsible environmental behavior.

The Total Company operating in Jordan practices its responsibility toward the environment within a semi strategic approach as an international company with no efforts to incorporate strategic CR practices into the organization's daily operations. There is a difference in the company's organization culture based on the lack of similarity in in their childhood and their development process. But if we compare their

website we will see that they are almost similar from our mission, vision, values, and to behave ethically toward the environment, also there is a visible similarity in the web site nature of contents, topics, in addition the three companies adopted the partnership approach for implementing their environmental activities with different targeting groups.

Table 4: A comparative table

Environmental Performance indicators	Total	Jordan Petroleum Refinery	Manaseer for Oil & Gas
The Website includes a Section for Environmental reponsibility	○	○	○
The website provide a Sustainability Report in Download format	●	●	●
The website has a an Environmental Policy in Download format	○	●	●
Company provides information about all company-initiated CER projects	∅	●	∅
Company has a CR Strategy in Download Format	●	●	●
Company has a team dedicated for CER activities with contact information On environment inquiries	●	●	●
The environmental topic relevance to the company values, mission, vision,	○	○	○
The website updated and actively communicates progress in Environmental responsibility activities.	○	●	○

Legend:

○	Positive	∅	Partial	●	Negative
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Source: Based on Author Review of the company's web site

While CER agenda of total–Jordan consider the road safety as its top priority, the Almanseer company and the Jordan petroleum consider the good environmental performance is to comply with the laws, instructions and standards applicable at the international level, None of selected companies produces a Report for Sustainability or CSR Strategy or Environmental Policy in Download Format also none of the them have provided contact information for environment inquiries furthermore, with no updated information provided by Jordan petroleum company about-initiated environmental project since 2013, it has been noticed that the Web sites for the three selected companies do not cover all of their environmental activities, but may be found in other associated sites. Which may raise a case for future investigation.

6. Conclusion

This study focuses on the website content and the communications of the environmental aspect of the corporate social responsibility of leading petroleum companies in Jordan. The three company's websites have a section dedicated to social responsibility with the exception of Jordan Petroleum Refinery, which reveals it as a part of the sustainable development, CER concept expressed through a narrative type with minimum visual elements and it has been noticed that the Web

sites for the three companies do not cover all of their environmental activities, but may be found in other associated sites

The three companies are aware of their responsibilities towards the environment, but they are committed to their environmental responsibility within their CSR framework and CSR practices are highly dominant by the character of donations, through the partnership with the official institutions, especially the municipalities universities, Jordan, football association so they are falling into philanthropic approach, Further they stated that they are dealing with highest ethical standards with matters relating to the community, and the surrounding environment. The three companies failed to introduce social reporting systems which measures not only Economic success but also environmental and social performance. They mentioned that they have taken environmental issues seriously, but their sincerity may be questioned in the absence of the development of an appropriate long-term corporate environmental policy and quantitative indicators to measure performance against the policy. The ad hoc disclosures can, at best, be taken as a list of mere intentions without evidence of any appropriate action. the three companies were very active in the fields of fighting poverty and supporting health and education within their CSR framework with little concentration on the field of environmental issues, there is Similarity in actions toward the environment between the three companies despite the difference in their back ground, as Total is international company and Almanseer is Jordanian private sector company and the JPEC is a state owned company more ever, the impact of these CSR practices including the environmental initiatives, ends with the end of the event or activity, what makes them take the character of advertising and propaganda, rather than social initiatives aimed at achieving long-term impact and create sustainable value.

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