

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) REPORTING IN EMERGING ECONOMIES: A SURVEY OF LISTED COMPANIES IN SRI LANKA

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Abstract

The overall research objective of this thesis is to identify the prominent features of CSR practices and the pattern of growth of CSR engagement as expected by Carroll (2000) at the beginning of the 'new millennium'. Sixteen companies were selected as the sample for the content analysis and data were collected for a 5-year period covering 2011/2012 to 2015/2016. The annual reports of the sample were considered as the data source. The contents of annual reports of those companies were fully analysed for five years. Both qualitative and quantitative data on the CSR reporting were collected from those integrated annual reports. A content analysis focusing on the number of pages, number of words used, number of images shown, number of tables used, and number of charts/figures used was carried out. These annual data were used to uncover the trend in CSR disclosure over the 5 years. The trend was identified quantitatively (number-wise) and qualitatively. Although the analysis showed a quantitative progress in CSR reporting, it also found that many irrelevant: images, tables, and charts were used in annual reports. Many images in the reports included politicians, linking them with company activities. Carroll (2015) expects a rapid growth in CSR in developing economies. It seems that underlying qualitative progress in CSR reporting is at a low level, when compared with the quantitative progress reported. This is not what Carroll (2000) expected at the beginning of "the new millennium" the 21st century.

Key Words: Corporate Social Responsibility, Sri Lanka, CSR reporting