

Corporate social responsibility and Pink Ribbon Campaigns. The case of the Spanish beauty and fashion brands

Responsabilidad social y acciones de comunicación “lazo rosa”. El caso de las firmas españolas de belleza y moda

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Resumen:

Se presentan los resultados del estudio de caso de seis firmas españolas de belleza y moda con acciones “lazo rosa”. Las acciones de lazo rosa son aquellas vinculadas con la investigación, prevención y tratamiento del cáncer de mama. Están enmarcadas dentro de la política de responsabilidad social (RS) de las empresas. Los resultados demuestran el compromiso social de dichas empresas pero evidencian que tanto el tipo de gestión como la comunicación de estas iniciativas no parecen consolidados y carecen de un planteamiento estratégico a largo plazo.

Palabras clave:

Comunicación comercial; responsabilidad social; belleza; moda; estrategia.

Abstract:

This article presents the results of the case study of six beauty and fashion brands that operate in Spain and have supported the Pink Ribbon cause, which is dedicated to support breast cancer research, prevention and treatment. The support of these brands to the Pink Ribbon cause is part of their respective corporate social responsibility policies. The results show that these brands are socially committed but that the management of their corporate social initiatives does not seem to be consolidated and lacks a long-term strategic plan.

Keywords:

Advertising; Social responsibility; beauty market; fashion market; strategy

1. Introduction

The commitment of companies to become responsible and sustainable is already an irreversible trend. Due to social demands and internal initiatives, companies are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of finding a balance between social, environmental and economic benefits. Until recently, corporate social responsibility (hence, CSR) was only an incidental and temporary practice undertaken by large corporations. Although there is still a lot to be done, the number of sustainable and responsible companies is increasingly growing.

There are different reasons that make a company want to become responsible. In the past, actions of solidarity were commonly motivated by mere philanthropic values. Currently, there are only few companies that act in this way. Today, companies have begun to discover the added value they can obtain from acting in a socially responsible manner and communicating their responsible actions to their stakeholders, understood as all those publics that can affect or be affected by the actions of a company (Navarro, 2012: 54). However, some companies develop temporary and sporadic CSR actions only to project a positive image, but fail to develop and implement a strategic, long-term and comprehensive CSR programme.

The concept of stakeholders is key in the field of CSR. Although Freeman was not the first author to use this term, in several studies (Freeman & Reed, 1983; Freeman, 1994; Freeman, Gilbert & Wicks, 1994; Freeman, 2004; Agle, Donaldson & Freeman, 2008) he has been developing a definition of reference: “those groups that can affect or be affected by the fulfilment of the organisation’s objectives”. Freeman distinguishes several types of stakeholders according to their direct or indirect influence over the organisation. The primary or internal stakeholders are vital for the company’s continuous growth and survival. The secondary or external stakeholders are part of the business environment and influence the primary stakeholders –activist groups, competitors, environmentalists, the media– (Freeman, 2004: 92).

Taking into account the diversity of ways in which CSR is implemented, we carried out a research to find out, among other things, whether the fashion and beauty companies that support the Pink Ribbon cause, which promotes breast cancer prevention, research and treatment, are performing a strategic CSR programme. Being strategic refers to the existence of long term action plans and the resources needed to implement them.

1.1. *The concept of CSR*

The concept of CSR emerged in the USA after the Second World War, although the first works on the subject were published in the 1960s. Several authors agree that the concept of CSR emerged from Bowen’s 1953 work, entitled *Social responsibilities of the Businessmen*. Moreno, Uriarte and Topa claim that Bowen understands CSR as the obligation of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of society’s objectives and values (2010, p. 29). It is in the first decade of the 20th century when CSR policies spread worldwide and began to be managed strategically:

“(…) companies’ senior managers began to develop a new rationality that integrated new logics to what had been until then the central logic and main *raison d’être* of their companies –investment return and profit maximization–. These new logics became not only compatible with the central corporate logic but also became a *conditio sine qua non* for it, i.e. they became indispensable for the preservation of the economic benefit. The two ideas that better explain this change of rationality are ethics and sustainability” (Villafañe, 2009:76).

Ethics is a “discipline that aims to guide human action in a rational way in all aspects of life” (Cortina, 2005: 17) and in the corporate sector it is “the discovery and application of the values and norms shared by a pluralist society to the peculiar field of corporations, which requires to understand it as a community model” (Cortina, 2005: 17). According to M. T. Brown, in the corporate sector “the purpose of ethics is not to make people more ethical, but to make people capable of making better decisions (Brown, 1992: 21). Due to its importance and transcendence, corporate ethics, in terms of applied ethics (García-Marzá, 2004), should be present in all corporate operations. There is an important debate about the relation between ethics and CSR which questions the obligatory or voluntary character of the ethical and the CSR practices.

Business ethics is a mandatory requirement to operate in the market. It is not voluntary. To comply with the regulations and to develop a commercial activity in accordance with the ethics of the field are indisputable obligations. However, CSR includes all those practices that are not mandatory but improve the image of the company as a responsible institution that is trying to reconcile the economic benefit with the social and environmental benefits. Thus, it could be argued that CSR responds to the proactive character and the level of awareness that a company has about these issues.

The implementation of CSR programmes should not be unilateral. The collaboration of all the publics involved is needed. Aragon, Rocha and Cruces (2009) consider that CSR programmes will increasingly be based on regulatory mechanisms. It seems coherent, logical and necessary for CSR programmes to have the participation of all concerned parties at all stages (design, development, implementation and evaluation). However, at present this approach is only an aspiration. The studies of Carretón and Ramos (2010) show that the participation of employees in the design of CSR programmes in their companies is insignificant and thus recommend the urgent incorporation of communication professionals in organisations to ensure the optimal management of CSR policies.

On the other hand, the proliferation of concepts in the field of CSR has generated some terminological confusion, especially in the Spanish scientific literature. In Spain, there is an undifferentiated use of the terms *responsabilidad social corporativa* and *responsabilidad social empresarial* to refer to corporate social responsibility. For example, the Spanish Ministry of Employment and Social Security and its Forum of Experts use the term *responsabilidad social empresarial*, while the Spanish Observatory on this subject has adopted the title *Observatorio de Responsabilidad Social Corporativa*. The main difference in the use of these terms is that *responsabilidad social empresarial* is generally used to talk about small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) while *responsabilidad social corporativa* is used to refer to multinational and large corporations.

There are other related concepts that increase the confusion about the specific scope of CSR. Some examples are: social marketing, cause marketing and corporate philanthropy. It is important to explain the particularities of each concept.

Social marketing basically differs from other types of marketing in the service it promotes: an idea or ideas that benefit society and produces some public good. According to Navarro (2008:205), social marketing is a very appropriate to achieve favourable behavioural changes in people and society. According to Olivares (2000:240), cause marketing includes:

“any commercial initiative that promotes a product, brand or range by associating it with certain social causes with the aim of increasing the level of consumption and, consequently, of sales and profits, and incentives consumers to buy the product by offering an added-value that is almost always of moral character- such as altruism, solidarity and personal satisfaction”.

Finally, corporate philanthropy refers to the degree of commitment of an organisation towards social affairs.

Benbeniste highlights the problems related to the definition of the term CSR: “There is no consensus among the various international bodies dealing with corporate social responsibility about its precise definition” (2002:2). Let’s analyse the definitions proposed by the different bodies.

Corporate Social Responsibility Europe (CSR Europe) was the first to considering CSR as a topic of discussion and management since 1995. Although it does not provide a unified definition of CSR, all the partner companies have commented on the subject and provided definitions with slight variations. The Spanish Business and Society Foundation, member of CSR Europe, defines CSR as:

“operating a company in such a way that it exceeds society’s general expectations from companies. CSR is more than a collection of temporary practices or occasional initiatives motivated by marketing, public relations or other corporate interests. It should be seen as a full set of policies, practices and programmes that are integrated into the operations and policies of the company” (Benbeniste, 2002: 7).

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) is a network of companies that promotes debate on CSR since 1997. In its paper entitled *Corporate Social Responsibility: Making Good Business Sense*¹ (2000), the WBCSD proposed to define CSR as the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life.

Guidelines for multinational enterprises were produced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development² (OECD) in 1976. With the participation of many countries, in 2000 the guidelines were updated to reflect the global nature

¹ WBCSD, *Corporate Social Responsibility: Making Good Business Sense*, 2000. Available at <http://www.wbcsd.org/newscenter/media.htm#reports>

² Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2000), *Revised OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*, 2000. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/EN/document/0,,EN-document-93-nodirectorate-no-6-18925-28,00.html>

of the markets. The document does not provide a definition of CSR, but highlights its voluntary nature and defends the necessity to balance the social, environmental and economic spheres.

In 2000, the United Nations promoted the policy initiative entitled *Global Compact*³, which includes a set of principles aimed at educating the markets about the implicit human dimension of CSR, but it does not define this concept. This initiative has been signed by 2,900 companies from 90 countries (Idowu & Filho, 2009:134).

In 2001 the Commission of the European Communities (European Union) prepared a green paper that promotes a European framework for Corporate Social Responsibility. In this document, CSR is defined as a process whereby “companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their daily business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (European Union⁴, 2001: 7).

Since 2002, the *Global Reporting Initiative*⁵ (GRI) provides a set of guidelines for the production of sustainability reports that include social, environmental and economic indicators. This international institution was supported by the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) since 1997. Like the Global Compact, the GRI does not provide a definition of CSR but it is credited with the popularisation of the triple bottom line accounting and the delimitation of the areas of action. “Although the aim of all business organisations is obviously to obtain economic profits, the solidarity, humanitarian or ecological action is often required for its achievement, through the improvement of their corporate image and reputation” (Olivares, 2000:238).

The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) is a worldwide reference in the standardization of corporate management systems. It integrates certification agencies from several countries. In 2001, ISO promoted an international forum on CSR to develop a standard in this field. ISO standards were firstly developed in the environmental field. In 2010, ISO published the standard 26000, which is only a guide that promotes voluntary CSR practices and does not have any rules for certification.

On the other hand, Aaronson proposes a definition that associates CSR with the currently-in-force ethics and legislation: “Corporate decisions linked to ethical values, compliance with legal requirements and respect for people, communities and the environment” (2003: 310). Solano (2009) calls the attention in determining the relationship between the public image of an institution and the mode of acceptance of social responsibility that such an institution offers to the public.

³ United Nations, *Global Compact*, 2000. Available at: <http://www.unglobalcompact.org>

⁴ European Commission, *Green Paper*, 2001. Available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/cCSR/greenpaper.htm

⁵ Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) (2002), *Draft 2002 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines*, 2002. Available at: <http://www.globalreporting.org/GRIGuidelines/2002draft.htm>

In 2012, the European Commission published a communication about the EU's renewed strategy for 2011-2014 on CRS. This communication was addressed to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and included a variety of innovations: a new definition of CSR; an outline of the Commission's commitments; recommendations to the European companies and the public authorities (national, regional and local); and a preview of a legislative proposal on companies' transparency about social and environmental information. The communication defines CSR as "the responsibility of companies towards their impact on society" (COM, 2011: 7).

The European Commission considers that the respect of the applicable legislation and the collective agreements reached between the interlocutors is an unavoidable prerequisite. The Commission indicates that the implementation of CSR should be done in close collaboration with the parties concerned to ensure the integration of the social, environmental and ethical concerns, the respect of human rights and consumers' concerns about their business operations and basic strategy. The ultimate goal is:

- To maximise the creation of shared value for the companies' owners/shareholders, interested stakeholders and the wider society and
- To identify, prevent, and mitigate their potential adverse consequences.

The European Commission also recognises that CSR is determined by the size of the company and the nature of its operations and, in this sense, it is likely that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) develop informal and intuitive CSR processes, although the Commission suggests that their structures of ownership and governance can be especially favourable for responsible business management. However, the Commission encourages companies to adopt a strategic long-term approach on CSR in order to maximise the creation of shared value.

In short, we could say that CSR is the set of voluntary actions –although there is a growing tendency towards regulated actions– that are performed by a company in order to increase profitability and show its commitment to balance the social, environmental and economic effects of its activity.

1.2. Models of strategic CSR management

Regarding CSR management, Benbeniste suggests that the adoption of CSR criteria involves the formalisation of policies and management systems in the economic, social and environmental spheres; information transparency with respect to the results achieved in these spheres; and the external evaluation of these spheres (2004:10). Therefore, the difference between awareness and long-term sustainable strategic management would explain the degree of openness of a company towards CSR.

To identify whether the management is really strategic, three phases of CSR implementation must be clearly identified: formalisation, transparency of information, and external evaluation. Communication would be intimately linked to each of the stages, and for this reason the execution of communication campaigns, such as those supporting the Pink Ribbon cause (our object of study), can be considered indicators of the strategic nature of CSR management in the heart of the fashion and beauty companies. However, although communication campaigns appear to be necessary they are not enough to determine the strategic nature of CSR policies. These communication actions should be part of an overall strategy or, as noted by Almagro et al. (2009:11), the corporate strategy, which would be based on and justified by the company's philosophy.

As we can see in table 1, the aforementioned agencies have experienced uneven developments. All the studied initiatives have managed to develop a formal protocol, some have carried out actions related to transparency, and it is only the European Commission which is evaluated by external agencies.

Table 1. CSR initiatives and models.

	FORMALISATION	TRANSPARENCY	EXTERNAL EVALUATION
European Commission	YES	YES	YES
International Labour Organisation (ILO)	YES		
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	YES	YES	
The Global Compact	YES	YES	
International Finance Corporation (Ecuador Principles)	YES		
International Standardisation Organisation (ISO)	YES		
Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)	YES	YES	

Source: Own creation based on Benbeniste (2004)

The actions the company can perform to express its CSR are very diverse and should always be supported by communication strategies. In fact, three approaches can be identified (Balaguer et al., 2005). The first is the passive approach and consists of the incorporation of ethical, social, moral or environmental criteria into the investment decisions of the company, which translates into positive and negative actions (Lozano and Albareda, 2001; Sánchez et al., 2004). The second approach is the active one, which focuses on influencing the corporate orientation through the activism of shareholders and the establishment of a permanent dialogue between them and the management team (Teoh and Shiu, 1990; Coffey and Fryxell, 1991; Lewis and Webley, 1994; Bonvin and Dembinski, 2002). The third approach is

community investment, which argues that a company supports financially a cause not only for economic profitability but also to obtain social profitability.

The Pink Ribbon cause, the object of this research, would be included in this third approach to business: the company makes a financial contribution to breast cancer research and prevention because it is one of the main causes of death in women (Eurostat⁶, 2011) and because women are the main consumers of beauty and fashion products.

Despite the abundance of proposals, and as a way of summary, we consider that the basic indicators proposed by Benbeniste (2004:19) are especially useful to evaluate CSR management and communication. These indicators result from the comparison of the proposals of the aforementioned bodies:

- Transparency: To inform about the quality of the relations that the company maintains with its stakeholders. It is often materialised in the annual publication of sustainability reports.
- Collaboration and dialogue with stakeholders.
- Corporate communication according to any of the standards proposed by the various agencies.
- Information on environmental impact.
- Information on human rights.
- Verification of corporate communication.
- Measures to prevent corruption.
- The standard is applicable to the company.
- The standard also applies to business partners.

1.3. CSR, communication and image

Studies on CSR from the point of view of communication in Spain are in full development. The literature on the subject pays greater attention to the social networks, public relations, and especially corporate reputation.

In this sense, as Ros and Castelló (2010) point out, there is a low use of social networks in CSR communication programmes. These scholars indicate that companies use social networks as channels for corporate communication and advertising but not so much for their CSR programmes. According to these authors, despite the possibilities of interaction and dialogue offered by the social media, they are still little used for CSR communication.

⁶ Website that offers statistics on the EU and candidate countries. Available at: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Causes_of_death_statistics/es

Public relations have considered the following practices to be part of CSR (Grüning and Hund, 2003):

1. The implementation of the basic tasks of the organisation.
2. The organisation's concern for the consequences of its activities on other external groups.
3. The organisation's concern for solving general social problems that are not connected to it.

The last approach would welcome Pink Ribbon campaigns, the object of our investigation.

CSR and corporate reputation are often associated. Villafañe points out that “corporate responsibility is necessary but not sufficient for corporate reputation” (2005: 75). After studying the corporate communication of several companies, Hernandez (2011: 97) pointed out that:

“Corporate Social Responsibility becomes one of the many ways in which the organisation tries to be perceived as a benefactor and supporter of just causes (...) our study demonstrates that there is nothing to celebrate (with the exception of Decathlon and Carrefour which exhibit minimal and insufficient willingness)”.

The organisational activity in this subject is still basic, little strategic, and poor. However, it seems that CSR is an unstoppable trend that is not being altered by the economic crisis. According to the Corporate Reputation Business Monitor⁷ (Merco), CSR is the variable experiencing the highest growth in Spain.

Regarding the indicators related to corporate reputation, after interviewing 104 executives from leading Spanish companies, Villafañe (2005) identified four indicators: transparency, good corporate governance, management of social and environmental issues, and human values. In the opinion of the executives, these four aspects affect corporate reputation the most. Together with the treatment of employees, these aspects should be considered as variables of responsibility and come to reiterate the remarkable role responsibility in corporate reputation.

1.4. Beauty and fashion companies supporting the Pink Ribbon cause

There is an inclination to support the treatment of health problems among beauty and fashion brands. Their main public is made up of women, who are peculiar and very active consumers of these products and the most affected group by breast cancer (although some men also suffer from this disease). Thus, the actions performed to support the Pink Ribbon cause are especially interesting due to their communicative social profitability. Pink Ribbon is the symbol of fight against breast cancer, and the companies that are associated to this cause used this symbol on the packaging of their products and in all communication campaigns in order to publicly express their commitment or contribution.

⁷ <http://www.merco.info/es/countries/4-es>

The campaign has also acquired relevance in other business areas: companies support the fight against breast cancer through the development of Pink Ribbon branded products. Lozano and Albareda (2001) indicate that studies on socially responsible investments (SRI) appreciate those companies that implement programmes for workers while taking into account women's health, safety and rights. The actions to support the Pink Ribbon cause would respond to this trend.

Sometimes, the actions carried out by these companies to fight breast cancer have seemed opportunistic. One of the objectives of the study presented here is to determine whether these communication campaigns are opportunistic or strategic.

For example, the Estée Lauder group organised its brands to develop a collection of pink ribbon themed products. Thus, in its October campaign against breast cancer, the beauty company donated all of the profits from the sales of its Pink Ribbon collection to the charity it created: The Breast Cancer Research Foundation. It is estimated that the group has raised about 50 million dollars and distributed 115 million Pink Ribbons around the world.

Also worth mentioning is the creation of special cosmetic treatments for cancer patients by some cosmetic brands, such as Germaine de Capuccini, and beauty salons like Ángela Navarro in Madrid. The skin of a woman during post-surgical treatment requires more moisturising and nutrition, due to the effects of radiotherapy and chemotherapy. In this sense, new niche markets, like that of wigs to disguise the hair loss caused by chemotherapy, have been opened. Another example is the case of Moe by Cristina Schamann, which has created a collection of fashionable hats for women suffering from hair loss.

The campaigns developed by beauty and fashion brands that are willing to donate part or all of the profits from the sale of products to the fight against breast cancer are often temporary.

2. Methods

A case study was carried out with the main objective of analysing and describing CSR management in fashion and beauty companies supporting the Pink Ribbon cause. The secondary objective is to determine whether the communication campaigns carried out by these companies to support the Pink Ribbon cause are strategic or occasional and to assess their level of development.

The sample includes all the fashion and beauty companies that have launched Pink Ribbon products in the Spanish market. To establish the list of relevant companies we used the directories of the Spanish Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association (STANPA⁸) and *Fashion from Spain*⁹. In the selection of the brands we verified whether their corporate

⁸ Spanish Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association. Available at: <http://stanpa.es/>

⁹ Available at: <http://www.fashionfromspain.com/>

websites explicitly mentioned Pink Ribbon products and later this information was verified by an expert advisor from each market sector.

The sample of this research is composed of six brands: Avon, Ghd, Germaine de Capuccini, Trucco, Estée Lauder and Pretty Ballerinas. In total, the sample included four brands from the beauty sector and two from the fashion sector, which is the totality of the fashion and beauty brands that made communication campaigns supporting the Pink Ribbon cause in 2011.

In addition, the study content analysis, which was applied to the communication pieces published about the Pink Ribbon cause, and a self-administered on-line questionnaire, which was applied to the marketing, communication and press directors of the beauty and fashion companies. Respondents were previously contacted via telephone to explain to them the objective of the study and request their participation. The questionnaire contains closed, semi-closed and open questions. The descriptive analysis of data was performed with SPSS¹⁰.

The first research question was: are the communication campaigns that support the Pink Ribbon cause temporary or strategic within the company's CSR policy? The derived hypothesis was: the company satisfies at least 10 indicators of social responsibility.

The second research question sought to investigate the importance of the Pink Ribbon campaign within the CSR history of the company: can the communication campaigns that support the Pink Ribbon cause be considered pioneering in the company's CSR policy? The following hypothesis was formulated: when a company launches its first Pink Ribbon product it already has already obtained at least one certification directly related to CSR.

3. Results

3.1. The strategic or temporary character of the Pink Ribbon campaigns

The surveyed companies requested anonymity in this section.

We first examined the indicators related to social responsibility.

Four of the six analysed companies undertake promotion campaigns of products and values. The promotion of values represents between 1% and 25% of the total media investment in three companies, and between 26% and 50% in two of the companies.

All companies participating in this study affirmed they were developing a social commitment. Three companies also had an economic commitment; five also had an environmental commitment; and four also had a labour commitment. Only one firm claimed to meet all the requirements of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

¹⁰ IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

The degree of gender equality within the companies is a key indicator of their CSR. In one company women represented between 26% and 50% of the workforce; in three companies between 51% and 75%; and in two companies between 76% and 100%. Thus it could be argued that in these six companies there is some degree of gender equality. Regarding the percentage of men in management positions, they represent between 1% and 25% in two companies; between 26% and 50% in three companies; and between 51% and 75% in one company, which also reflects certain gender balance.

With respect to the percentage of foreign nationalities represented in the workforce, it is below 50% in most cases and only in one companies the percentage is 0%. Meanwhile, four of these companies take into account the Spanish Law for the Social integration of the Disabled (LISMI). The involvement of these companies with their communities is confirmed by the geographic origin of their workforce: in three companies between 1% and 25% of the staff was local; in two companies the percentage ranged from 26% and 50%; and in one company local employees represented between 76% and 100% of the workforce.

A crucial indicator to determine whether a company is socially responsible and is effectively integrating CSR in the business strategy is the production of annual reports or sustainability reports. Most of these reports are inspired by the guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative. Only one company, Estée Lauder, produced reports on a regular basis. However, when questioned about this issue, two firms recognised that they only undertake CSR actions in an occasional basis; three firms claimed that CSR is part of their philosophy and their global strategy; and one company mentioned that the annual report was a confirmation of the strategic vision of its CSR programme.

The six companies pointed out that they promote measures of social commitment and apply measures of environmental commitment. Four companies also expressed their commitment to workers' wellbeing.

In three of these companies at least one member of the management team had participated as a speaker at a conference on CSR, and all companies usually collaborate with NGO's and social-profit organisations.

Four of these companies have implemented measures to support employees' reconciliation between work and family and all of them carry out environmentally friendly practices through an optimal management of the available natural resources. Five of these companies have a training programme for employees and three companies sponsor sports and cultural activities. Five of the six companies make donations to charities and all of them collaborate with institutions or organisations dedicated to fight breast cancer.

All companies turn to local business to purchase supplies. Moreover, all the companies have a system to address consumer complaints. Regarding future plans for the launch of Pink Ribbon products, five companies are sure they will launch a product while one says it will probably do so. Finally, three of these companies have received some kind of reward or recognition by associations, of affected women and relatives, for their support in the fight against breast cancer.

3.2. Importance of the Pink Ribbon campaigns within the CSR policy of the companies

The study verified the existence of certifications directly related to CSR, prior to the Pink Ribbon campaigns.

The certifications that were investigated are: *Empresa Familiar Responsable-EFR* (Family Responsible Company), SA 8000, Occupational risks, OHSAS 18000 and ISO. One company confirmed having one of these certifications, two have obtained management systems certifications (ISO 9001, EFQM, etc.), and another has obtained certification in production techniques (GMP certificates in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, etc.). Of the six companies, four did not answer this question, which suggests that only two companies have these certifications. The two companies obtained the first of these certificates in the 1990s. Only one of the companies obtained financial assistance from the government or other entity to achieve these certifications.

Three of the studied companies have received a prize for being responsible. It is paradoxical that while the companies admitted not having CSR related certifications they do show responsible behaviours and are awarded for doing so. This confirms that the practice of CSR does not follow some specific and widely established guidelines. In this sense, the case study method has been very useful to identify a very particular and individualised practice that depends on the type of the company in question and its management team. Estée Lauder received the Sandra Ibarra Foundation award for solidarity against cancer and the Wapa magazine award for Best Business Solidarity Trajectory.

On the other hand, Germain de Capuccini won the award for the Rational Planning of Working Hours, given by the *Asociación para la Racionalización de los Horarios Españoles-ARHOE* (Association for the Rational Planning of Spanish Working Hours), and the second prize in the first edition of the sustainability and development awards of the Spanish *Asociación de la Industria y el Comercio de Alcobendas-AICA* (Industry and Commerce Association of the City of Alcobendas). The other award-winning company did not specify the type of award it received.

Of all the studied brands, only Avon launched its first Pink Ribbon product before 1990. Estée Lauder and GHD launched this type of products between 2000 and 2004. These companies were followed by Germaine de Capuccini, Pretty Ballerinas and Trucco, which designed Pink Ribbon products between 2005 and 2010. The company that launched its first Pink Ribbon product before 1990, Avon, obtained the first certificate in the 1990s.

4. Conclusions

4.1. Specific conclusions

Social commitment is manifested in the production of campaigns aimed at promoting values, the regular collaboration with NGOs and other social-profit organisations, the sponsorship of sports and cultural activities, and donations to

charities. Additionally, these companies buy supplies from local businesses, have implemented systems to address consumer complaints, and collaborate with organisations engaged in the fight against breast cancer. As a result, these companies have obtained social profits in the form of awards given by associations of women and families affected by breast cancer to recognise their support to fight this disease.

The fact that these companies have obtained certifications and awards for being responsible and have sent executives to participate in conferences on CSR also confirm their inclination towards the CSR model.

In terms of their commitment towards the wellbeing of workers, the studied companies: have implemented work-and-family reconciliation measures and training plans for their workforce; have showed practices of gender equality in the constitution of their workforce; have taken into consideration the Spanish Law for the Social integration of the Disabled (LISMI); and have included different nationalities (although still below the 50%) in their work teams, although the geographic origin of their workers is mostly local.

Environmentally friendly practices are widespread in all of the studied companies.

However, the main indicator that confirms whether a company has integrated CSR into its business strategy, i.e. the production of a public annual report on social responsibility, is not sufficiently widespread and is not a common practice.

4.2. General conclusions

We could say that the CSR management systems implemented in the companies under analysis do integrate actions and measures that demonstrate their social, economic, environmental, and labour commitment. Most of these companies have indicators which confirm this commitment, especially social and labour measures.

These companies have implemented measures that reflect their social awareness and commitment but, in general terms, we cannot confirm that CSR is completely integrated in their management policies. These companies do develop some communication campaigns and other CSR activities, but it is not possible to categorically affirm that their CSR policies have a desirable strategic character.

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