

STRATEGIC USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SUSTAINABILITY INFORMATION DISCLOSURES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS ON FIRM PERFORMANCE

HITESHA YADAV



**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI**

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by

Hitesha Yadav

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled “**Strategic use of social media for sustainability information disclosures and their implications on firm performance**”, submitted by Hitesha Yadav, to the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), is a bonified record of the research work done by her under my supervision. The content of this thesis, in whole or in parts, has not been submitted to any other institute or university for the award of any degree or diploma. Material, wherever borrowed, has been duly acknowledged.

Prof. Arpan Kumar Kar
Amar S Gupta Chair Professor
Department of Management Studies
IIT Delhi

Prof. Smita Kashiramka
Professor in the area of Finance
Department of Management Studies
IIT Delhi

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Hitesha Yadav

ABSTRACT

Organizations engage with the stakeholder community through communication of current and relevant topics on various platforms. This communication from the firm helps the firm's engagement with the stakeholder groups and enhances the firm financial performance. The CEO of the firm plays a crucial role in stakeholder engagement and building a positive impression. They are often perceived as an authentic and credible source of information. Literature indicates that the CEO's use of social media platforms for sharing a firm's business-related information helps develop better relationships between the firm and the stakeholders, supports wide public accountability, and has an impact on the firm financial performance. In today's information age, businesses heavily rely on social media due to its two-way information communication, creating an emotional experience and influencing stakeholders' perceptions in real time. With such increasing popularity of social media has resulted in increased opportunities as well as challenges for CEOs for their strategic utilization of social media platforms for sharing relevant content that is of interest to stakeholders, helping them in their decision-making. CEOs communicate business-relevant and attuned topics to the stakeholders' perspective to foster meaningful engagement and generate a higher impact on stakeholder engagement. Sustainability has become an important agenda that organizations are adopting to cater to the changing business and societal demands, and the CEO, being the face of the organization, becomes responsible for the disclosure of sustainability agendas in the company's communication with the stakeholders. They adopt multiple strategic orientations in their communication with the stakeholders to have a competitive advantage and gain business value.

This research, therefore, provides visibility regarding a CEO's strategic use of social media through different orientations in their social media communications related

to the firm's sustainability agendas. The selective studies in this thesis focus on the causal impacts of the CEO's strategic use of social media on stakeholder engagement, the CEO's reputation and the firm's financial performance during the crisis. Furthermore, the research also explores the influence of in(congruence) in CEO communication on social media and the firm's business actions towards their sustainability initiatives on the firm financial performance. This research utilizes multiple theories, i.e. attribution theory, stakeholder theory, resource-based-view theory, signalling theory, and impression management theory, as theoretical lenses to explain the importance of strategic use of social media and its impact on firm financial performance. Annual reports and social media (Twitter) data have been used to derive insights about CEO communication on sustainability. Further, methods of text mining, content analysis, natural language processing (NLP), social media analytics (SMA), and econometric modelling have been used to investigate the research agendas.

This thesis contributes to the different research streams such as information disclosure, social media for stakeholder engagement, the importance of sustainability for business as well as stakeholders, the role of CEOs and their different orientations in their communication for building reputation and firm financial performance. Overall, this research provides a conceptual model based on the CEO's engagement with stakeholders regarding the firm's sustainability agendas through effective utilization of social media during a crisis to build a strong reputation among the stakeholders and influence the firm financial performance.

सारांश

संस्थान विभिन्न मंचों पर वर्तमान और प्रासंगिक विषयों के संप्रेषण के माध्यम से हितधारक समुदाय के साथ जुड़ते हैं। संस्थान का यह संप्रेषण हितधारक समूहों के साथ जुड़ाव को बढ़ाता है और संस्था के वित्तीय प्रदर्शन में सुधार करता है। संस्था के सीईओ हितधारक जुड़ाव में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाते हैं और सकारात्मक छवि बनाने में सहायक होते हैं। उन्हें अक्सर एक प्रामाणिक और विश्वसनीय सूचना स्रोत के रूप में माना जाता है। साहित्य से पता चलता है कि सीईओ का सोशल मीडिया प्लेटफॉर्म का उपयोग व्यवसाय से संबंधित जानकारी साझा करने के लिए, संस्था और हितधारकों के बीच बेहतर संबंध विकसित करने, व्यापक सार्वजनिक जवाबदेही का समर्थन करने और संस्था के वित्तीय प्रदर्शन पर प्रभाव डालने में सहायक होता है।

आज की सूचना युग में, व्यवसाय द्वि-मार्गी सूचना संप्रेषण, भावनात्मक अनुभव उत्पन्न करने और वास्तविक समय में हितधारकों की धारणाओं को प्रभावित करने की क्षमता के कारण सोशल मीडिया पर काफी हद तक निर्भर करते हैं। सोशल मीडिया की बढ़ती लोकप्रियता के साथ, सीईओ के लिए प्रासंगिक सामग्री साझा करने के लिए इसके रणनीतिक उपयोग के अवसर और चुनौतियाँ भी बढ़ी हैं, जो हितधारकों के निर्णय लेने में सहायक होती हैं। सीईओ व्यवसाय से संबंधित और हितधारकों के दृष्टिकोण से जुड़े विषयों पर संवाद करते हैं ताकि सार्थक जुड़ाव को प्रोत्साहित किया जा सके और हितधारक जुड़ाव पर अधिक प्रभाव उत्पन्न किया जा सके।

स्थिरता (सस्टेनेबिलिटी) एक महत्वपूर्ण एजेंडा बन गई है जिसे संस्थान बदलते व्यावसायिक और सामाजिक मांगों को पूरा करने के लिए अपना रहे हैं, और सीईओ, जो संस्था का चेहरा होते हैं, हितधारकों के साथ संप्रेषण में स्थिरता एजेंडा के प्रकटीकरण के लिए उत्तरदायी होते हैं। वे प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक लाभ प्राप्त

करने और व्यावसायिक मूल्य बढ़ाने के लिए हितधारकों के साथ संप्रेषण में कई रणनीतिक अभिविन्यास अपनाते हैं।

इस शोध का उद्देश्य सीईओ द्वारा सोशल मीडिया के रणनीतिक उपयोग और उनके संप्रेषण में विभिन्न अभिविन्यासों के माध्यम से संस्था के स्थिरता एजेंडा से संबंधित जुड़ाव पर प्रकाश डालना है। इस शोध में सीईओ द्वारा सोशल मीडिया के रणनीतिक उपयोग का हितधारक जुड़ाव, सीईओ की प्रतिष्ठा और संकट के दौरान संस्था के वित्तीय प्रदर्शन पर कारणात्मक प्रभावों का अध्ययन किया गया है। इसके अलावा, यह शोध सीईओ के सोशल मीडिया पर संप्रेषण और संस्था की स्थिरता पहलों की व्यावसायिक क्रियाओं में (असंगति) के प्रभावों का भी विश्लेषण करता है।

यह शोध कई सिद्धांतों, जैसे एट्रिब्यूशन थ्योरी, स्टैकहोल्डर थ्योरी, रिसोर्स-बेस्ड व्यू थ्योरी, सिग्नलिंग थ्योरी और इम्प्रेशन मैनेजमेंट थ्योरी का उपयोग करके सोशल मीडिया के रणनीतिक उपयोग और इसके संस्था के वित्तीय प्रदर्शन पर प्रभाव को समझाने के लिए किया गया है। स्थिरता पर सीईओ के संप्रेषण के बारे में अंतर्दृष्टि प्राप्त करने के लिए वार्षिक रिपोर्टों और सोशल मीडिया (ट्विटर) डेटा का उपयोग किया गया है। इसके अतिरिक्त, इस शोध में पाठ खनन (टेक्स्ट माइनिंग), सामग्री विश्लेषण, प्राकृतिक भाषा प्रसंस्करण (एनएलपी), सोशल मीडिया विश्लेषण (एसएमए) और आर्थिक मॉडलिंग के तरीकों का उपयोग करके अनुसंधान एजेंडों की जांच की गई है।

यह शोध सूचना प्रकटीकरण, हितधारक जुड़ाव के लिए सोशल मीडिया, व्यवसाय और हितधारकों के लिए स्थिरता के महत्व, सीईओ की भूमिका और उनकी संप्रेषण में विभिन्न अभिविन्यासों के माध्यम से प्रतिष्ठा निर्माण और संस्था के वित्तीय प्रदर्शन पर प्रभाव जैसे विभिन्न शोध क्षेत्रों में योगदान देता है। कुल मिलाकर, यह शोध संकट के दौरान स्थिरता एजेंडा के संदर्भ में सीईओ द्वारा सोशल मीडिया के

प्रभावी उपयोग के माध्यम से हितधारकों के साथ जुड़ाव और उनकी प्रतिष्ठा को सुदृढ़ करने और संस्था के वित्तीय प्रदर्शन को प्रभावित करने के लिए एक वैचारिक मॉडल प्रस्तुत करता है।

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