

# STANDARD TITLE PAGE FOR PROJECTS

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		De	nislav Hadzhiminev	20161398
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#### Summary

"Customer Engagement Understood Through Social Media Posts. A Case Study Of The Unilever's CSR Initiatives on LinkedIn" is the title set for the following project which is interested in contributing to the CSR topic.

The main topic of the thesis is the Consumers` perception measurement model (CPCSR) and its application. The application of the model has been done based on the single case research specifications and the CSR initiatives of the multinational company Unilever have been analyzed. The sample data was extracted from LinkedIn which serves as the source for the online data collection method.

The purpose of the thesis is to implement the domains of the CPCSR model and to rank them based on the number they were encountered. First of all, patterns were created in order to structure the raw data, afterwards the characteristics of each domain have been applied to identify to which domain a particular post refers. Once having those steps done, the author was able to apply the Microsoft Excel tools "Correlation" and "Regression" which calculated whether there was a significance correlation between the number of posts regarding each domain and the average "likes" which were left by the users of LinkedIn.

Regarding the results of the study, the domains were successfully ranked and the set research question has been answered. This is considered useful since the CPCSR has not been yet applied, however, after the whole study was conducted the author discovered that the reliability of the study is weak. This is due to the fact that a specific timeframe has been chosen and if the time frame is changed the results might be different which automatically would change the ranking of the CPCSR domains. Nonetheless, even with those weaknesses the project contributes to the CSR topic and applies a newly developed model on a social media platform. What is more, the results provided an idea that can be developed in a future

research where a survey is created and spread through the stakeholders of particular company. The stakeholders would be able to grade each domain of the CPCSR model and then to generalize the importance of the CSR initiatives of a company. Having information for those two variables, the researcher would be able to rank the domains based on their effectiveness.



MSc in International Marketing - Master thesis

# Customer Engagement Understood

# Through Publications on the Social Media

# A Case Study Of Unilever`s CSR Initiatives on

# LinkedIn

Supervisor: Jonas Eduardsen

Author: Denislav Hadzhiminev

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#### Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to extend the knowledge of the Corporate social responsibility topic. It was noticed that the interest regarding the topic is receiving more and more attention from the scholars, therefore, the initial search gave foundations of the current trends within the matter. Stakeholders and their engagement towards CSR initiatives are the components to which this study is dedicated. Based on this, a measurement model for consumers' perception on CSR was adopted and applied to multinational company case (Unilever). Another noticeable trend was the interest towards the social media and the suggestions for studies which are related to the CSR topic and conducted through social media platforms. The data for the analysis was collected from LinkedIn and the single case study specifications allowed to understand in details Unilever's CSR initiatives during a specific timeframe. To give an aim to the study, the author developed and answer the following research question: "*What is the ranking of the CPCSR model domains in the Unilever's CSR posts on LinkedIn?*". In the analysis of the study, special patterns were created in order to interpret the extracted data sample. What is more, the analysis of the data provided a suggestion for future research which might be able to contribute to the CSR topic.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, CSR, Consumers` perception measurement model, CPCSR, customer engagement, Unilever, LinkedIn



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# **1. Introduction**

An article developed by Zhao, Zhang, & Kwon (2018) was dedicated to explore the development of the Corporate social responsibility (CSR) topic in the recent years and also to suggest future research directions. Based on their work, it is considered that CSR is playing a significant role into the competitivness of the multinational companies in today's world and what is more, the topic of CSR is rapidly growing after the year of 2010. Zhao, Zhang, & Kwon (2018), found five research trends into the twelve examined International Business journals and one of them was regarding the integration of stakeholder management. The suggestion in this trend is that businesss should find ways to contribute to the common good because it is being part of the society and this contribution can be acomplished by the engagmenet of consumers towards companies CSR actions. Following this idea the study of Jurietti, Mandelli, & Fudurić (2017) was found and it confiremed that there is an increasing need to engage stakeholders in the CSR topic and even more this issue has been also addressed in the CSR literature in the recent years. In the same study, the authors suggested that there is an improvement of new technologies, in particular social media and this has found new ways of stakeholder engagement. Social media is providing solid ground for marketers to position their strategies towards the customers and as social media application grows the social interactions within it also continue to rise. (Hoffman & Novak, 2012). By the use of the social platforms, managers are being able to better understand the engagements that their customers have with the company (de Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012). What is more, social media is becoming a vital part of the everyday life and is the tool for communication, sharing information and understanding consumers' behavior and since consumers are being actively involved in the social media, the communication between them and the companies has created proactive interactions with exchanges of thoughtful insights. Those interactions have been used by CSR managers in order to adopt strategies which are dedicated to the



interests of the stakeholders (Jurietti, Mandelli, & Fudurić, 2017 & Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Following the line of though, the study of Eteokleous, Leonidou, & Katsikeas (2016) was found and in it, the authors reviewed that the customers' engagements are the way through which international marketing is interacting with the topic of CSR. Furthermore, the relation between the topics of stakeholders' engagement and CSR dates from 1980 and it has also positive development in the recent years, which justifies the specter of the study. Companies are considering that marketing ways are the tool of exhibiting the social behavior and even though the literature is expanding on the topics above, scholars are noticing that not many studies are created on how consumers perceive CSR. What is more, scholars are arguing that consumers are not only interested into the CSR activities, but they are also evaluating companies based on their CSR politics (Brown & Dacin, 1997). Based on those foundations Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber (2014), developed a conceptualization which is used as a measurement model and is titled "Consumers' perception on Corporate social responsibility" in the following study this model will be presented under its abbreviation - CPCSR.

The summary of the above writings can suggest that what is known so far is that there is an increase interest in the topic of CSR during the recent years (Zhao, Zhang, & Kwon, 2018). The integration of the stakeholders' management is vital part of the CSR lore, yet what is not so developed are studies which are dedicated to understand how consumers understand CSR (Eteokleous, Leonidou, & Katsikeas, 2016). However, the improvement of the social media world can provide the environment to analyze the stakeholders' engagements within the topic of CSR (Jurietti, Mandelli, & Fudurić, 2017). Based on the need of model which is dedicated to understand consumers' perception of CSR the CPCSR model was developed (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014). However, there were not any other studies found



which were applying and observing the model in action. What scholars are believe is important is to have well defined and tested models which are allowing to understand better the consumers' perceptions since they are also evaluating a given company through its CSR actions (Brown & Dacin, 1997).

## 1.1 The purpose of the project

Based on what was stated above the following study is supposed to apply the case study research method and to look deeper into the users of LinkedIn which are following the profile of the multinational company Unilever. By doing this the CPCSR will be tested and its domains will be defined by the content of the LinkedIn posts. Once the study is completed the reader should be able to understand better the CSR activities of Unilever on LinkedIn and also to observe and understand the domains of the CPCSR model. The topic of the thesis is dedicated to the application of the CPCSR model on the Social media.

## **1.2. Research question**

# "What is the ranking of the CPCSR model domains in the Unilever's CSR posts on LinkedIn?"

In order to answer the research question the author would use the qualitative research method based on online data collection. This will be done by extracting the data for the analysis from the LinkedIn profile of Unilever. Therefore, the single company case method will be used. A timeframe will be chosen and then the data will be sorted in specific patterns. Afterwards the CPCSR domains characteristics will be applied and the data will be sorted into them. This would help to define which domains are of a particular interest in Unilever's initiatives. By answering the research question, the author believes that the results would contribute to several topics. First of all, the CSR topic is the main focus of the study, second the customers'



engagements are the specter to which the CPCSR model is working on. By applying the model on a social media platform the study is not only testing it but also is contributing to the whole topic of CSR and the actions taken on the social media.

# **1.3. Project outline**

The first chapter of the project contains the Introduction of the topic and the found justification of scholars who are revealing why the topic is important today. Furthermore, the author develops the research question and the steps that were followed during the project.

The second chapter is regarding the Methodology of the project. In it, the author presents the reasons behind the taken steps through the developed paradigm and the explanation of the research method and design which are justifying the steps to answer the research question. In the same chapter, the reader will be able to review how the Literature review sources were collected and how the Analysis was conducted.

The third chapter is regarding the Literature review. Three main topics are building the chapter and they are regarding LinkedIn, the CPCSR model and Unilever's information. Justifications and further specifications of why those particular subjects are chosen could be found in this chapter. At the end, two hypothesis are suggested which will be tested based on the data found in the Analysis. They were developed in order to tackle the research question with more clarity.

The fourth chapter is the Analysis, where the author presents his observations over the research problem. The two proposed hypothesis at the end of the literature review are the foundation for this chapter. It begins with the division of the LinkedIn posts into the created patterns. Afterwards, the characteristics of the CPCSR model are implemented and the publications are distributed into the relevant domains.



At the end, the reader can find a Discussion in which the general information of the analysis was presented and also the author gave suggestions for Future studies and Limitations of this paper. Last but not least stands the Conclusion which summarized the idea of the project and the findings of this paper.

Appendix was attached to the project, in which analyzed data can be found. The data in the Appendix is distributed into the relevant model domains, therefore, the reader should be able to understand better how the analysis was conducted.



# 2. Methodology

## 2.1. Philosophy of science and Paradigms

The following lines would present the author's understanding of the Philosophy of science and the Paradigms used in order to build up the social world in which this project is taking place.

In order to understand the social world, one should consider the different viewpoints that are creating the environment of this world. The paradigms are the tool which presents the understanding of the project's research field. The reason why this is considered useful is behind the filters that paradigms are setting. First of all, it would help in asking the right questions in order to better address the research problem. Second, the paradigms would filter the structure of the project and the way the data was collected. Third, the results would be influenced by the choice of the paradigm (Kuada, 2010). Each and every paradigm specification is giving more precision on the study, therefore, the author believed that the explanation of the understanding on the chosen paradigms was needed.

John Kuada's (2010) explanation of paradigms suggest that it is a set of common understandings that are signifying different research fields. Ontological, Epistemological, Methodological and Human nature are the four sets of assumptions that are building the definition of a paradigm. In the following lines, the author presented a short definition of each one of the assumptions, including the practical understanding towards this project.

*Ontology* – the assumption signifies the nature of the researcher and the reality in which the project is taking place. This represents a particular statement that is used in order to draw the lines of understanding for a particular problem. What is suggested for this assumption is that it raises the question of whether the researcher is creating the examined reality or simply



taking part into it. Regarding the stand point of the researcher the ontology is perceived objectively or subjectively. If the researcher is observing a certain reality objectively the approach is considered as realism, while influencing the surroundings of the examined reality is perceived as nominalism (Kuada, 2010). Regarding this project, the author chose the objective stand point since a company's CSR was observed on the social media. Kuada (2010) explains realism as the world which is made of immutable structures and in this case the two structures of Unilever and LinkedIn were seen through the *consumer-perception measurement model* which helps in defining the foundations of the two examined structures.

Epistemology – this assumption represents the knowledge that one is having for a particular social world and more specifically what is the "truth" that has been followed through the examination and the understanding of a given situation. From objective stand point, epistemology is perceived as positivism, while being subjective to the knowledge is considered as anti-positivism. John Kuada (2010) presents that researchers are arguing whether one can truly have knowledge regarding a given problem when not being involved in it. However, regarding this project the author had not any particular relations with the company Unilever and he was not aware of the external politics of CSR in the social media. Therefore, the objective way of perceiving the truth was followed through the use of Case study research method which was serving as the guidelines for receiving the knowledge and giving understanding over the found results in the Analysis part.

Methodology – is the path that will be followed throughout the study project. What are the different steps taken and how they are connected will build the methodology of the research (Kuada, 2010). Qualitative research method was adopted. Bryman & Bell (2015) argue that the main benefit of the qualitative research is that it positions the researcher on the side of the examined subjects. When applied to this project, the qualitative research allowed the reader to observe better the CSR related reactions of the LinkedIn users towards Unilever's strategies.



Human nature – here the individuals are important and especially their interactions and relationships between themselves. Once again, one should define whether the examined human beings are taking actual part of the investigated social world or they are external to it (Kuada, 2010). In this project the author's group of interest were the users of LinkedIn and especially the one that were involved within the posts of Unilever. Therefore, it was believed that the examined human beings are taking part of a system and they were subjective to it. If particular actions were taken, the users can demonstrate their involvement, approval or disapproval to it.

Overall, the paradigm that could be build was supposed to set an objective view through the use of case study research over a particular social environment in which the human beings are subjectively involved. The objective stand point was viewed as external to LinkedIn and the theory and model of choice were the link between the observer and the social environment. Figure 1 explains graphically the build paradigm.

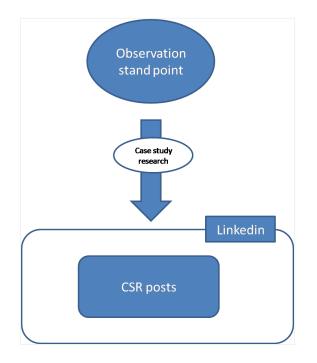


Figure 1: Paradigm of the study (own creation)



Many researchers are arguing that one cannot fully understand a particular environment and as soon as he/she is involved in a particular problem, the viewpoint is already subjective. However, this debate has created different typologies in order to give an elaboration of the problem (Kuada, 2010).

#### 2.1.1. Morgan and Smircich's Typology

To further justify and give more clearance on Figure 1, the author found similarity in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Morgan and Smircich's Objectivist Paradigm. Furthermore, this typology was used in order to set the authors understanding of the objective-subjective debate.

The paradigm suggests that the *ontological* assumption is that the reality exists and is a "real thing" which is external to the researcher which also corresponds to the Case study specifications (Turner & Danks, 2014). In the case of this project, the author was standing on external standpoint and was observing from outside the social world - Linkedin. Human nature assumption is presenting that the individuals involved within the examined social world are responding to "concrete" external stimuli which in this project are the CSR posts. From *epistemological* stance the "knowledge" about the environment is received through structures which are explaining the interaction between the examined individuals and the external stimuli. In this case the law that was followed was the consumer-perception measurement model which was extracted from academic literature. As for the methods used, in this typology the authors are suggesting that usually researchers are likely to use large data sets and afterwards to focus on facts based on those data sets (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). In the case of this project, the author used the received "likes" on the posts. They served as the instrument which is showing consumers' involvement with the CSR posts. Those two instruments were chosen since it is considered that they are expressing how users' are engaged within a specific topic (de Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012). Based on this data, at



the end of the project it was possible to receive a detail overview of the Unilever's CSR interactions on LinkedIn and rank the domains of the CPCSR model based on this knowledge.

A graphic example (table 1) of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Morgan and Smircich's Objectivist Paradigm is following.

Dimensions	Paradigm 3
Ontology	Reality as a contextual field of information
Ontology	(LinkedIn)
Epistemology	To map contexts (CSR post based on theory
Lpisteniology	and model)
Human Nature	Man as a information processor (users of
	LinkedIn)
Mathadalagy	Contextual analysis ("likes" left on the
Methodology	posts)

Table 1: 3rd Morgan and Smircich`s Objectivist Paradigm (adopted from Kuada (2010))

# 2.2. Research methods and designs

Even though the data received for the Analysis part was in the form of numbers (e.g. the "likes") the author chose the qualitative method in order to tackle the suggested challenge. It is argued that this type of method is used for emphasizing different cases and is trying to give detailed examination of them (Kuada, 2010). In this way the qualitative research method was applied in the use of quantified data and the reader was able to understand the results better when reflected on the found literature. Another benefit of the proposed method is that is able to discover particular meanings within the obtained data and it can elaborate the specific manner that the individuals are undertaking in their social world (Neuman, 2006).



#### **Online data collection**

The online data collection ways were applied and more specifically the focus was on extracting data from a social network. This method of data collection was chosen because it does not require any budget, it can extract huge amount of data and it can be applied very quickly (Bryman & Bell, 2015). On the other hand, the suggestions found in the literature were proposing this type of data collection regarding the development of the CSR topic (Eteokleous, Leonidou, & Katsikeas, 2016). Regarding the online data collection, Bryman & Bell (2015) suggest that it can be extracted both by quantitative and qualitative means. Yet, this study is focusing the qualitative ways, therefore, this way of research was followed. There are particular steps that one should consider before using a website for data collection. (1) The right source for the data collection that is supposed to answer the research quesiton; (2) Sampling of the content that will be extracted; (3) Consistency of the content through the time in which the data was published. (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The implemantation of those requirements was presented in the Literature reivew where the author reviewed his justifications of the chosen data collection source.

#### **Case study**

Understanding and observation are the goals of this study and for this reason the Case study research design is being adopted to acomplish this. In their study, Turner & Danks (2014) presented that the case study research can be used as effective tool for managers and researchers who are willing to understand better a particular problem within a subject. The benefits from this research type are coming mainly because it represents a real world situatioan and it helps in exploring unknown enviroments, mainly occuring phenomena in organizational settings. Regarding this project, the main benefits of the case study can be found in the provision of data that can be reviewed by multiple means and it allowed the



observation of a complex unit (Turner & Danks, 2014). The case studies are used in the events when a specific activity or a problem occurs and it describes those subjects through single case or with multiple cases (Dooley, 2002). Regarding this study, the single case study was adopted and more specifically the *critical case* which is based on theory used to test/develop a certain real world problem (Turner & Danks, 2014). In order to execute the critical case type, the researcher requiered a theory which identifies the specific content needed. What is important regarding this specification is to define what the term "theory" means. According Whetten (1989) a good theoretical contribution should possess the following aspects: (1) *what*, (2) *how*, (3) *why*, and (4) *who*, *where*, *when*. The *What* is related to the conceptual system that is being used. The *How* relates to the understanding the variables that are building the theory. The *Why* relates to the usage and the application of the theory, what the purpose of it is. Lastly, *Who*, *Where*, *When* are the barriers and the limitation that defining the area of the examined phenomena (Turner & Danks, 2014).

For the evaluation and the analyzation of the single case study, the findings of the data should be used to identify relationships between different particular aspects (Turner & Danks, 2014). According to Dooley (2002), there are two types of anaysis in the case study researches – the *strucural analysis* which focuses on identifying patterns and the *reflctive anaylsis* which applies the researcher's personal judgment to the discusions on the data. Regarding this paper, the author adopted the *reflective way* of analysing the data and the assumptions were based on the author's understanding of the theory applied throughout the analysis part. This also helped in the build patterns that the author created in order to structure and organize the data.

Since the single case study is adopted the author was looking for a company case with certain specifications. Those specifications were based on the CPCSR model which was developed on consumers and managers opinion on CSR strategies of companies operating in three different sectors. Following the logic, the author displayed his proposition of a multinational



company that has diverse product group, it is operating on different markets and it is engaging its consumers in CSR issues over the social media.

To summarize the above ideas, figure 2 present the initiatives that were perceived. Based on the above foundations, the Literature review in this project provided explanation of "LinkedIn" and the reasons why it was the right online source for the purpose of this study. Further on, Unilever was presented as a company case and again justifications were provided. The Consumer perception measurement model with all the domains and specifications of it was reviewed. Regarding the Analysis part the model was applied to identify the Unilever`s CSR post on LinkedIn. Each one of those posts were displayed through screenshots and explanation of their relation with the CPCSR model was discussed. Bryman & Bell (2015), argue that when the qualitative method of data collection is chosen, the case study tends to take an inductive approach, therefore this approach will be following in the project.



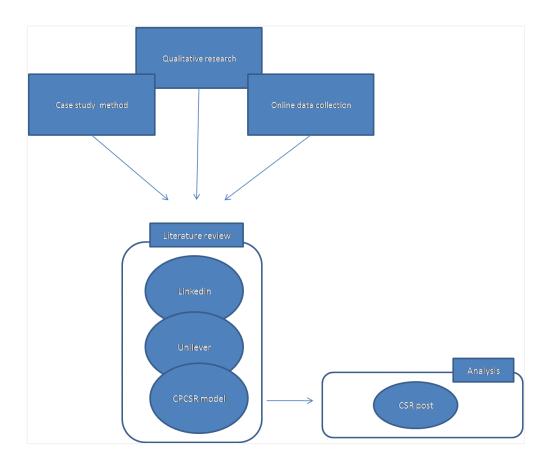


Figure 2: Research design (own creation)

#### 2.2.1 Alternative design approaches

Besides the case study framework for collection and analysis of data, there were five more approaches which were reviewed. The following lines will present the author's understanding and arguments of not choosing four of them and why the last one is considered as helpful tool in the deeper understanding of this project context.

#### **Experimental design**

The design is considered as a strict way of proving the results of casual findings. Usually the variables are divided into dependent and independent where the dependent variables are under a specific treatment and they are measured before and after the experimental manipulation



while the independent variables are staying unchanged. This interaction is showing weather the changed variable is having influence over the independent one. However, even though this application sounds effective it can also be seen as a drawback for the design. The manipulations made, which are supposed to change the dependable variable are also supposed to be applied in the independent variable to determine whether it influence on the dependent variable. Business researchers are more commonly interested in real-life settings where a field experiment is conducted (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Regarding this project the author did not find an application of the proposed instructions of conducting a experiment. The CPCSR model and the LinkedIn posts could be considered as variables, however, a change in one of them would not affect the other variable.

#### **Cross-sectional design**

Usually scholars refer to it as a *social survey design* which can explain the nature of the design. Surveys are the usual way of conducting the data in this approach, however, observations or analysis of specific content (e.g. statistics) is not excluded. The design is applied in situations when the researcher is interested in the collection of data on more than one case at one particular moment. This might be useful when a lot of variable are included and a general connection between those variables is needed in order to detect patterns. In this design there is no manipulation of the variables, there is only observation of the examined phenomena. Variation is the key in this design, however, in the case of this study, the author was not interested in exploring wide variety of companies, but only one (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

#### Longitudinal design

It is used to define a change that has occurred in a research topic. Usually organizations are the focus and they are placed on vertical and horizontal levels of analysis and the interactions



between those levels are being observed through time. However, the process requires a lot of time and budget and it is not often used in the business researches. The variables are perceived more casually and the chosen sample should be surveyed multiple times (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Those facts were considered enough to exclude this type of design, since the time to complete the project has been limited and the steps which were supposed to be taken would have not been completed.

#### **Comparative design**

As the name once again speaks for the nature of this design, the comparison is the main action that is taken. Different studies are compared to each other by the use identical methods. Those researches usually occur when researchers are willing to examine issues or phenomena in two or more countries by considering the sociocultural settings (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In the case of this project the comparative design would have been a good choice if the domains of CPCSR model were supposed to examine Unilever's CSR actions towards country X and country Y for example. However, this was not the author's intention and this is why the design was out of consideration.

#### Actors design

After the review made on the John Kuada's Research methodology book, the *Actors design approach* was noticed. The author considers the knowledge as worth sharing and the following lines are presenting the understanding of this design which is supposed to add on to the knowledge of case study design. What is suggested in the explanation of John Kuada (2010) for this approach is that is trying to achieve an "understanding" towards a given problem. It is supposed to give a diagnostic and in this project the author perceives the approach as the answer-key tool of the research question. What is more, the techniques that are usually involved within the actor's approach are mainly based on observation which



reflects perfectly on the main idea behind the study which was to observe the LinkedIn users' engagements with Unilever's CSR posts. The actor approach usually is connected with the qualitative research method and it is validated based on a particular uniqueness found within the social world – in this case this uniqueness were the "likes" left under the CSR posts. This explanation justifies the choice of the Qualitative research method since the task was to observe a particular process and to understand it better. Last but not least, the results are supposed to be valid, transparent and useful to whomever is willing to use them. To further justify why the actor's approach is chosen, Abnor and Bjerke (2009) are believing that human beings, in the project case - users of LinkedIn, are subjective beings which are creating the reality through their actions and intentions. Once being aware of the "actors" in the social world of LinkedIn and their interactions, the reader was able to understand their environment in a detailed manner. Also this gave a possibility to rank the domains of the CPCSR model through the Unilever's perspective.

# 2.3. Data collection regarding the Literature review

There are three topics that built the Literature review. LinkedIn, the CPCSR model and Unilever. The author started the search of the literature from the University library of Aalborg (AAU library) and figure 3 presents the overall framework of the Literature review.

Regarding LinkedIn, the project presented the network as part of the Social media world and the way it is perceived by the users. This was developed on several peer-reviewed papers which were somehow connected to each other and were building the overall understanding of LinkedIn. What is more, the author has built the literature review of this topic in way that was justifying the choice of it. Overall, nine articles were used to build the knowledge of LinkedIn in this study.



While the initial literature readings for the project topic were being reviewed the author noticed the CPCSR model in one of them. There was a suggestion that CSR should be observed also from the marketing scholars and this would create wider understanding of how customers and the CSR subjects of interest perceive the topic (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014). Furthermore, the CPCSR was not applied on the social media which matched with the recent interest of CSR and the online platforms (Jurietti, Mandelli, & Fudurić, 2017). Therefore, the literature used for the model specifications was based only on the initial source of the model. However, two additional sources which were found in the reference section of the model study were added in order to present brief history behind the model creation.

Regarding Unilever, the author wanted to justify his choice of this particular company for the case study. Therefore, an interview that appeared in a peer-reviewed paper allowed the author to better understand the goals of Unilever and also to match them with the purpose of this study. What is more the website of the company was referenced in order to give a brief introduction to the case. The Annual Report of 2017 was also considered as source of information where the targets that Unilever perceives are set. Overall, four sources were used in order to build the knowledge needed for the case study.



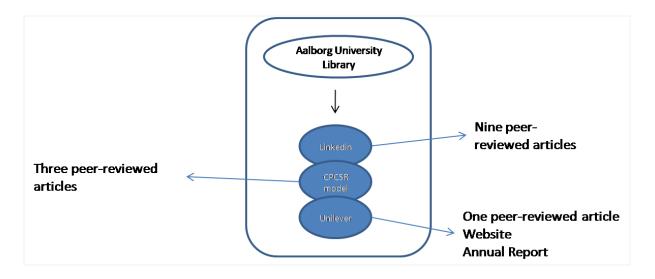


Figure 3: Literature review search (own creation)

# 2.4. Data collection regarding the Analysis

Bryman & Bell (2015) discuss that when mass media is being analyzed the wide range of data is positevly perceived. Therefore, the range of the examined articles is considered from 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2017 until 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2018. During this period there were 259 post (2 post per day on avarage) which were publicated on the LinkedIn page of Unilever.

There were four kinds of publications which appear as: (1) post with *textual post*(n=6) (2) posts with *video content*(n=34), (3) posts with *picture content*(n=88) and (4) posts that are *linked to another page* (n=131),. In order to find patterns within those posts the author devided them into subcategories which can be seen on Figure 4.

Regarding the posts with video content the author created three sub groups which refer to Career information, Help campaigns and Personal stories. The post with picture content were divided into six sub-groups which were giving information for Brand & Products, Career offers, Holidays Celebrations, Future Leaders competition, Personal stories and Social goals



& Information. Since the posts with link content are the largest, the author created four subgroups. Two of them were regarding Career information and the Future Leaders competition. The other two were refering to Personal stories and Social goals & Information. However, eight more sub-categories were developed within the last sub-groups since the content was high and quantity and further division was needed. The whole build up of those patterns was based on the author`s personal judgements which were allowed based on the reflective way of analysis data.

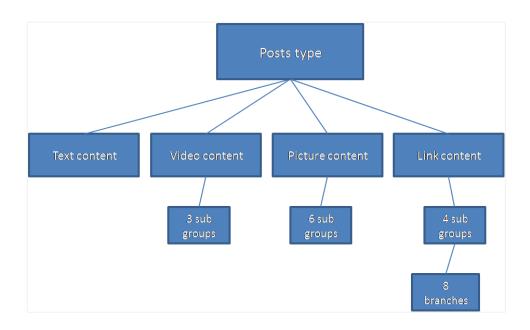


Figure 4: Framework of the sample data (own creation)

Once having the division done, the author was able to seek the characteristics of the CPCSR model domains through the LinkedIn posts. Based on the information given on the posts the characteristics were applied and the observation was made. The analysis part contains the overview.



## 2.5. Validity and Reliability

When the sample data was collected, there were 259 pieces with no connection. The author developed patterns which divided the data that made it easy to operate. Therefore, the validity of the measurements is based on patterns build to separate the data. This construction helped in understanding better the found publications and in the operation process. As for the further calculations which were made in order to find the correlation and the statistical significance, the author used Microsoft Excel and two functions of the Data analysis tool. Those functions can be found under the names of *Correlation* and *Regression*. The selected patterns of filtering the data and the tools applied were considered reasonable for the initial goals of the project.

Regarding the reliability, if the chosen timeframe is selected again and the posts are searched in the LinkedIn page of Unilever, the results found in this study would be repeated. However, if the timeframe is different, the ranking of the CPCSR domains might be changed. This might be caused by the company initiatives throughout the year. For example, different campaigns that are undertaken might be related to different CSR initiatives which would probably change the quantity of posts in each domain. During the analyzed period, Unilever had many publications related to the campaign "Future Leaders competition" which was fitting in the characteristics of the societal domain of the CPCSR model. If in the second half of 2018, Unilever run a campaign which is more related to the characteristics of another domain the ranking and the results will be probably changed. Therefore, the author cannot consider the project fully reliable.



# 3. Literature review

## 3.1. Explanation of the reality - LinkedIn

#### Social media and Marketing

The increase in the numbers of social media users has been improving over the recent years. People from all over the world are being more and more engaged with the social platforms. What is more, the breadth of different social media platforms is increasing and as the popularity grows, marketers are searching for solid ground to base their strategic decisions and to employ social media as the connection platform to their customers (Hoffman & Novak, 2012). To implement their CSR strategies on the social media, marketers should use social media platforms as marketing tool in order to engage with the consumers. Thus, this study adopted the Virtanen, Björk, & Sjöström (2017) understanding for social media marketing which is using the social media platforms for marketing purposes.

#### "Likes" & "Comments"

Managers are investing in social media in order to create better relations with their customers and also to understand them better. By creating fan pages on the social network websites, managers are providing the environment for customers to express themselves. This action is signified by the "likes" and the "comments" left under the engaged posts (de Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012). It is suggested that the consumers who are leaving their interactions are the one that



#### LinkedIn

LinkedIn is considered as social networking site and it tends to be more business oriented. The network helps its users, which are mainly people operating in different business spheres, to practice virtual interactions between themselves. This environment is considered as the place where one can promote, keep in touch with professionals, offer advices, post publications and express personal ideas. Similar to the other social networks, those activities are done through different post status and updates, however, in the case of LinkedIn those post are often work related. The Group feature on the network is considered as the place where companies and single users can go for more in-depth interactions between themselves. Usually, discussions are dedicated to job searches, however, there are also different business topic found on LinkedIn. With users in over 200 countries, LinkedIn has a content of more than 2 million company pages which has given a name of the platform as the place for business-related social networking. The site is providing easy ways for sharing content with particular information like news, expert opinions or social topics (Hands, 2013).

#### **Comparison and justification**

To better understand why LinkedIn is the chosen social network for this study a comparison with the other top social platforms will be reviewed in the following lines. When comparing LinkedIn to the other Social networks it can be said that the platform is allowing more text-based messages. The same concept can be found on Facebook and Twitter while on Instagram, one can find more hedonic and impressionistic post (Virtanen, Björk, & Sjöström, 2017). Facebook already has over a billion registered users and surveys are reporting that 50% of 500 million users of Facebook are logging in daily and spend over 700 billion minutes each month on the platform. As for LinkedIn, the network was established in 2003 and since then the number of users has reached 450 million worldwide (Chang, Liu, & Shen, 2017).



Facebook is generally associated with community and group interaction where people are mainly connecting to communicate with friends while LinkedIn is focusing on the professional networking which makes the perception and the motivation to use each one of the networks different (Chang, Liu, & Shen, 2017). Another difference is found in the fact that on Facebook, people are having objective to engage in social events and meeting new people while on LinkedIn the percentage of engagement is dedicated to business topics and professional development (Myers, Czepiec, Roxas, & & Whitson, 2011). According to Chang, Liu, & Shen (2017), this two sites are dominating in the social media market, however, each of them has different group of people in motivation, purpose, engagement and perception of usage. Another important factor is that people tend to put their trust on larger scale post, groups or pages. For example on Facebook and Twitter people are having small status updates with information that is not proffesionally perceived while on Linkedin, users tend to be more involved in the proposed group or page topics (Utz, 2016).

To conclude, LinkedIn is considered as the world's largest professional network which is publicly-held based on business related topics. While Facebook's mission is to connect people and Twitter is giving its users the opportunity to share information and their ideas, LinkedIn is staying focused on the professional side and creates the environment for professionals who are willing to engage in the business world. The engagements of the business network are mainly done by posts, groups and business oriented publications (Power, 2015). The above presented aspects are considered as the justification of choosing the social network as base for the online data collection and more specifically the LinkedIn platform. The "likes" was the measurement instruments since they are the customers' way of expressing opinion over a given topic on the social media (de Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012).



#### 3.2. Consumer perception measurement model

In order to validate the usage of the critical case study, the author decided to use the CPCSR model as the insturment which will provide good theoretical contribution to the project. Regarding the "how" question, the multidimensional conceptualization gives the opportunity to assess how consumers perceive CSR in general and more specifically to observe which domains are of particular interest to consumers. Regarding the "why" question, Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber (2014) suggest that the model can be used for examination of particular company's CSR initiatives and observe the specific impacts that the implication of those initiatives triggers. As for the final questions "who, where, when, the author would choose the people who are enagaged on LinkedIn with the CSR post of Unilever. The post will be considered from 26.12.2017 until 15.05.2018. The usage of the model would give the opportunity to rank each of the model's domains based on the consumers preferences once having a particular environment of application.

#### **History**

Regarding the development story of the CPCSR model it can be said that it fills a gap that was found in the literature of CSR and marketing (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014). Based on the study of Berens, van Riel, & van Bruggen, (2005) a growing rate was found on the consumers' interest towards companies' CSR policies and as it seems this interest have influence when evaluating a certain product of the given company (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004). However, a particular way of assessing the customers' perception on CSR efforts was missing and this is how the CPCSR model was developed (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).



#### **Benefits**

The approach of the model is based mainly on the stakeholders who are involved with a particular company. It is considered as a wider-ranging scale and there are three main benefits of using it. First of all, the model can identify consumers' perceptions and expectations towards CSR initiatives and second it gives the knowledge that researchers need in order to create academic contents on the CSR matter. Third, it was suggested that the application of the model, can be used for managerial strategy purposes by evaluating own performance which helps to identify shortcomings in the CSR communication strategies. (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014). The model opens new paths for the customers` understandings, perceptions and actions towards CSR strategies. It is mainly beneficial to CSR managers and guides them in taking the right steps towards the matter. Without such a model, marketers might face inaccurate decisions even regarding the marketing strategies and the marketing mix. What is interesting here is that the results found by Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber (2014) suggests that CSR is differently understood and perceived by managers and consumers. Mangers perceive the strategies of CSR as complex and holistic concepts while consumers could distinguish partially and differently some of the areas of responsibility (the seven domains) that are building their own understanding of CSR.

#### The model

The research proposes that the construct of the CPCSR model is a hierarchical, multidimensional construct which is relating to the consumers' overall perception of CSR. The model itself is proposed to be a second-order construct with the seven first-order dimensions (see figure 5). The overall CPCSR assessment assists in evaluating how well consumers perceive CSR while the individual CSR domains are used for more specific investigation of the impacts on CSR on consumers. It is recommended that when this model is



being used, the researcher should consider both levels of analysis – the higher level and the individual domains. The higher level (the overall assessment of CPCSR) is used to evaluate how well consumers perceive CSR, while each of the domains can give more accurate consumer specification and derive recommendations for the CSR related strategies (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).

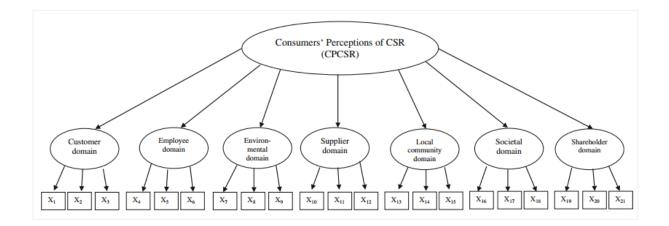


Figure 5: CPCSR model (adopted from Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber (2014))

#### Foundations of the model

The model is based on qualitative data collection which was obtained through 48 in-depth interviews. Consumers (n = 25) and CSR managers (n = 23) are the one who were involved in those interviews which lasted between 45 and 115 minutes. The main focus of the questions was on the description of CSR, characterization of a socially responsible company and outlining the most important responsibilities that a company should fulfill. The most important note that was drawn from the interviews was that there is a major difference between managers and consumers assessment concerning the CSR (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014). And based on this finding Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber (2014) set the following definition of CPCSR:



"A socially responsible company integrates social and environmental topics in its core business activities and acts responsibly towards its employees, its customers, the environment,

its suppliers, the local community, its shareholders and society at large."

This led to the foundation of seven different domains (dimensions) of CSR which helped in the development and the refinement of the model. Online survey was sent to 483 customers of three different actual companies. They were supposed to evaluate a manufacturing company ( 28.2% of respondents), a fast-moving consumer goods company (35.6%) and a bank (36.6%) based on the seven domains. The companies were choosen because they have different CSR strategies and Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber (2014) had found that by that time the companies were focusing more on this area. Based on exploratory factor analysis the results showed that dimensions are relevent when evaluating a company's CSR and the consumers's perception of it.

#### **Dimensions**

In order to create an assessible and tangible CSR engagements, the model of CPCSR is dividied in seven different areas. They are focused mainly on a company's stakeholders: employees, customers, environment, suppliers, the local community, shareholders, and society at large (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014). Each one of the domains would be review in the following lines.

The *employee domain* encircles issues such as working conditions, non-discrimination of employees or adequate remuneration. The main idea behind is to follow activities which are done in honering the employees. In this group the respect of human rights is closely related, the decent working condition, whether they are safe and not hazardous to health and the flexibility in the working hours. Another aspect that is building this dimension is the equall treatment of employees and the possibilities for future career development. Are there any



trainings or development centeres which can help a single employee to reach higher knowledge for the working environment and oneself? Last but not least, the communication and the way particular company is maintaining its relations with the employees (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).

The *customer domain* addresses issues like fair prices, product labeling, whether it is clear and comprehensive and the high & safe quality of the products. Overall, everything that relates to the customes` satisfaction regarding a particular product or service. What is important in this dimension is the fairnes that particular company is implementing towards their sales practices or main competitors. This is observed by the customers and can influence their opinion on the company`s CSR strategies. Another remark that can build this dimension possitivly is the labeling of the products and the information that is provided to the consumers. This also symbolise that the company is meeting particular quality standarts and it can be trusted. Fairness is significant here and it can be found in the price range of different products. By offering the right and diverse sales promotion the level of customer engagment is subjected to increase and as already noted, thise engagment builds the second domain of the CPCSR model (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).

Consumers are willing to be informed how a particular company is being responsible towards their energy consumption, waste and emission. This forms the *enviroment domain*. The issues regarding the "green life" of a company can be found in the way the company is recycling, prevent waste and dispose the waste correctly. Also the way the company "educates" its consumers is highly valued and it gives extras to the positivness of this domain. Information regarding the investments made towards researches which are enviromentally oriented, as well as the corporate enviromental proction standarst are positivley perceived by consumers (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).



The *supplier domain* contributes to the topic of fair terms and conditions with the supplier and the selection of it. Regarding this dimension companies's should present good attutude towards their supplies. Furthermore, the process of choosing the "right" partner can be also benefitial to the positive attitude towards this domain. Providing information, good relation status can be percieved positevly. A company should provide fair terms and conditions for its suppliers and not repress them with unrealisitc demands. Open communication is of importance and fair negotiation is a- must within this dimension (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).

The next domain represents the company's responsibility towards the *local community*. What is stressed out for this dimension is the obligation of creating jobs in the local communities, local sourcing, and contributions to a regional development. Every region has particular values, customs and culture, it is of a high importance those aspects to be respected when considering the community domain. Another important part is the information provided regarding the products' raw material sourcing. Where exactly is the location, why is it there and what are the benefits for the local society? This also provides opputunity for job oppenings and company's should be ready to address whether they hire locals or outsiders of the selected region (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).

The *shareholder* domain is declared through the company's responsibility for achiving profit. This dimension is significed through the company's strategies for sustainable growth, longterm financial success and responsible investments. When perceiving a CSR strategies, customers are willing to have open information towards the future goals that a company is having. The questions to which customers seeks answers are how the goals will be achieved and how the investments will return. Another important aspect of this domain are the future investments that are supposed to be made. Customers are interested in what exactly the



investments are made and what are the chances of sucssess (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).

Finally, the model of CPCSR proposed that companies are supposed to present their responsibility to the *society at large*. This can be addressed through different campaigns that are undertaken. Donations to social causes, employment of people with disabilities and the support of social projects. Customers will highly value when a company is employing people who were long-term unemployed and being supportive to employees who are involved in social projects during working hours. Education of young people is considered as honorable deed and companies who are doing it are perceived positively. Last but not least, when a company is contributing to solve particular social problem the domain's rate is at its peak (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014).

As overall thoughts on the model, Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber (2014) suggest that the importance of the domains is varying and they depend on the interest of the particular consumers and also on the way that they are applied. According their findings the most relevant domains are *customers, the environment and the employees one*. Medium importance refers to the *suppliers, the local community* and *society at large*. What the data in the model's study found is that the least important domain is the *shareholder one* because it is the least developed and since consumers lack the knowledge and perhaps the interests in the financial deeds of most companies it is no surprise to receive such results.

#### 3.3. Who are Unilever?

Following the CPCSR model concept, the author will display his proposition of a multinational company that has diverse product group, it is operating on different markets and it is engaging its consumers in the CSR issues.



#### Unilever

The CPCSR model was developed based on the opinion of expert managers and consumers towards three different business sectors. Unilever was considered as the right choice of a multinational company having a wide product group category and operating on two of those sectors (as manufacturer and fast-moving consumer goods company). The company is an industry leader and its managerial practices inspire many other firms (Laursen & Andersen, 2016). Unilever is a business company that has been founded on a sense of purpose. In 1890s the Englishman William Hesketh Lever establishes the Lever Brothers Company which made a revolutionary new product that helped the popularization of cleanliness and hygiene. In the time passed, the company expanded under the name of Unilever and it has been operating in over 190 countries, however, the sense of purpose towards its customers and the sustainable way of doing business are the goals to which the company is heading (Unilever, 2018). The product range of Unilever is enormous and it contains more than 400 brands which are found in four categories - Food and drink, Home care, Personal care, Refreshments. The company assumes that on any given day, 2.5 billion people are somehow using Unilever products (Unilever, 2018). Based on the Unilever's Annual Report (2017) and the statement made in it, the company has made good performance in the year of 2017 and is following its set objectives for 2020 with strong pace.

#### **Educating customers**

Regarding the choice of Unilever as company on which the analysis will be completed the author would use an interview from the Sustainable manager and annual report justifications for the CSR strategies. In a interview the current Senior Global Manager, Lesley Thorne has stated that all managerial decisions are dedicated to the societal and sustainable way of doing business. Furthermore, Unilever has been recognizing the value of the digital partnership and



consumers' collaboration. The digitalization has brought new ways of understanding how consumers' behave and working directly with them, on the social media, can help in spreading the Unilever's message in "engaging and meaningful" ways (Mizera, 2013). Due to Thorne (Mizera, 2013), through its different products, Unilever is influencing many people from all over the world by teaching them life-saving habits. Based on this asset and through collaboration, the company can orient its CSR strategies towards those customers and understand their needs better. According to the Unilever's Annual Report (2017), the company is following the programme called "Connected 4 Growth" which was launched in 2016. The programme is revealing Unilever's CSR strategies which are being implemented trough more "consumer-facing organization" dedicated to understand the consumers and also be responsible towards the world. The process of achieving this is going through engagement of as many people as possible which according to Thorne's interview (Mizera, 2013) can be achieved through the use of social media platforms.

#### **3.4 Hypothesis**

Based on the above writing the author developed two hypothesis which were supposed to test the findings in this chapter, to contribute in answering the research question and also to built up the Analysis part of this project. The critical case study suggests the use of hypothesis which will allow a better understanding of the analyzed circumstatnces (Bryman & Bell, p.62, 2015)

#### H1 Customer domain is the most used domain in the CSR politics of Unilever

The literature review presented that the customer domain is one of the three most commonly used domains (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2014). Therefore, this hypothesis was supposed to test whether this is true or not in the case of Unilever's CSR politics which are presented to the users of LinkedIn. This hypothesis was tested through the



number of posts published on LinkedIn that refer to the 7 domains of the CPCSR model. The prove of this hypothesis was also important because it would have allowed to rank the domains based on the Unilever's preferences.

# H2 The domains of the CPCSR model have impact on the LinkedIn users` engagements on Unilever`s CSR strategies.

To prove this hyptothesis the author used the ranked domains from H1 and the avarage number of "likes" given by the users of LinkedIn. By observing whether there is a correlation between the two variables, the author was able to state if the usage of the domain is bringing more interest on the Unilever's publications on LinkedIn.



### 4. Analysis

#### 4.1. Sample of the analysis

There were 259 post which were ecnountered during the period between 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2017 and 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2018. Four publications were related only to celebration of particluar holiday and three others were referring to unrealted publication to the domains of the CPCSR characteristics. Therefore, they were removed and at the end 252 post are consider as the sample that the Analysis was based on.

#### **Textual content**

Regarding the post with only textual conent there were only 6 publications which were encountered during the second part of April. Through out the chosen frame period there were not any other post with textual content. All of those six publications were connected to a competition called "Future Leaders competition" and they were giving insights of how the program is progressing.

#### Video content

Regarding the posts with video content there were 34 spotted publications. In order to understand them better the author decided to separate them into three groups. It was noticed that the content can refer to specific *Personal story*, to videos which are providing information for what the *Career* at Unilever might look like and videos which were giving insights about the progress of international campaigns. The following Figure 6 was supposed to present the findings in a more accessable way.



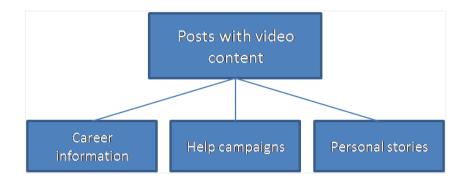


Figure 6: Video content posts (own creation)

#### **Picture content**

Regarding the Picture content post, 88 publications were encountered during the set timeframe. During the initial observation, the author decided to structure them into six different cathegories which can be seen in Figure 7. The pictures in the publications were used in order to involved the audience with specific *Brand-Product*. Regarding this type of post, there were 10 publications which were trying to involve the audience, give interesting information and also rise the awareness towards a particular region through the chosen product. On the other hand, the Career promotional publication were also encountered in the picture content type of posts. However, only one publication was noticed and it was regarding a specific position in a "Foods R&D team". Further more, there were 5 picture post which were notifying or congratulating the audience for a particular world wide *Celebration*. The picture posts were used to provide the main information for the progress of the Future Leader competition. There were 27 post which were presenting each of the qualified teams for the finals of the competition and also the pictures were trying to involve the audience with information of the campaign. Another separation group that was noticed is the Personal picture posts which were introducing quatations from employees of Unilever that are closely related to a particular product. 28 personal picture posts were encountered and it was noticed that those post were connected to the Brand-Product post and usually were following right



after them. Last but not least, is the group of *Social goals insights* 15 picture posts are forming the group. Those post are also related to the *Brand-Product* group post and they were appearing with the practical infroamtion of the benefits that the presented product is providing for a community in a specific aread.

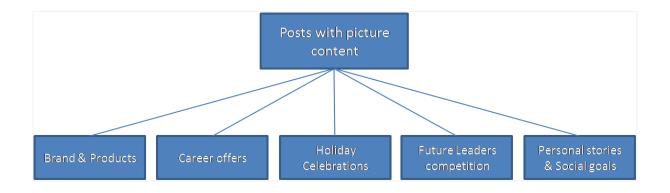


Figure 7: Picture content posts (own creation)

#### Link content

Regarding the post which are providing a link between another webpage there were 131 post encountered which is making this post type the biggest. Four sub-groups were created in order to structure the linkage posts and the overall view is presented on Figure 8. It was noticed that usually those links were leading either to the Unilever's official website, to personal blogs or very reraly to another page which is not connected either to LinkedIn or to Unilever. First of all, the *Career* post were also encountered in the this type of publications. There were only three posts which were providing a link to the Unilever's career page and giving more information for the offered position. Second, the *Future Leader competition* was encountered as well, however, in this group of publications only four posts were linking the users to expert opinions which were providing information and tips for the competition. Third, 49 post were placed in the group named *Social goals & information*. The post were related to Campaign information, Unilerver's position towards global topics, Results of Unilever and Future Goals.



The largest group in the link type of publictions refers to the Personal stories.74 post were separated into four braches. The first one of them is related to posts which were redirecting the user to personal blogs which were giving a personal opinion regarding a specific cause. The writers were usually employees of Unilever and they were taking different position, regardless the hairarchy. As for the topics, usually the writers were giving tips towards situations that might occur in the working place or regarding strategies which can lead to specific development. The second branch is related to a campaign that Unilever has undertaken called "Game changers". Those "game changers" are people who are "smashing" the stereotypes that might occur on a particular location. Local community causes is the third branch which is telling a story of a inspiring people that are dedicated to a specific group/region development. Usually they are not connected to Unilever, however, the company is involving them as people that the world needs to know about. The last branch is dedicated to Management observations and comments on particular topics. Usually those post were redirecting the user to the interview page to which different global topics or Unilever's standpoints were presented.

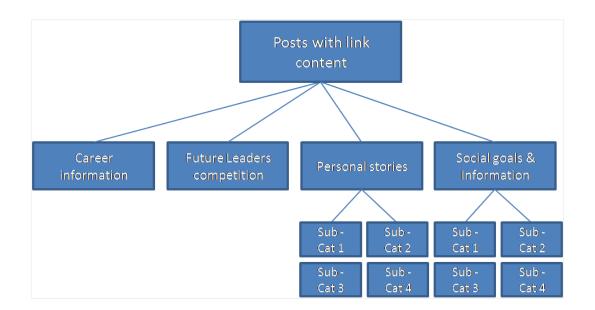


Figure 8: Link content posts (own creation)



#### 4.2. Testing Hypothesis 1

#### "Customer domain is the most used domain in the CSR politics of Unilever"

In order to answer this hypothesis the author made an overview of the 7 domains and the conent on LinkedIn that has been publicated by Unilever during the selected timeframe. Each one of the posts were reviewed and separated in one of the domains based on the model's characteristics that were presented in the Literature review. The following lines suggest an overview of the content that each domain has, followed by the discusion on the first hypothesis.

#### Community

Regarding this domain there were only 22 post encountered. Three of them were found in the publications with video conent, fourteen were selected from publications with link conent, five were found through the picture content posts and zero in the textual content posts. Overall those post were related to a personal story from a specific region. Apparently there was an issue in the selected region, therefore, Unilever decided to involve the users of LinkedIn with a relevant story. The publications which were referring to the community domain were showing the standpoint of Unilever towards specific regions. Through the development of specific communities and regions, Unilever is able to perceive a better product portfolio and also to open jobs in the places of operation.

#### **Employee**

Regarding the employee domain there were 52 post encountered. Most of them were found in the posts with link conent. There Unilever was trying to involve the users of LinkedIn with information regarding the working conditions within the company and also to present Unilever's actions towards equal treatment on the work place, regardless the region that the



work is practiced. There were links to personal blogs where employees of Unilever are expressing their opinion and giving tips of how the issues should be treated. Those personal insights were also from interns and youngsters who are on their entry position at the company. By doing this Unilever has not only provided information, but also has given a voice to the one involved in the particular topic. Regarding the post with picture content, a lot of influence on the characteristics of the employee domain had the campaign called "Game Changers". Once again the people who are implimenting innovations and virtues to their workplaces were given voice through this campaing. Regarding the posts with video content, it was noticed that the working enviroment and the innovation into the technology for the working tools is highlighted. All those aspects respond to the characteristics of the employee domain.

#### **Shareholder**

The characteristics of the shareholders domain is the way company is ensuring the economic success by doing successful business and provide open communication towards the investments that have been made. Therefore, when the publications were analyzed, those characteristics were the applied filter in order to identify how users of LinkedIn are informed regarding Unilever's shareholders avtivities. It was noticed that there were not any specific post which were directly dedicated to the Unilever's shareholders, however, 21 of the publications were involving the audience into the economic successes of the company and the future plans to which capital will be invested. This was implemented through the publications of posts with picutre content which were giving information regarding the composite parts of the Unilever's products. Those parts were reveling information of the made investments and the benefits that will occure from the actions. What is more, it was noticed that in the posts with link conent there were managerial observations which are considered as the open communication and another way of reaching the shareholders.



#### **Environment**

28 post were encountered with environmental context. In those publications Unilever was trying to involve the users of LinkedIn with the efforts that the company is making towards a better world. Most of the environmental domain caracteristics were found in the post with link content. There Unilever were redirecting the users of LinkedIn to another page which was were giving insights of the technological improvement made towards more sustainable packages, investments on researches towards the environment and recycling progress of the company.

#### **Societal**

During the analysis of the post it was noticed that 43 of them were dedicated to the "Future Leaders competition". The programme is dedicated to young people who are willing to start their career at Unilever. Real cases from the business world are given and the competitors are supposed to suggest reasonable solutions. The competition starts on a local level from where the region teams are selected and then the finals are gathering those teams into the final stage (Unilever Future Leaders Programme, 2018). Those 43 post were giving insights to the audience of who are the teams, how the competition is progressing and why it is important for the society. Since this is taking huge part and a lot of investements are dedicated towards the education of the young graduades, the author considers it as a whole and apply it into the Societal domain. Apart from those publications another 51 posts were selected based on the characteristics of the Societal domain. Most of the encountered publications were dedicated to the way Unilever is solving societal problems and their contribution to it. Besides this, singular posts were presenting cases of people with disabilities who were employed by Unilever. Overall, there were 92 posts which were refering to the characteristics of the Societal domain with the highest quantity of publications.



#### Customer

Regarding the characteristics responding the Customer domain, Unilver's post on LinkedIn were 31. Through out the chosen time frame the post presented three different products of Unilever portfolio. Each one of the publications started with a game which was supposed to involve the users to guess the particular brand only through the shape of the package. Afterwards, usefull information was given to the users and by this Unilever has given information about their quality standerts. On the other hand, all this is forming a relationship through interactions with the consumers and product involvement. Apart from it, employees of Unilever were presenting useful information through their blogs on LinkedIn where people could learn more about Unilever's products.

#### **Supplier**

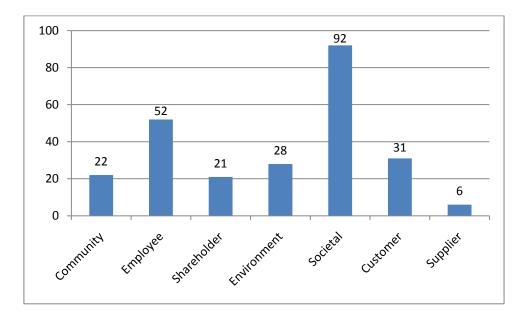
Only 6 posts were referring to the characteristics of the Supplier domain which is making it the smallest one. The posts which were dedicated to it were presenting Unilever's partnerships and the way Unilever is communicating with the smaller businesses which are part of the bigger company.

#### Results

The test of this hypothesis was supposed to give better understanding of the Unilever's CSR politics on LinkedIn and more specifically the application of the CPCSR model. The ranking of the domains was also beneficial to the test of the second hypothesis. Based on the above findings, it can be stated that the customer domain was not the most important domain in Unilever's CSR posts on LinkedIn and the suggested hypothesis was disproved. Post related to the societal domain were encountered more frequently than the other domains. 92 posts were referring to the characteristics of the societal domain. On the second place was the



employee domain to which 52 post were dedicated. Third was the customer domain with 31 related posts. On the fourth place, Unilever has been publishing 28 posts which refers to the characteristics of the environmental domain. 22 posts ranked the community domain on the fifth place followed by 21 posts for the shareholder domain. The least used domain in the CSR politics of Unilever was the supplier domain to which the company has dedicated only 6 posts. The overview of the ranking can be observed on Graph 1.



Graph 1: Encountered posts related to the domains characteristics of the CPCSR model

### 4.3. Testing Hypothesis 2

#### **Correlation analysis**

"The domains of the CPCSR model have impact on the LinkedIn users` engagements of Unilever`s CSR strategies"

In order to prove the second hypothesis the used Microsoft Excel in order to perform the test test and extract the results. First, two columns which refered to the CPCSR model domains were created. The first one contained the number of publications for each of the specific



domains. The second column showed the average number of "likes" which were collected within the specific domain. Table 2 suggest and overview of the writings.

Domains	Number of posts	Average likes per domain		
Community	22	573		
Employee	52	705		
Shareholder	21	503		
Environment	28	894		
Societal	92	1004		
Customer	31	914		
Supplier	6	373		

Table 2: Variables used for the Correlation and the Regression analysis

After the table was created, the author applied the Excel tool called "Data analysis" and took two steps. First one observed the correlation coefficient and the option "correlation" was used. The two columns were selected and Table 3 suggest the results in which r = .72. This would mean that there was a strong positive correlation between the use of the CPCSR domains and the users` engagements on LinkedIn.

	Number of posts	Average likes per domain
Number of posts	1	0,72
Average likes per domain	0,72	1

**Table 3: Correlation analysis results** 

Here it can be concluded that the suggested hypothesis was perceived as true and the domains of the CPCSR model have impact on the customer engagment. Even more, this concludes that the more posts for a specific domains are created the more customers` engagements will be received.

### **Regression analysis**

The following lines perform an regression analysis and they serve as suppliment to the general results of the suggested data. Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Futing Liao (2004), argue that



there is a strong tie between analysis of variance and regression analysis. Historically there is no connection between the development of the two anylsis, however, with today's statistical software development researchers are able to represent most analysis of variance as regression analysis with dummy variables. Therefore, based on this theoretical prove the author applied the Excel's Regression option on the variables from Table 2 in order to observe whether they are statistically significant.

For the dependent variable (input Y range) the author chose the "*average likes per domain*" while for the independent variable (input X range) the "*number of posts*" was selected and tables 4 & 5 suggest overview of the results.

Regression Statistics					
Multiple R	0,72				
R Square	0,52				
Adjusted R Square	0,42				
Standard Error	179,97				
Observations	7				
Table 4. Pegrassian Statistics					

**Table 4: Regression Statistics** 

The R square represents how well the set of the encountered posts help to predict the dependent variable which is the "average number of likes". In the case of this results it can be stated that the posts for the domains as a set accounts for 52% when perceiving the customer engagements (Cramer & & Howitt, 2004).

ANOVA

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	175783,30	175783,30	5,43	0,0672
Residual	5	161938,93	32387,79		
Total	6	337722,23			

Table 5: Analysis of Variance

Table 5 suggested that in this case the p-value is equal to .067. Usually the p-value represents how often the results will be received in the same way (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Futing Liao, 2004). However, since the results are above .05 this would mean that there is no statistical



significance when examining the number of posts for the CPCSR domains with the average "likes" received on those posts (Cramer & & Howitt, 2004).

In conclusion it can be stated that the data separated in each domain and the average likes per domain are not statistically significant. However, this do not prove that there is not a statistical significance between each domain and the customer engagement.



### **5. Discussion**

This chapter was included in order to involve the readers with a meaning over the analyzed results and also to convince in the merits of the study. The guidelines from the Discussion chapter were inspired by the work of Hess (2004).

The major findings in the study are the ranking of the CPCSR domain based on the Unilever CSR strategies on LinkedIn. Afterwards, empirical findings give the foundation for the future research suggestions. As for the practical relevance, the main benefit of the study is the actual application of the CPCSR in the social media and the observation made. First, the model was developed in order to measure the consumers` perception on CSR issues and second the whole topic of CSR is evolving and a research based on online source fit as a missing piece in the literature.

Two hypotheses were developed once the literature review was completed. Through the analysis, those hypotheses were supposed to test the findings in the literature. The analysis was based on 252 posts which were found in the Unilever's page on LinkedIn. After it, the general findings revealed the ranking of CPCSR domains through the use of Unilever. In the literature it was suggested that usually companies are most commonly using the *customer* domain characteristics when they are trying to involve people into their company's CSR strategies. However, this was not the case regarding Unilever. Based on the data found, Unilever was most commonly using the *societal* domain which in the theory was suggested as a domain with average importance. By the work on the first hypothesis, the authors was able to answer the suggested research question, stated in the Introduction chapter and more precisely, "What is the ranking of the CPCSR model domains in the Unilever's CSR post on LinkedIn?". Unilever's CSR strategies on LinkedIn are ranking the domains of the CPCSR



model as following: (1) Societal, (2) Employee, (3) Customer, (4) Environment, (5) Community, (6) Shareholder, (7) Supplier.

Besides the planned findings the author was also able to identify a possibility for empirical investigation which was conducted through the second hypothesis. In it the customer engagement regarding the analyzed data was observed. With the help of Microsoft Excel and more specifically the Correlation tool the author was able to observe whether there is a correlation between the use of the CPCSR domains and the users` engagements on LinkedIn in the case of Unilever. A possitive correlation was calculated (r = .72) and this suggested that with the higher posts quantity of each domain, the average number of "likes" was rising. Afterwards, a Regression Analysis was condcuted and based on it the suggestions of Future studies were developed.

#### **Previous studies**

While the author was looking for articles to justify the choice of the single-case study a similar study was found on the CSR topic and again Unilever was the investigated company (Jurietti, Mandelli, & Fudurić, 2017). However, the critirias of their study were different because their main focus was on the values that CSR present. Their study could be understood more as a foundation on the importance of the CSR topic. Through their study, the authors were trying to understand the dialog characteristics between users and companies, however, at the end they have stated that the model used failed to illustrate the difference between opportunities of dialog characteristics. Therefore, based on their study and the importance of the CSR value, a model was needed in order to identify CSR related topics on the social media of a multinational company.

The work of Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber (2014) was one of the first papers found in the initial searches and all of the following foundings prove that the use of it could



be helpful in defining the conumers` perception on CSR activities. The authors are the creators of the used model and they are the one who suggested the possible applications of it might examine how the CPCSR model impacts on the company`s CSR initiatives. Those instructions were taken into account and applied in this project.

### 5.1. Future research and Limitations

#### **Future research**

This project managed to use the sample data which was based on online source. The results allowed to better understand Unilever's CSR initiatives based on the CPCSR model. Even though, the domains of the model were ranked, the author did not manage to calculate their effectiveness. Therefore, a future research proposition would be the investigation of the effectiveness of the CPCSR model based on the response of stakeholders. Those revelations were also suggested by the regression analysis in which it was noticed that the way of data structure did not prove that there is a statistical correlation between the domains as singles and the users' engagements. A possible future study would be to conduct a survey among the stakeholders of a multinational company. In this way, every domain will have equal amount of information and they will be graded based on the perception of the stakeholders. On the other hand, as dependent variable, the general image of the company's CSR initiatives could be measured and applied.

#### Limitation

There are two main limitation noticed by the author. The first one comes from the fact that the sample data was gathered from only one source. As noticed in the study of Virtanen, Björk, & Sjöström (2017), online users tend to have different ethics and behavior on different social



platforms. Therefore, Unilever's post might have been with different content and the customer engagement might have been expressed in a different way. It would have been interesting to see whether the Unilever's ranking of the domains would hold if more social media were added and more data was analyzed. The second limitation is the reliability of the study. The author suspects that if another timeframe is chosen the results would be different. These are the two limitations that should be taken into account when reviewing this project.



### **6.** Conclusion

The main part of this paper is based on the test of a model which measures the consumers' perception of CSR on LinkedIn. A single-case study has been adopted and Unilever was chosen as the multination company of which the CSR initiatives were analyzed. Two hypotheses were developed after the Literature review was done in order to answer the research question and also to extend the knowledge of the study. What the knowledge of the study provides is the ranking of the CPCSR domains based on the consumers engagements expressed through the "likes" left under the posts of Unilever in LinkedIn during a specific period. What more was found was that there is a positive correlation between the posts for each domain and the average number of likes collected. Therefore, when Unilever is making more CSR oriented publications the customer engagement is rising. However, only one source was chosen for the data collection and the results could have been different if the data was collected from multiple social media platforms. As for future studies, it can be proposed the further analysis of the model and the effectiveness of its domains.



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### **Appendix**

#### Community domain

#### Unilever 3,060,638 followers

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reby imp

576 Likes • 2 Co

231 Likes + 1 Com

are being

us here: https://lokd.in/dX8E

tions to Unilever To the number one E across all other ind big thank you to ou Congrat. selected FMC A big th



3 mons Another opportunity to make a #UniquelyUnilever difference came as Domestos partnered with Population Services International (PSI) and eKutir to create the Domestos Toilet Academy in 2014. The programme has trained sanitation entrepreneurs in rural communities in India, helping to make financing accessible for households to own a toilet, and

ng livelih





iss the globe Unilever members are putting een's rights at the forefront of everything they been such person is Manoj-Kumar Langhani, a ver Account Manager, who is helping to suppe empower the women of Pakistan. In a country re women are often excluded from the



#### 1,210 Likes • 23 Unilever 3,060,640 f followers

Cocoa : ds are grown in pods that change n; green to red, then red to purple, and llow. By working with the Rainforest help to ensure that farmers are trained ich cocoa pods are ready to be picked

Unilever 3,060,637 follower 8 d



Unilever 3,057,414 followers 4 mons U Unile

4 mons lever Hero Sherine Sabry is giving visually vaired people in Egypt the tools they need to cceed in the workplace. Read her inspiring story p://ow.ly/fkpL30hlubQ impaire succeer http://c



449 Likes • 14 Comments

Unilever 3,060,639 followers 2 mons Are you an experienced R&D Professional Manager looking for ind the right person to lead the Food R&D team. If you meet the criteria please email your CV to HR. Recruit.Israel@unilever.com and indicate RDML.



#### Unilever 3,060,640

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#### Unilever 3,057,414 U

lero, Rajagopalan Veeraraghavan, has left a benefit his local community by managing smation of a school for children with eds. Read his inspiring story: http://ow.ly/ ogTJ



535 Likes • 10 Comments



nt to



482 Likes • 1 Comment

Unilever 3,057,397 followers 1 mon

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What goes into creating and delivering a social mission campaign at Unilever? Kosala Hewamadduma, Global Marketing Director, reveals his Top 5 tips for creating successful brand campaigns that have a positive social impact on the communities around us, as well as his experiences of developing future leaders across Africa...

#### Follow us: https://lnkd.in/dX8FzzN



Unilever 3,057,413 follo

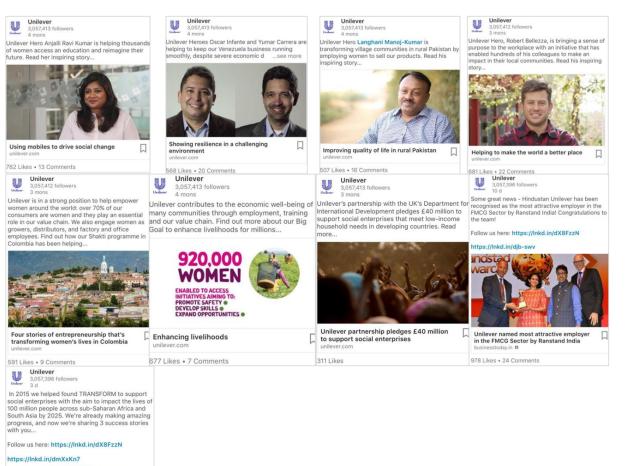
Unilever Hero Samuel Osoro is teaching children Kenya why they must wash their hands with soap. And there's a good reason why he's so determined t spread the message. Read his inspiring story...



Saving lives through one simple message 

542 Likes • 4 Comments



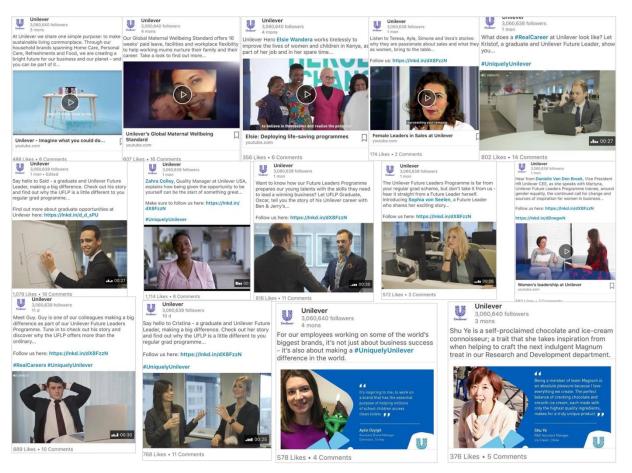




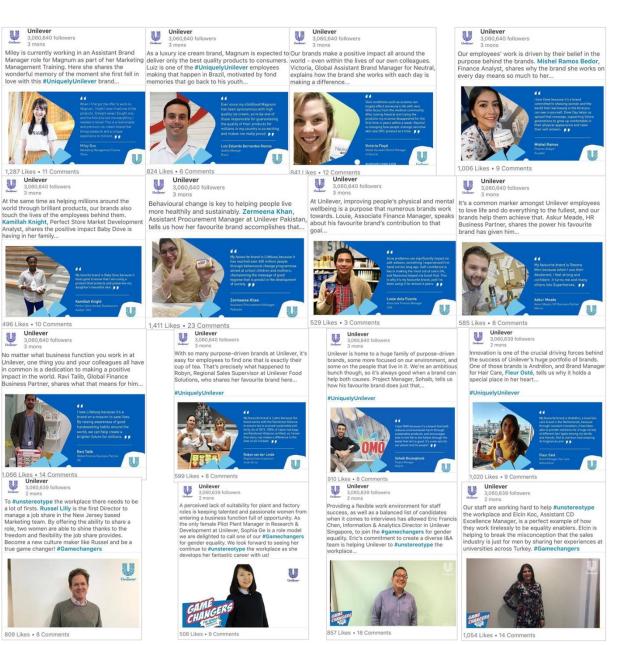
218 Likes • 1 Comment



#### Employee domain









#### Unilever 3,060,638 followers 2 mons U

The Middle-East is a region where establishing a gender-balanced talent pool is particularly challenging. Female talent at leadership level is therefore significantly underrepresented, but at Unilever in Dubai, VP of Home Care, **Ageel Angawi** doing everything in his power to change that. As on of our **#Camechangers** for gender equality, Ageel believes in the potential of female talent and works tirelessly to mentor young women, enabling them to tirelessly to mentor young women, enabling them to break barriers and **#Unstereotype** the workplace.



701 Likes • 12 Comments

Unilever 3,060,638 followers 2 mons U

2 mons The road to gender diversity in the workplace can seem long and hard. However, **#gamechangers** like Kathy Degouivea-Smith, HR Director Africa, are proving that if you take the challenge head on you can become a new culture maker. Kathy helped nurture a more gender and racially diverse workforce - one that is already having a positive impact on the business, helping shift mindsets and **#unstereotype** the workplace. The take the set of the set



Unilever 3,060,638 follo 1 mon

Anone Mariéme Jamme, technologist, coder and educatior activist who works tirelessly to empower girls and women through education, empowerment, mentoring, leadership and economic development was in Reclfe, Brazil last weekend leading the first delighted and proud to be part of this movement in a weekend full of learning, challenges and inspiration powered by lamtheCode, Meriéme's organization which used all its efforts to teach socially vulnerable girls and women how to code. #UniquelyUnilever #iamthecode iamthecode



546 Likes • 5 Co

Unilever 3,060,638 followers

Unilever Tea Kenva is home to 16,000 employees

Uniever Tea Kerya is home to 16,000 employees, with wome representing an estimated 32% of the workforce. With #gamechangers like Irene Ng'ang'a, Welfare Manager, we're taking our responsibilities to our workforce seriously. Irene has helped ensure the safety of women in the workplace and the local villages. We're working closely with UN Women on the "Leave NO One Behind" campign to raise awareness and drive collective action to create safe spaces for women and quirs in and around our Kericho plantations. #Unstereotype



U

"What I really love about working with AXE is that it's willing to try something different. That's what find your magic' is all about in the end; celebrating the things that make us different." – Ignacio Varela,



Unilever Unilever 3,057,414 followers 4 mons A mons At Unilever you can shape your own path - working with the brands and people that drive our sustainable business growth and create a bright future. Take a look at where a role with Unilever could take you... http://ow.ly/t0Di30hk8vK

Professionals 

900 Likes • 12 Comments

Unilever 3,060,638 followers As a business function in Zimbabwe, manufacturing As a business function in *Limbabwe*, manufacturing is an area where the majority of roles are still held by men. Working to **#Unsterectype** that workplace is Melody Makuvise, the first ever female Machine Operator on our Savory Royco line. As one of our **#Gamechangers** for gender equality, Melody is a role model inspiring other women to follow their dreams with her motto; "Never let fear get in the way of greatness".



Unilever 3,060,640 followers

Say hello to LEVEL3, a co-working space that pushes Say hello to LEVELS, a co-working space that pushe the boundaries of collaboration and corporate innovation. Built within the Unilever regional headquarters in Singapore, LEVELS brings together Unilever, startups, and entrepreneurs to encourage innovation and create new partnerships that deliver real and meaningful business impact.



Unilever 3,057,413 followers 4 mons A mons Big businesses are getting bigger, and smaller ones now operate on a global level. With competition heating up, companies look to the next generation leaders to help them adapt, survive and thrive. Hindustau Unilever Future Leader, Rajat Garg, shares his top three reasons why tomorrow's leaders should join the UFLP to kick-start their management careers...



265 Likes • 4 Comments

Unitever 3,060,638 followers 2 nons In Pakistan, Field Sales is a career path dominated by men, but one of our #Gamechangers for gender equality has used relationship building skills and sheer passion to start changing that. As the first female Area Manager in Pakistan, Faizafak Khan is at the core of our mission to #Unstereotype the workplace through her work championing inclusion and conducting wellbeing sessions to support and inspire women around her.



#### 2.343 Likes • 68 Comments Unilever 3,060,638 follo 2 mons

Jamois One of the keys to having a diverse workforce is to provide a flexible work environment. Not only does offering the option of flexi-hours and job sharing enable you to retain valuable staff, it can create a bigger impact on the business too. Two of our #Gamechangers, Angela Kennepohl and Daphre van den Hoek are Overheads Analysts from Holland who job share - not only has it allowed these two busy mums to continue working, they have manage to exceed expectations and truly excel in the job sharet #Unstereotype



Unilever 3,057,413 follo

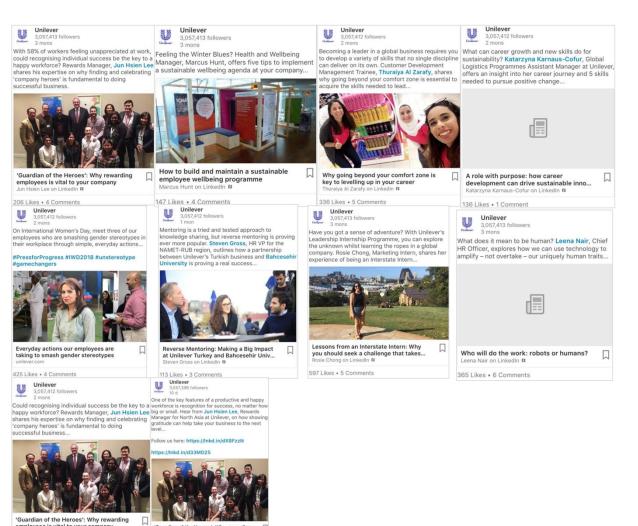
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Tomorrow's leaders making a difference today – 5 benefits of being a Future Lea... Carlos Felipe Minelli on LinkedIn 🛙

257 Likes • 4 Comments





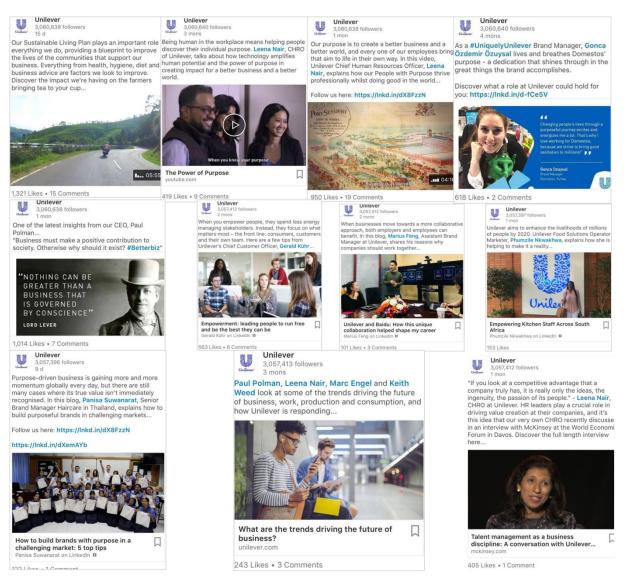
'Guardian of the Heroes': Why rewarding employees is vital to your company

181 Likes • 3 Comments

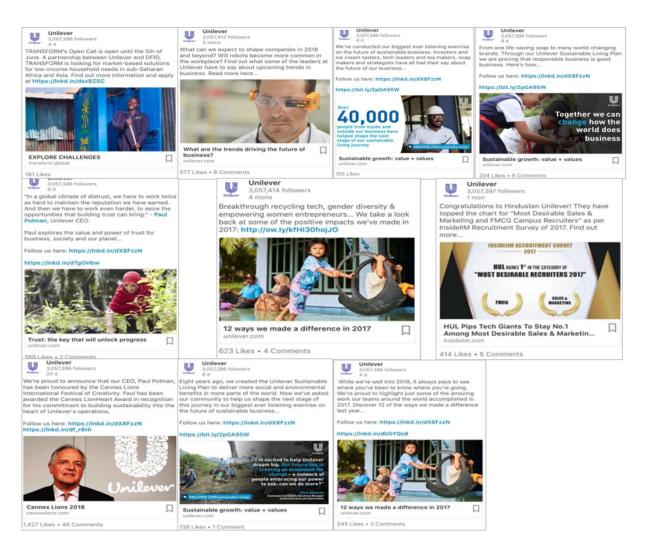
'Guardian of the Heroes': Why rewarding employees is vital to your company 169 Likes • 3 Comments



#### Shareholder domain

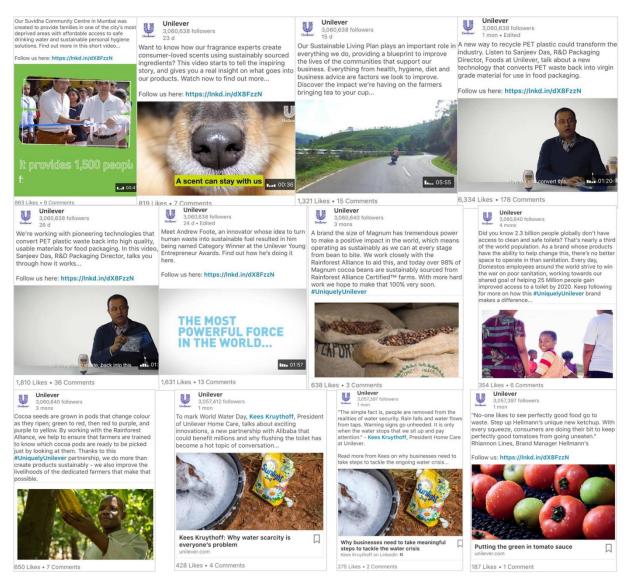




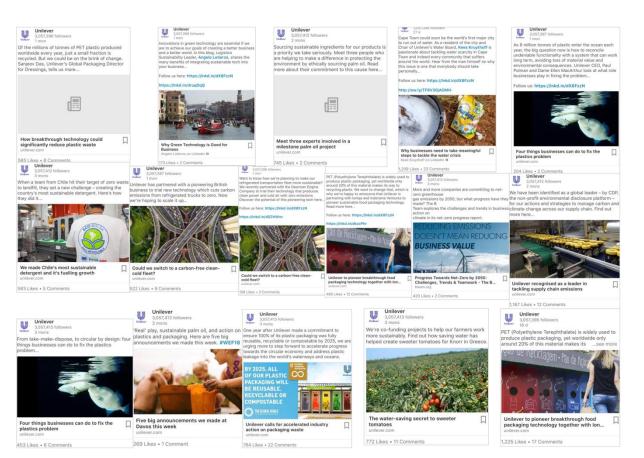




#### Environment domain

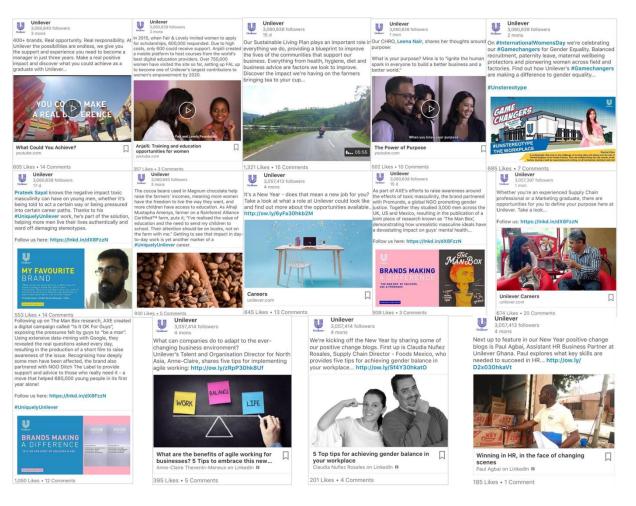








#### Societal domain







100 Likes

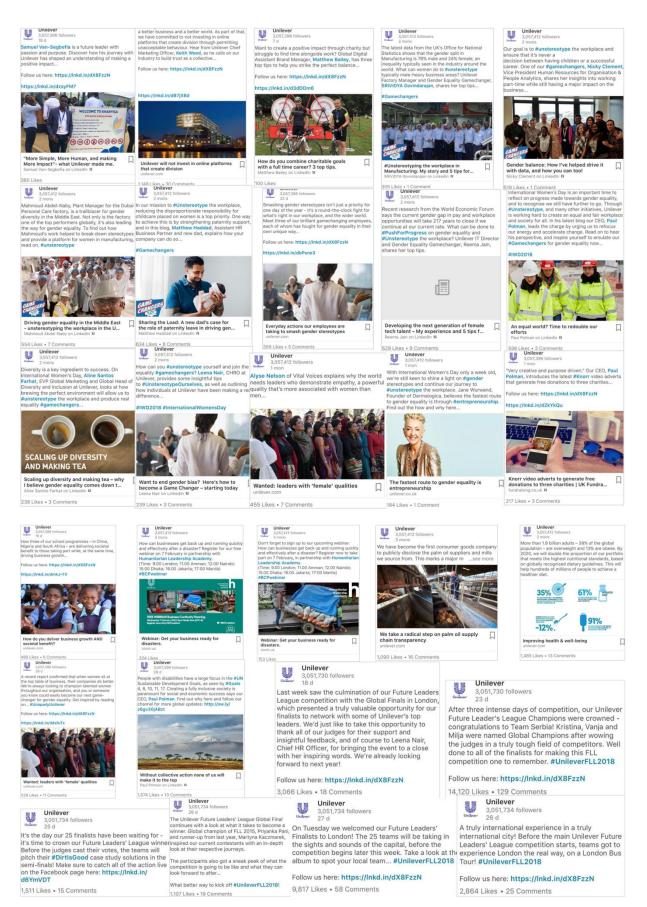
415 Likes • 2 Comments

431 Likes • 8 Comments

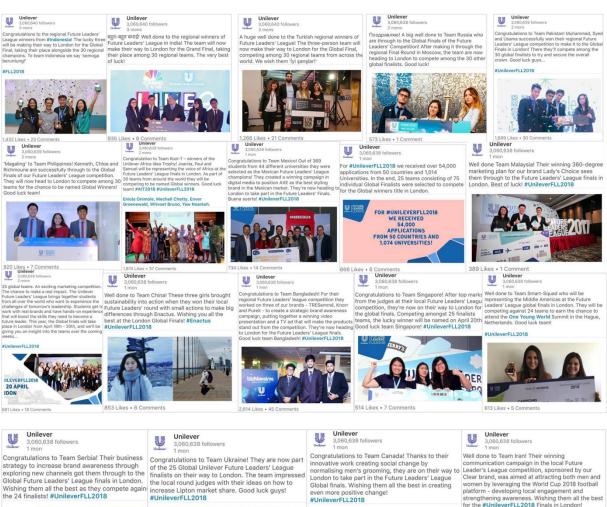
Palencia, Ana on Linkedin I 473 Likes • 5 Comments

70 Likes











703 Likes • 11 Comments Unilever 3,060,638 followers 1 mon

Congratulations to Team Japan! Their strategy to expand the market share of our Axe deodorant brand got them through to the Future Leaders' League finals in London. Good luck Team Japan! #UnileverFLL2018

#### Follow us: https://lnkd.in/dX8FzzN



673 Likes 5 Comments Unilever

3,060,638 followers Well done to Team Thailand! They will be heading to

London as part of 25 teams from around the world to take part in the Future Leaders' League global finals. Wishing them all the best! **#UnileverFLL2018** 

#### Follow us: https://lnkd.in/dX8FzzN



1,525 Likes • 6 Comments



387 Likes • 4 Comments Unilever 3,060,638 followers

1 mon Congratulations to Team NAME! The winning local Future Leaders' League team in the U.A.E. wowed the ludges by creating a 3-year business plan to launch a Simple e-commerce platform. The team will now head to the #UnileverFLL2018 finals in London, competing against 24 other teams to beccome global winners!

#### Follow us: https://inkd.in/dX8FzzN



Unilever 3,060,638 followers 1 mon

1 mon The countdown to the Future Leaders' League Global final is on! The final takes place in London between 18th and 20th April, with 25 teams competing to be crowned Global Winners. Which team will you be cheering for? #UnileverFLL2018

#### Follow us: https://lnkd.in/dX8FzzN



998 Likes • 11 Comments



### Unilever 3,060,638 followers 1 mon

1 mon Congratulations to Team Nigerial As part of the local Future Leaders' League competition they designed a strategy to gain market share from coffee by making Lipton tea the cooler bevarage amongst millennials. They will be heading to London in April to compete to become global winners in the #UnileverFLL2018 finals. Good luck!

#### Follow us: https://lnkd.in/dX8FzzN



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Incon It's nearly here! The start of the Global Finals of the Unilever Future Leaders' League is just a few days away. Beginning on April 18th, 25 teams from across the globe will present their solutions to some of the issues that Dirt Is Good is facing as a brand. We'llbe updating you as the competition progresses, so check back with us next week... #UnileverFLL2018

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761 Likes • 9 Comments

Well done to Team frant Their winning communication campaign in the local Future Leader's League competition, sponsored by our Clear brand, was aimed at attracting both men and women by leveraging the World Cup 2018 football platform - developing local engagement and strengthening awareness. Wishing them all the best for the **#UnileverFLL2018** Finals in London!



## 691 Likes • 16 Comments Unilever 3,060,638 followers 1 mon

1 mon Well done to Team Sri Lanka! Their winning case study for driving penetration in our homecare brand Rin got them through to the Future Leaders' League finals in London, giving them the oppurtunity to become Global Winners. Watch this space as they compete against 24 other teams. Good luck team Sri compete against 24 other teams. Good luck team Sri team State St compete against 24 other t Lanka! #UnileverFLL2018

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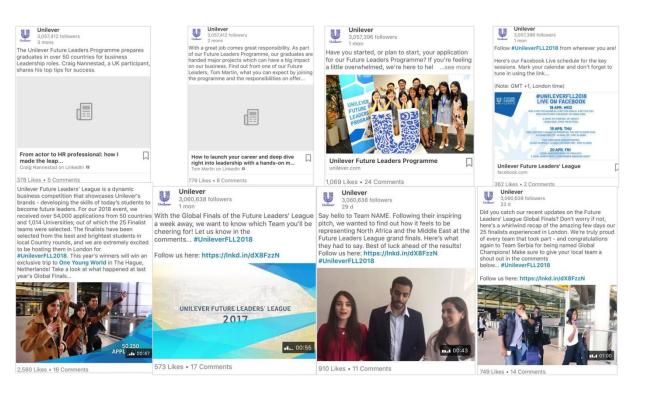


### Unilever 3,060,638 followers 29 d

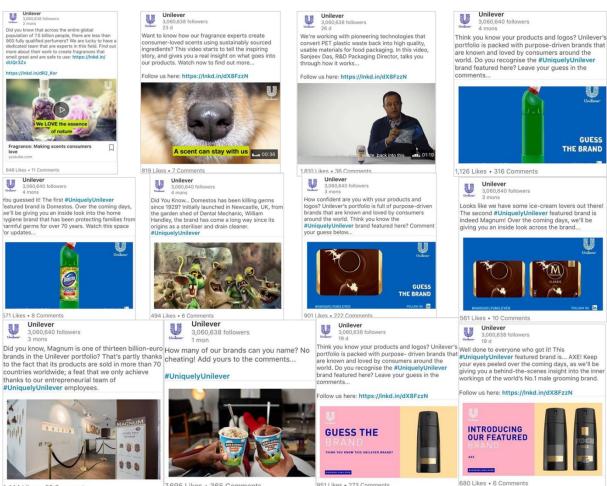
29 a) 11% the moment everyone here has been valit The judges have made their decisions on while our hulliant team's will receive the Unilever F1. Leaders League 2018 Trophy. So, without turk ado, we are delighted to fell you that Team S8 are this year's winners? Congratulations to K7 Vanja and Mila, and of course all the finalists making this FLL compatition one to remembe winners? J 2018







#### Customer domain



7,695 Likes • 365 Comments

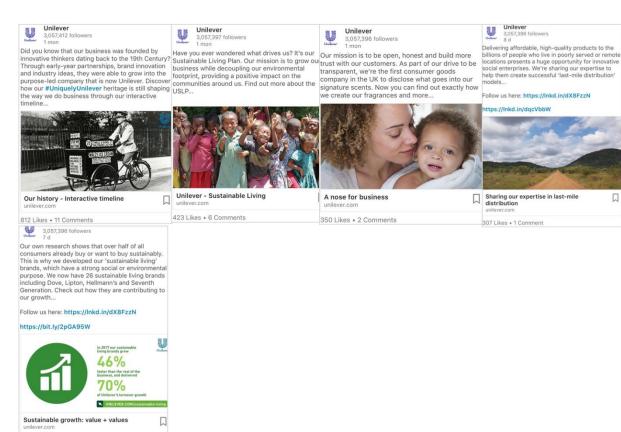
951 Likes • 273 Comments

76









385 Likes • 7 Comments



### Supplier domain

