Cities and Corporate Social Performance

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# Table of Contents

List of Tables ................................................................................................................. 3  
List of Figures ................................................................................................................ 3  
ABSTRACT ....................................................................................................................... 4  
DECLARATION ................................................................................................................ 5  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .................................................................................................... 6  
CHAPTER 1 ...................................................................................................................... 7  
INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 7  
CHAPTER 2 ...................................................................................................................... 10  
LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................................................................... 10  
2.1 Theories in use ......................................................................................................... 11  
2.1.1 Institutional theory ............................................................................................... 11  
2.1.2 Resource dependence theory ............................................................................. 11  
2.2 Interdisciplinary construct between Corporate Social Performance (CSP) and City ....... 14  
2.2.1 Corporate Social Performance (CSP) .................................................................. 14  
2.2.2 The role of city location in determining firm behaviours ........................................ 15  
2.2.2.1 Cities as institutional environment for corporate behaviours ......................... 16  
2.2.2.2 Exogenous role: Cities as locales to facilitate economic activities ................. 17  
2.2.3 Gap between Corporate Social Performance and City ......................................... 18  
2.2.3.1 What do we (not) know about CSP and Cities? .............................................. 18  
2.2.3.2 Why cities are important in determining CSP? .................................. 20  
2.3 The relationship between environmental issues and Corporate Social Performance ...... 22  
2.3.1 Environmental issues that induce firm motivation to go green ............................ 22  
2.3.2 Issues as stakeholder concerns for firm responsiveness ...................................... 23  
2.3.3 Issue as wicked problems .................................................................................... 24  
2.3.4 Why environmental issues and Corporate Social Performance? .......................... 26  
2.4 The relationship between urban competitiveness and Corporate Social Performance ...... 27  
2.4.1 Definitions .......................................................................................................... 27  
2.4.2 Urban competitiveness with hard and soft determinants in developed countries ....... 28  
2.4.3 Urban competitiveness in Bowstring models in developing countries .................... 30  
2.4.4 Why urban competitiveness and CSP? ................................................................ 31  
2.5 Reviews of main articles .......................................................................................... 32
CHAPTER 3
HYPOTHESES

3.1 Urban air pollution and Corporate Social Performance ........................................ 41
3.2 Urban competitiveness and Corporate Social Performance .................................... 44
3.3 City size and CSP .................................................................................................. 47
3.4 City size moderates the impact of urban air pollution on Corporate Social Performance .. 49

CHAPTER 4
METHODS

4.1 Data sources and procedures .................................................................................. 52
4.2 Measures ................................................................................................................ 53
  4.2.1 Dependent variables ......................................................................................... 53
  4.2.2 Independent variables ....................................................................................... 54
  4.2.3 Moderator variable ........................................................................................... 55
  4.2.4 Controlled variables ......................................................................................... 56
4.3 Data Analysis .......................................................................................................... 58

CHAPTER 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ............................................................................................. 60

CHAPTER 6
RESULTS

6.1 Control variables .................................................................................................... 70
6.2 Hypothesis 1: Urban air pollution and CSP ............................................................ 71
6.3 Hypothesis 2: Urban competitiveness ................................................................. 73
6.4 Hypothesis 3: City size and CSP .......................................................................... 74
6.5 Hypothesis 4: Interaction effects between urban air pollution and city size on CSP .... 77

CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION ................................................................................................................... 80

CONCLUSION ................................................................................................................. 85

REFERENCES ................................................................................................................. 86

APPENDIX ...................................................................................................................... 98
List of Tables

Table 1 Article review ................................................................. 33
Table 2 Summary of variables ..................................................... 57
Table 3 Descriptive statistics ......................................................... 60
Table 4 Levels of pollution in cities from different regions .................. 61
Table 5 Correlations among variables ........................................... 69
Table 6 Results of Panel regression on Aggregate CSP using fixed effects, with lagged independent variables and no interaction ................................................. 70
Table 7 Results of Panel regression on Aggregate CSP using fixed effects, with lagged independent variables and including interactions .................................................... 72
Table 8 Results of Panel regression on Industry adjusted CSP using random effects, with lagged independent variable and no interaction .................................................. 75
Table 9 Results of Panel regression on Industry adjusted CSP using random effects, with lagged independent variables and including interaction ............................................ 76
Table 10. A roster of cities ............................................................ 98

List of Figures

Figure 1 Literature review map ..................................................... 10
Figure 2 Conceptual Framework .................................................. 40
Figure 3 Corporate Social Performance in different firm sizes over years .................. 63
Figure 4 Corporate Social Performance across cities over years ..................... 64
Figure 5 Corporate Social Performance across industries over years ................... 65
Figure 6 Industry-related Corporate Social Performance across cities over years ........ 66
Figure 7 Relationship between PM10 and Corporate Social Performance (Aggregate) across cities over years ................................................................. 67
Figure 8 Interaction plots of SO2 and City Size on Aggregate CSP (left) and Industry adjusted CSP (right) ................................................................. 77
Figure 9 Interaction plot of CSP and PM10 on Aggregate CSP ........................... 78
Figure 10 Interaction plot of NO2 and City Size on Industry adjusted CSP ............... 79
ABSTRACT

This study examines how and why pollution levels in global cities influence the adoption of corporate social performance (CSP) by firms headquartered in these cities. Drawing on resource-dependence and institutional theories, this study found that urban air pollution is likely to decrease CSP due to low level of regulatory stringency and firms’ cost-reduction motives. However, our research also discovered that environmental CSP is higher when urban air pollution increases in large cities, while environmental CSP is lower when air pollution increases in small cities. Unveiling the influence of city-level characteristics on CSP has a number of theoretical and managerial implications: (1) **Theoretically**, the adoption of CSP studies at the city level refines institutional theory and resource-dependence theory on drivers of CSP at the subnational (city) level, which hitherto focused on the national and organisational levels. (2) **Regarding practical relevance**, policymakers can benefit from understanding the mechanisms that explain the relationships between their cities’ environmental concerns and CSP.

**Keywords**: Corporate social performance, city characteristics, urban air pollution, institutional theory, resource dependence theory
DECLARATION

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University’s digital research repository, the Library Search and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time. I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

SIGNED: _______________________________     DATE: ___________________________
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