Corporate social responsibility: An approach to peace?

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The responsibility to promote sustainable development should be a joint effort among government, industry and other organizations. They can share the responsibilities and commitments that countries have with regard to the ratification of the global plans of action, such as Agenda 21, Kyoto Protocol and Agenda 2030. Delai and Takahashi (2012) explain that the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the approach to sustainable development in the organizational scope. Nowadays, some of the biggest concerns are the role and impact of corporate actions on society and the planet. This article aims to explore how organizations could address the issue of just peace; it presents two initiatives the Global Compact and Agenda 2030 as CSR initiatives that they could resort. The entrepreneurial and corporate actions can indeed be configured as actions of peace if they consider the guidelines of United Nations Global Compact and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development as core of their business.

Key words: Business ethics, Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility, Global compact, Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization brings opportunities and challenges. According to Kordos and Vojtovic (2016), many of the challenges brought by globalization ”is due to the paralysis of the status of national states and the growth of the status of transnational corporations.” In this sense, Giddens (2012) states the difficulty faced by national states in order to deal with global issues, such as those related to health, the dissemination of AIDS, environment and the global economy.

The World Summit in Sustainable Development has recognized the relevance of the role of corporations to contribute to the poverty reduction in developing countries and Scholars have argued that the responsibility to promote sustainable development should be a joint effort among government, industry and other organizations, mainly multinational enterprises. Oetzel et al. (2010, pp 360-361) aim to “help businesses see the role that they can play in furthering peace – in creating more just and peaceful societies by starting with their own organization and the communities in which they work.”

Thus, business enterprises can engage in ethical behaviour and also can share the responsibilities and
commitments that countries have taken to the ratification of the global plans of action, such as the Agenda 21, Kyoto Protocol and Agenda 2030 (Getz and Ladek, 2006; Oetzel et al., 2010; Santiago et al., 2015). Data show that CSR activities are focused on philanthropic and volunteer aspects, obedience of labour laws and patterns to meet the requirements of certifications, in addition to presenting themselves as a social-marketing, window-dressing strategy, under the critical approach (Fleming and Jones, 2013; Mathis and Mathis, 2012; Crane and Matten, 2010; Sousa Filho et al., 2010). It is therefore relevant to mention the proactive corporate social responsibility even in Small and Medium Enterprises (Torugsa et al., 2013). Nowadays, some of the biggest concerns are the role and impact of corporate actions on the environment. The question refers to the problem that is configured to the organizations actions to guarantee human rights and peace and the impact of these actions on the environment. The research question is: what are the actions business enterprises and organizations may take to guarantee human rights and peace? Thus, this article aims to explore how organizations could address the issue of just peace (Galtung, 1969) and presents initiatives that business enterprises and other organizations can use in order to deal with peace matters, according to the presented theoretical framework. This article is important due to the lack of academic production regarding CSR and Just Peace and by calling the attention of organizations and business entrepreneurs to the UN initiatives that can broaden and foster sustainable development.

Conceptual approach: Csr and just peace

Four concepts were considered in this study: corporate social responsibility, sustainability, sustainable development, and just peace. CSR means the approach of sustainable development in the corporate environment (Delai and Takahashi, 2012) and, in this sense, the Brundtland Report (WDCD, 1987) called “Our Common Future” was quoted. It defines sustainable development as development that satisfy the needs of the now without jeopardizing the capability of generations of tomorrow to satisfy their own needs. However it is important to present Caroll’s pyramid initial model of CSR that includes four dimensions: philanthropic, ethical, legal and economic (Caroll, 1991) because of its pioneers’ and best known aspects, even though some criticism as it does not consider the environmental aspect and the supremacy of the economic dimension (Baden, 2016).

In respect of sustainability, the research resort to Elkington’s (1998) triple bottom line, or People, Planet, and Profit. Thus, this research address the concept of Corporate Sustainability Responsibility involving social, economic and environmental dimensions, or circles (Visser, 2017). The area of intersection of the three circles is considered sustainable. Thus, an action to be sustainable must meet the three dimensions.

The concept of just peace adopted in this study is based on Galtung (1969) which contemplates the aspects of Negative Peace, which means lack of direct violence and Positive Peace, which means lack of structural violence. This research emphasize that structural violence is the result of the way institutions are organized that privilege some people or groups with goods and political influence, improving their well-being to the detriment of the well-being of other people. Thus, positive peace refers to the promotion of social arrangements that reduce social and economic injustice, inequalities of race, gender and ecological imbalances as barriers to peace. We can only have just peace when and where human rights are respected and all human beings have the same chance to achieve their full potential.

In the end, it worthwhile to mention some research on Business for Peace arena (Oetzel et al 2010, Fort 2015, Katsos 2016, Miklian 2017). The first built in previous research also presented specific forms that business enterprises can promote peace, including conflict management, besides promoting economic, obeying international and local law, and principles of external valuation, fostering a sense of community, and engaging in track-two diplomacy and conflict sensitive practice and risk assessment (Oetzel et al. 2010, p. 362). The latter also suggests five assertions for how businesses may create peace. They are “fostering economic development; encouraging local development facilitates local capacities for peace; importing international norms improves democratic accountability; firms can constrain the drivers or root causes of conflict; and undertaking direct diplomatic efforts with conflict actors builds and/or makes peace.” (Miklian 2017 p.9)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research carried out a qualitative and exploratory study in order to fulfill its objectives, according to Blaikie (2010). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) named Agenda 2030 and the Global Compact were the two possibilities for business enterprises and other organizations to engage in human rights and just peace issue, under their CSR programs showed in this study. They were chosen in the United Nations Development actions, based on the maturity of the former and the hope of lasting achievement of the latter.

Finally, this research exhibits a case study on Brazilian enterprises signatories of the Global Compact, resorting to public data retrieved at the Global Compact website. The types of organization and randomly selected 10 organisations were analysed and their sustainability reports verified.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Some initiatives have been developed in order to ensure
that corporations get involved in the themes of human rights and peace. Code of Conduct, Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) named Agenda 2030 are some of them. For this article, the Global Compact and the Agenda 2030 are considered.

The Global Compact

The Global Compact advises that companies accept, support and promote a set of principles related to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. They are based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. In this sense, the Global Compact principles are:

a) Human Rights:

i) Businesses should promote and acknowledge the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
ii) Ensure they are not involved in human rights abuses.

b) Labour:

i) Businesses need to maintain the freedom of association and acknowledge the right to joint trading;
ii) Eradication of all types of forced and mandatory work;
iii) The elimination of child labour; and
iv) Elimination of unfair treatment in terms of recruitment and job.

c) Environment:

i) Businesses need to provide a preventive measure to environmental issues;
ii) Be involved in activities to facilitate higher environmental responsibility; and support the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

d) Anti-corruption:

i) Businesses need to fight corruption to the fullest, including bribery and extortion.

The corporations involved in the Global Compact are committed to these principles in their business. Accepting this orientation, business enterprises and other organizations are able to operate their business while respecting the corporate sustainability and social responsibility.

Furthermore, there are the UN Global Compact’s Action Platforms that aims to convene leaders, experts, civil society, business, Governments and UN partners to face challenges and act on SDGs. The platforms are: 1) reporting on SDGs; 2) Financial innovation for the SDGs; 3) Pathways to Low-Carbon and Resilient Development; 4) Health is Everyone’s Business; 5) Decent Work in Global Supply Chains; 6) Water Security through Stewardship; 7) Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; 8) Business for Humanitarian Action; and 10) Breakthrough Innovation.

Brazilian organizations and the global compact

According to the Global Compact website, there are 689 Brazilian organizations indexed with the principles of the Global Compact. Fifty four percent of them are business enterprises actively following the principles, while 12.9% are enterprises that are inactive. Thirty six percent of them are small or medium-sized enterprises, while 35% are companies (Figures 1 and 2).

Ten organisations were randomly selected from the list for a closer review of the Sustainability Reports on their websites. According to studies, some organizations sign the agreement but do not follow the Global Compact principles with governance and transparency, releasing public reports.

Upon searching, only 4 out of 10 organisations published a Sustainability Reports on their websites (Figure 3).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Agenda 2030

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also called 2030 Agenda, are shared by the universal alliance between the continents to eradicate poverty, save the planet, and make sure that everybody in the planet has peace and affluence (Figure 4).

Figure 5 shows the SDGs formed by 17 goals associated to, integrated and indivisible 169 targets. They were built on the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) published in 2015 (Figure 6).

The new 17 goals involve peace and justice, economic inequality, sustainable consumption, climate change, innovation etc. They are intertwined: the way to successfully achieve one goal might entail handling challenges that are closely related. The SDGs operate in one spirit and are practical in making the correct choices to better life sustainably for tomorrow generations. They give straightforward guidelines and targets for all nation to adhere to based on their own priorities and environmental issues worldwide.

Figure 6 shows the 17 goals have the following themes: no poverty, no hunger, good health, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, renewable
energy, good jobs and economic growth, innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption, life below water, life on land, peace and justice and partnership for the goals.

From the following link, the UN description of each goal is presented in detail: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html):

1° No Poverty

Eliminating poverty is one of the highest problems of man today. Even though the number of extreme indigent individuals reduced from 1.9 billion to 836 million between 1990 and 2015, many still can get their most basic needs. Worldwide, more than 800 million people live on less than US$1.25 a day; many do not have enough food, clean drinking water and sanitation. Millions
Global Compact Brazilian organizations and public sustainability report

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>Conselho Federal de Administracao</td>
<td>Public Sector Organization</td>
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Figure 3. Brazilian organization signatories, type and publication of sustainability report (elaborated by the author from UN data).

Figure 4. The 5 P's of sustainable development (reproduced from https://br.pinterest.com/pin/558868634991524880/).

Figure 3. Brazilian organization signatories, type and publication of sustainability report (elaborated by the author from UN data).

of people have been taken out of poverty due to fast economic growth in nations like China and India, but their progress is not equal. Women have the tendency to be poorer than men do, because they sometimes cannot get salary job, education and property. Prosperity is also scarce in other regions, like South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 80% of acute poverty people. New challenges caused by climate change, conflict and food insecurity imply there is need for more work to eliminate poverty. SDGs are a daring engagement to complete what was started, and put a full stop to poverty in all aspects and ways by 2030. This entails reaching out to the most unprotected providing access to necessary resources and services, and helping areas damaged by conflict and climate-related disasters.

2° No hunger

With fast economic growth and improved agricultural activities in recent years, the number of undernourished people has reduced by almost half. Many unindustralized countries suffering from famine and starvation are now able to supply the nutritional demands of the most unprotected. Central and East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean have made huge success in eliminating acute starvation. These are great achievements based on the goals given by the first Millennium Development Goals. Regrettably, acute starvation and inadequate nutrition are still a great hindrance to advancement in a number of nations. As at 2014, it is estimated that 795 million people are severely undernourished, due to environmental degradation, drought and loss of biodiversity. More than 90 million children below five years old are terribly underweight. In addition, each person in every four is starving in Africa. The aim of SDGs is to eradicate all kinds of starvation and inadequate nutrition by 2030, ensuring everyone – mostly children – get enough nutritious food throughout the year. This entails ensuring sustainable agricultural activities: helping small sized farmers and letting even access to land, technology and markets. International cooperation is also inquired to have investment in infrastructure and technology to expand agricultural productivity. Jointly with the other goals outlined here, starvation can be eradicated by 2030.

3° Good Health

The United Nations Development Programme has successfully reduced child mortality, improved maternal health and fought HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. More than 50% decline in preventable child deaths has been recorded since 1990, worldwide. There was 45% decline in maternal mortality globally. New HIV/AIDS infections dropped by 30% between 2000 and 2013, and more than 6.2 million people have been rescued from malaria. Irrespective of this unbelievable success, there are more than 16,000 children’s deaths daily caused by curable diseases like measles and tuberculosis. Daily,
many women die during pregnancy or from childbirth related issues.

4° Quality Education

Since 2000, there has been great advancement in obtaining basic primary education. The overall number of enrolment in developing nations was 91% in 2015, and the number of school dropouts reduced by almost half, globally. Literacy rates have increased dramatically; a number of girls are now admitted in school. These are outstanding achievements. Progress has been difficult in some developing countries due to high levels of poverty, armed conflicts and other exigencies. In Western Asia and North Africa, ongoing-armed conflict has driven many students from school. This is alarming. While Sub-Saharan Africa had the greatest achievements in primary school enrolment in the developing regions – from 52% in 1990, up to 78% in 2012 – large disparities remain. Children from the poorest households are up to four times more likely to be out of school than those of the richest households. There is high difference between rural and urban areas. It is reaffirmed that the attainment of quality education is one of the keys to sustainable development. The goal is for all girls and boys to have finished primary and secondary school free of charge by 2030. Other goals are to allow all to have vocational
training, eradicate gender and wealth differences, and obtain general access to quality higher education.

5° Gender Equality

Stopping all kinds of biases against women and girls is not only a fundamental human right, but also important to speed up sustainable development. It has been shown umpteen times, that the empowerment of women and girls has a great impact, and is a catalyst for economic growth and development all way round. Since 2000, UNDP, UN partners and the rest of the world have concentrated on gender disparity. Outstanding achievements have been obtained since then. There are now more girls in school unlike 15 years ago, and most regions have obtained gender equality in primary school. There are up to 41% women now engaged in salary jobs besides farming, compared to 35% in 1990. The aim of SDGs is to work on these achievements to put a stop to marginalization against women and girls all over. There still exists large disparities in the labour market in some areas, with women not allowed to have jobs systematically. Others include sexual violence and exploitation, uneven sharing of free of charge care and household chores, and relegation in public offices.

6° Clean water and sanitation

Insufficient supply of water has effects on over 40% of people worldwide, a disturbing number forecasted to increase with increased global temperatures by virtue of climate change. Though 2.1 billion people now have better water sanitation since 1990, diminishing supplies of safe drinking water is a huge issue affecting every continent. In 2011, 41 countries experienced shortage of water; 10 of them almost lost their renewable freshwater supply, depending on alternative sources. Increasing drought and desertification worsen these trends. By 2050, one in every four persons will be disturbed by repeated water scarcity. To ensure general accessibility to safe and cheap drinking water for all by 2030 demands that investment should be high on quality infrastructure, sanitation facilities, and support hygiene all way round. It is important to protect and restore water-related ecosystems like forests, mountains, wetlands and rivers to fight against shortage of water. Cooperation that is more international is also required to support water efficiency and treatment technologies in developing nations.

7° Renewable Energy

Between 1990 and 2010, the number of people accessing electricity rose by 1.7 billion, and with continual increase in world population, the demand for low cost energy will also increase. The dependence of the world economy on fossil fuels, and increased greenhouse gas emissions are causing dramatic changes to our climate system. This is affecting the entire world. Attempts to support clean energy have led over 20% of global power to be created by renewable sources as of 2011. Yet, one in five persons does not have electricity, and as the demand keeps rising there needs for a considerable rise in the production of renewable energy all over the world. To ensure general accessibility to affordable electricity by 2030 there is need to invest in clean sources of energy like solar, wind and thermal. Using cost-effective standards for a large number of technologies can lower the world electricity consumed by buildings and industry by 14%. This means not using almost 1,300 mid-size power plants. It is important to expand infrastructure and upgrade technology to provide clean energy in all developing countries to support growth and help the environment.

8° Good Jobs and Economic Growth

For the past 25 years, there has been reduction in the number of workers living in abject poverty, amidst the lasting effect of the 2008 economic crisis and world recession. In developing nations, the middle class constitutes over 34% of total recruitment – a number that has almost tripled between 1991 and 2015. With the continual recovery of the world economy continues, there is slower growth, huge disparities, and insufficient jobs forever increasing labour force. According to the International Labour Organization, over 204 million persons were jobless in 2015. The SDGs advance sustained economic growth, higher levels of productivity and technological creativity. Supporting entrepreneurship and creation of employment are vitals means to eliminate forced labour, slavery and human trafficking. With these aims, the goal is to provide complete and lucrative jobs for all including men and women by 2030.

9° Innovation and Infrastructure

Investing in infrastructure and creativity are important for economic growth and development. With more than half, the world population residing in cities, mass transport and renewable energy are now very vital, just like the growth of new industries and information and communication technologies. Advancement in technology is a means to provide permanent panaceas to economic and environmental issues, including creating new work and advancing energy efficiency. Advancing lasting industries
and investing in scientific research and innovation are vital to speed up sustainable development. Over 4 billion people cannot use the Internet, with 90% from the developing world. Bridging this digital divide is important for ensuring even accessibility to information and knowledge, and fostering of creativity and entrepreneurship.

10° Reduced Inequalities

It is reported that income disparity keeps rising; the richest 10% earn up to 40% of overall world income. The poorest 10% earn only between 2% and 7% of total world income. Inequality has risen by 11% in developing nations considering the population growth. These huge inequalities demand adopting of quality policies to enrich the bottom percentile of income earners, and advance economic inclusion of all irrespective of sex, race or ethnicity. Income disparity is a world concern that needs world solutions. This entails improving the regulation and monitoring of financial markets and institutions, supporting development help and foreign direct investment to places where the need is highest. Stimulating safe migration and mobility of people can bridge the huge divide.

11° Sustainable cities and communities

Over half of the population of the globe reside now in urban areas. By 2050, it might rise to 6.5 billion people – two-thirds of all humanity. Sustainable development cannot be possible if building patterns and the management of urban spaces is not hanged. The fast growth of cities in the developing world plus increased rural to urban migration has resulted in a boom in large cities. In 1990, there were ten large cities with over 10 million residents. In 2014, there were had 28 large-cities, residence to 453 million people. Abject poverty is mostly common in urban spaces and national and city governments strive to make room for the increasing population. Making cities safe and sustainable entails providing accessibility to safe and cheap housing, and improving slum houses. It also means to invest in public transport, create green public spaces, and improve urban planning and management for all to participate in.

12° Responsible consumption

To obtain economic growth and sustainable development there is need to lower our ecological footprint by changing our pattern of production and consumption of goods and resources. Water is consumed by agriculture most globally, and irrigation takes up to 70% of freshwater for human use. To obtain this goal, adequate handling of our joint natural resources and ways to dispose toxic waste and contaminants are vital. Supporting industries, businesses and consumers to recycle and diminish waste is also vital, as they will help developing countries to achieve more sustainable patterns of consumption by 2030. A great part of the world population consumes very less to meet even their important needs. Halving the per capita of global food waste at the retailer and consumer levels is also vital to create sufficient production and supply chains. This can help with food security, and shift us towards a more resource efficient economy.

13° Climate action

Nearly all nations of the world experience directly the great impacts of climate change. Greenhouse gas emissions keep rising, and are now more than 50% higher than their 1990 level. In addition, global warming causes permanent changes to our climate system, which will threaten permanent effect if actions are not taken now. The annual average losses from earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical cyclones and flooding lead to hundreds of billions of dollars, requiring an investment of US$6 billion yearly in disaster risk management alone. The goal aims to mobilize $100 billion annually by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries and help mitigate climate-related disasters. Helping more vulnerable regions, such as land locked countries and island states, adapt to climate change must go hand in hand with efforts to integrate disaster risk measures into national strategies. It is still possible, with the political will and a wide array of technological measures, to limit the increase in global mean temperature to two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. This requires urgent collective action.

14° Life below water

The world’s oceans – their temperature, chemistry, currents and life – control the systems of the earth making it conducive for humans. The management of these resources is important for humankind to offset the impacts of climate change. More than three billion people rely on marine and coastal biodiversity to live. Nowadays, 30%of the world’s fish stocks are over- utilized, below the level where they can bring forth reasonable yields. Oceans also take in about 30% of the carbon dioxide humans give out, and there was have 26% increase in ocean acidification since the onset of the industrial revolution. Marine contamination, a great deal emanating from land-based sources, is now getting to frightening levels, with an average of 13,000 pieces of plastic litter seen on every square kilometre of ocean. The SDGs
want to handle and defend marine and coastal ecosystems from contamination, and handle the effects of ocean acidification. Supporting preservation and the good use of ocean-based resources through international law can fight some of problems seen in our oceans.

15° Life on Land

Humans rely on the earth and ocean to live. Plant supplies 80% of our food, and agriculture is our vital economic resource and means of development. Forests provide 30% of the earth’s surface, supplying important shelters for millions of species, provide clean air and water; and are used to fight climate change. Now, our lands are being degraded, and arable lands are lost at 30 to 35 times the historical rate. Drought and desertification keep rising yearly, causing loss of 12 million hectares and affecting poor areas worldwide. Of the 8,300 animal breeds, 8% have gone into extinction and 22% are on the verge going into extinction. The aim of SDGs is to preserve and restore the usage of terrestrial ecosystems like forests, wetlands, drylands and mountains by 2020. Stopping deforestation is also needed to fight the effect of climate change. There is need to urgently lower the loss of natural habitats and biodiversity which are part of our common heritage.

16° Peace and Justice

Lasting development cannot be achieved if there is no peace, stability, human rights and good governance according to the rule of law. Our world is increasingly been segregated. Some areas have some forms of peace, security and prosperity, while others experience permanent violence and conflicts. This must be handled. High rates of armed violence and insecurity can destroy the advancement of a nation, influencing economic growth and often cause malice that can last forever. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture prevail where conflict thrives or where there is no rule of law; and countries must endeavour to defend those most vulnerable. The SDGs want to stop all kinds of violence, and join with governments and communities to put full end to conflict and insecurity. Establishing the rule of law and advancing human rights can reduce the movement of illegal arms and encourage developing nations to participate in the institutions of world governance.

17° Partnership for the goals

The realization of the SDGs is possible by strong commitment to global partnership and cooperation. While official developments help from developed nations increased by 66% between 2000 and 2014, humanitarian crises brought on by conflict or natural disasters continue to demand more financial resources and aid. Many countries need Official Development Assistance to support growth and trade. The world today is more inter-related than in time past. Improving access to technology and knowledge is vital to distribute ideas and encourage creativity. Coordinating policies to help developing countries manage their debt, as well as promoting investment for the least developed, is important to obtain sustainable growth and development. The goals aim to support North-South and South-South cooperation by supporting national plans to achieve all the goals. Promoting international trade, and assisting developing nations increase their exports, is all part of obtaining a universal rules-based and equitable trading system that is fair and open, and beneficial to all.

Conclusion

Considering the literature review and data analysis, this study supports the aim that business enterprises and other organizations must be held accountable beyond providing jobs, making profits to the shareholders and obey the law. Thus, two UN initiatives that organizations and business enterprises can resort to in order to work with the promotion of just peace were displayed. One goal is to put on the table initiatives that could be used by the organizations to implement actions that allow them to show they care about social responsibility as a standard that can make a difference to the way the society sees and accepts their business (Visser, 2017).

Finally, the question is:

What actions business enterprises and organizations may take to guarantee human rights and peace? propose that organizations can develop CSR actions based on the Global Compact principles and sustainable development goals - Agenda 2030 in order to face world peace problems and contribute to sustainable development. Their CSR actions must go beyond Carroll’s pyramid model. These actions should include all three aspects: social, economic and environmental, to be characterized as sustainable, within the sustainability model presented by Elkington (1998), called the triple bottom line, or People, Planet, and Profit. The entrepreneurial and corporate actions can indeed be configured as actions of peace if they meet this proposed model. For a practical experience in developing country, reference was made to Warner and Sullivan (2017) and UNCTD (2001), the former as an example of the role of academic applied research to develop a partnership for sustainable development between extractive industries,
government, civil society, and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the later for guidance for action. As suggestions for futures studies, researchers can study the subject in Latin American organizations. Moreover, in addition to organisations, a study on social activists work towards SDGs will be interesting to probe.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors acknowledge the support of IPRA Foundation, Federal University of São Francisco Valley (Univasf) and the University of Birmingham’s Brazil Visiting Scheme. They also appreciated the anonymous reviewers, Ville Uski for proofreading the paper and to Matheus Hariell and Fernando Fischer for their assistance in data collection.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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