



Disclosure on corporate and NGO cooperation in Poland – coming out or a low profile approach?

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Abstract

The first aim of the paper is to answer the question regarding the scope of the information on philanthropic cooperation revealed by corporations and charitable organizations in a transition country. We explore the findings from the content analysis of disclosures of 41 corporations and 82 foundations. The results showed that the scope of disclosure on corporate and NGO collaborations is small on both sides.

The second objective of the paper is to explore the reasons of the small scope of disclosure on corporations' and NGOs' collaborations. In order to achieve the second aim, we extended our analysis through interviews with CSR managers and directors of foundations. Firstly, some managers adopt the stance that when there is no legal requirements or even voluntary guidelines (like GRI Guidelines), no further disclosure on collaboration is necessary. Moreover, the managers of corporations tend to follow the materiality rule in voluntary disclosure and reveal information only in projects with the biggest budgets and/or major social impact. NGOs do not see the benefits for them in publishing detailed information about their collaboration with companies.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, NGOs, reporting, disclosure, collaboration.

Streszczenie

Poziom ujawnień korporacji i organizacji pozarządowych odnośnie do współpracy w zakresie działań filantropijnych w Polsce

Pierwszym celem artykułu jest odpowiedź na pytanie badawcze, jaki jest zakres ujawnianych informacji o współpracy korporacji i organizacji pozarządowych w Polsce. Dla realizacji tego celu zostały przeprowadzone badania ilościowe w formie analizy treści. Źródłem informacji wykorzystanych w badaniu są strony internetowe korporacji, fundacji oraz raporty społecznej odpowiedzialności. W badaniu wykorzystano ujawnienia 41 korporacji i 82 fundacji.

Drugim celem artykułu jest zbadanie przyczyn niskiego poziomu ujawnień informacji o współpracy korporacji i organizacji nienastawionych na zysk. Aby osiągnąć drugi cel, zostały przeprowadzone wywiady z menedżerami CSR w korporacjach i z dyrektorami wybranych fundacji. Niektórzy menedżerowie wskazali, że jeśli nie ma obowiązkowych wymagań, ujawnienia dobrowolne nie są konieczne. Ponadto podstawą do podjęcia decyzji o ujawnieniu informacji jest jej istotność i tylko projekty, na które korporacje wydają duże kwoty środków pieniężnych lub projekty o wysokim wpływie społecznym są odpowiednio opisywane. Organizacje pozarządowe nie dostrzegają natomiast korzyści z ujawnień odnośnie do współpracy z korporacjami.

Słowa kluczowe: społeczna odpowiedzialność przedsiębiorstwa, organizacje pozarządowe, ujawnienia, raportowanie, współpraca.

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Introduction

Corporate social responsibility started to be a topic of interest for many researchers when it became an interesting concept for corporations (Austin, 2000; Campbell et al., 2003; Jamali, Keshishian, 2009). Globalization, growth in the scale of the impact that business has on the environment and human lives (as well as knowledge on the subject) induced corporations to conduct philanthropic activities embracing environmental protection, aid to the poor, children and others in need. Moreover, the executives of corporations themselves are convinced that society expects business to take responsibility for environmental protection, help those in need, as well as take an active role in social life (CECP, 2008). The importance of corporate social responsibility is also a result of an increase in the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dealing with human health, protection of the environment and their influence on corporations. The awareness of the interdependence of corporations and individuals (customers, employees, investors) is higher. A corporation's future depends on its customers' health, future employees' competences and access to natural resources (Haas, 2010, p. 4).

However, the concentration on core activities aimed at generating profits and increasing shareholder value as well as the desire to separate economic and social activities (and the ability to take advantage of tax reductions) affects the decisions of many corporations' executives to transfer social activities to specialized organizations. These organizations (called charitable organizations, philanthropic organizations or NGOs) are willing to participate in such collaboration, seeing in it an opportunity to increase the scale of their operations and positive social impact (Conley, Williams, 2005). A special type of NGO is corporate foundations – they derive their funds from corporations but are legally separate entities.

Corporations presenting their impact on society and the environment in their CSR reports (also called sustainability reports) disclose information on the above mentioned topics. Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines (GRI, 2015) recommend that corporations should report in three main dimensions: economic, environmental and social. In the economic dimension, the company should present the organization's impacts on the economic conditions of its stakeholders, and on economic systems at local, national and global levels. In the environmental sphere, the entity should describe the organization's impacts on living and non-living natural systems, including ecosystems, land, air and water. The social dimension should embrace information on labor practices and decent work, human rights, society and product responsibility.

While activities and reporting in the field of environmental impact (see Deegan, Gordon, 1996; Guthrie, Parker, 1989; Roberts, 1991) and employees (Lewis et al., 1984; Roberts, 1990) was widely analyzed by researchers from various countries, philanthropic activity and disclosure, both by corporations and NGOs, are still less explored in the literature.

Recently, due to the increase in the number and scope of activities, as well as the growing impact on the environment by NGOs, expectations have risen regarding such

organizations' transparency (see Gray et al., 2006). In some developed countries, organizations such as Charity Navigator in the US or the Charity Commission in the UK monitor the NGO sector and the efficiency of the use of funds provided by donors. In Poland, there exists no organization that monitors the efficiency of NGOs' activities. There are only some organizations (like the Klon Jawor Association or the General Statistical Office) that provide information about the condition of the NGO sector in Poland.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) also developed specific guidelines on how NGOs should present their economic, environmental and social impact in sustainability reports (GRI, 2014). Research on sustainability reporting (Crespy, Miller, 2011) reveals that the scope of disclosure of NGOs is significantly lower than in the case of corporations. The reason for the small scope of disclosure may be the relatively low amount of resources governed by NGOs. The other possible reason for this situation may be their management's belief that the main source of social legitimacy is activities and they have no need to report anything that is beyond the legal requirement.

The paper has two main objectives:

- to examine the extent to which corporations and NGOs cooperate and disclose information about their collaboration (about donations, projects, and about partners and the partners' activities) in order to legitimize their functioning;
- to examine which factors influence the scope of disclosure on the collaboration.

The rest of the article is organized as follows. Section two presents the motives, benefits and barriers of corporation-NGO collaborations. In the third section we discuss the social and historical settings of corporation-NGO cooperations in Poland. The fourth section is devoted to CSR disclosure analyzed using legitimacy theory framework. In the fifth section we develop hypotheses and present a sample choice and methodology. Section six presents a discussion of the results. The paper ends with conclusions.

1. The social and historical setting of corporations and NGO cooperation in Poland

Our study focuses on the cooperation of NGOs with corporations in Poland, a country which has undergone a transformation from a socialist economy to a market economy. It created specific conditions for the cooperation of NGOs and corporations. In the socialist system, the profit-oriented sector was reduced to a minimum. Private economic activity and profit seeking were condemned as contrary to the assumptions of a functioning political and economic system. During communist party domination, most NGO activity was seen as potentially dangerous to the system as uncontrolled social movements. In the communist system, the state tried to resolve many social problems, for example using state agencies e.g., the care of orphans and education were provided by such agencies. Moreover, in the communist system, at least in theory, there was no

poverty or homelessness, and therefore there was no need for NGO operations focused on solving such problems (see Table 1).

Table 1. A short history of Polish foundations and associations

Time period	Description of the situation
During World War I	Most foundations in Poland went bankrupt (the foundations' capital located in banks was confiscated by the Russian Army)
The interwar period	10 000 associations, 3000 foundations were created
During World War II	Most foundations were liquidated – Frank's order and foundations law
Communist period	Again, all foundations were liquidated – the funds of charitable organizations in Poland were confiscated by the state

Source: Leś (2001).

It's been more than 20 years since the fall of communism in Poland but still some of its effects on beliefs and social behavior may be observed.

Firstly, the wealth of society and companies is smaller than that in Western Europe and the USA. One of the conditions for carrying out charitable activities or, more broadly, socially responsible operations, is a sufficiently high level of citizens' wealth, income and income variability (Crowson, 2009). Due to a lower level of wealth, the scale of charity and socially responsible activities is smaller. Secondly, there still exists a negative image of entrepreneurship and profit-oriented activities in post-communist countries (see Padelford, White, 2010). Thirdly, social activities have less positive connotations in society. Fourthly, Poland is a country with a relatively low level of public trust (see Wike, Holzgart, 2008). The low level of public trust translates into reduced confidence in social activities, as well as a lower level of trust in the voluntary disclosure of corporate social responsibility. Such disclosure can be regarded as a kind of corporate propaganda. Fifthly, because of the short (or at least interrupted) history of charitable activities in Poland, there is no notion of NGO transparency and accountability.

In the settings of a post-communist country, the scale of NGO and corporation collaboration is expected to be lower than in countries with a long-established civil society. Probably the level of disclosure on such cooperations would be reduced in comparison with countries with a long corporate charitable tradition. Therefore, the legitimization effect of social disclosure may be smaller than observed in other countries.

2. CSR disclosure in the light of legitimacy theory

One of the theories used in the research on corporate social responsibility (including social and environmental disclosure) is legitimacy theory. Legitimacy theory is the main theoretical framework used in this paper. Legitimacy theory (Deegan, Kamal,

2013, p. 117) posits that corporations and other organizations do not have any inherent right to exist or to obtain resources. In order to obtain such a right, they have to follow certain rules and show their usefulness to the society.

Lack of legitimacy may lead to an obstacle in resources being obtained by corporations (e.g. by the boycotting of its products or the bulk sale of shares by the shareholders) or by NGOs (by donors refraining from giving further financial support to the organization).

Legitimacy theory is used to explain why companies choose to disclose voluntarily information on social and environmental activities (see Harte, Owen, 1991). According to legitimacy theory, organizations undertake various activities in order to justify their operations in the eyes of society. Organizations conduct socially legitimizing activities in order to maximize access to resources and long-term survival (Krasodomska, 2013, pp. 47–48).

The concept of legitimacy is heavily based on the impact of a company on society. Campbell (2007) on the basis of a literature study, we have identified the following institutional factors that stimulate corporations to improve their legitimacy by acting in a social manner: public and private regulation, the presence of nongovernmental and other independent organizations that monitor corporate behavior, institutionalized norms regarding appropriate corporate behavior, associative behavior among corporations themselves, and organized dialogues among corporations and their stakeholders. Institutional settings differ significantly in various parts of the world. A differentiated social environment leads to the formation of other regulations and distinctive company behaviors (Doh, Guay, 2006).

In the case of corporations, gaining legitimacy can be achieved by showing the positive impact of the company on the environment in miscellaneous areas: relations with workers, impact on the natural environment or strengthening ties with local communities (Haas, 2010). The disclosure of information on cooperations with highly reputable NGOs may also have a legitimizing effect on a company. Deegan and Rankin (1996) conducted a study that confirmed that corporations try to use social responsibility reports to legitimize their actions. Du and Vieira (2012, p. 413) discovered that companies utilize a variety of tactics in order to gain legitimacy, including engagement in CSR activities addressing the needs of various stakeholders and cross-sector partnerships.

The cooperation of NGOs with corporations can be triggered by an NGO's perception of serious sustainability concerns that can be settled only through collaboration with corporations (e.g. due to decreased governmental funding). Du et al. (2011, p. 29) stress that firms can play a complementary role to governments and NGOs when they use their core competencies in responding to a social need. Factors affecting effective cooperation formation between NGOs and their partners, including corporations, listed by Samii et al. (2002) included the following: dependence on resources, commitment symmetry, purposes symmetry, intensive communication, mutual learning ability and similar cultural values.

The scope of legitimization of corporations may depend on the level of their cooperation with NGOs. Yaziji and Doh (2009, pp. 13–14) argue that firms are pushed by

NGOs to meet existing social expectations and legal requirements. In return, NGOs gain access to financial and nonfinancial resources and expertise from those corporations with whom they collaborate, managerial and technical skills, marketing leverage and other support. Austin (2000) in his Collaboration Continuum identified three levels of collaboration between corporations and NGOs: philanthropic, transactional, and integrative. The philanthropic level is characterized by the lowest degree of involvement of a corporation in philanthropic activities funded by the company. The philanthropic level of collaboration is typically short term, not repeatable and with a small amount of resources involved, including simple actions. The role of corporations is often limited to providing funds to selected NGOs. The transactional level includes both financial support and other forms of engagement, following the company's strategy. It is often conducted in the form of sponsorship contracts or longer cooperation contracts aimed at achieving mutual goals. This collaboration level involves more resources, cooperation is more systematic, and the value added for both parties is greater. The integrative level requires massive investment in development cooperation programs of both sides. At integrated level, a lot of resources on both sides are used, and the scope of cooperation is complex and shows a strong link with the missions of both parties.

Research conducted using the legitimacy theory framework in social and environmental disclosure focused mainly on the following issues:

- scope of company disclosures (Guthrie, Parker, 1990; Deegan, Gordon, 1996; Choi, 1999; Crespy, Miller, 2011),
- factors influencing voluntary disclosure on CSR (Trotman, 1981; Cowen et al., 1987),
- managers' motives to make particular social and environmental disclosures (Roberts, 1992; Adams et al., 1998).

Adams et al. (1998) identified three main parts of the social responsibility reports: employee, environmental and ethical. He examined the disclosures in six European countries: France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK. Their research results show that the main factors influencing the extent and nature of CSR disclosure was the size of corporation measured by revenue, and to a lesser extent the country of origin. The industry in which a corporation operates turned out to be irrelevant. Krasodomska (2010) states that the content of corporate social reports depends mainly on the enterprises' approach to CSR reporting (its estimated influence on the added value).

According to Adams et al. (1998), a positive correlation between the size of the enterprise and disclosure scope may be justified within the theory of legitimacy, because larger companies have a greater impact on society and their need for legitimacy in the community is greater. The same authors suggest that voluntary disclosure may also be used to prevent the introduction of mandatory social reporting, because if companies publish such information voluntarily there is no need for obligatory social and environmental statements.

The results of the study by Adams et al. (1998) show that the structure of social and environmental disclosures in annual reports took the form of providing information on employees, information on environment, information on social/ethical issues.

In the study, it was found that quantitative disclosures in the reports were most common in Swedish companies. It proves that the country settings have an impact on social responsibility reporting. Moreover, in some countries, social and environmental disclosure is obligatory, in other countries, including Poland, it is still voluntary. Although the number and amount of voluntary social and environmental disclosures increases, without enforcement of such obligation for companies, the scale of such disclosures will probably never be high (Lydenberg, Grace, 2008, p. 15).

Legitimacy theory is also used in order to explain the creation of corporate foundations. Establishing corporate foundation may also be a way of gaining legitimacy. Actions undertaken by such foundations often gain media coverage and are able to improve a company's reputation (Gottschalk, 2011, pp. 1–2).

3. Hypothesis development, methodology and sample choice

Corporations wanting to gain the right to operate, in the light of legitimacy theory, should undertake socially beneficial actions like collaboration with NGOs. Consequently, following the same theoretical framework, in order to show their usefulness to society, they ought to disclose a broad scope of information on cooperation with NGOs. Therefore, in the light of legitimacy theory we should posit that the scope of voluntary corporate disclosure on collaboration with NGOs is high among those companies that cooperate with NGOs. However, taking into consideration the specific institutional setting in Poland, we decided to put forward a hypothesis *a contrario* to the main notion of legitimacy theory as follows.

The first hypothesis we propose in the paper is:

Hypothesis 1: The scope of voluntary corporate disclosure on collaboration with NGOs in Poland is small.

An indicator of the „secrecy/non-disclosure” approach is the relatively small number of corporations operating in Poland preparing social responsibility reports (FOB, 2012, p. 21), which may be a sign of the low interest of management boards in corporate social responsibility. In the specific (Polish) institutional environment, even companies preparing social responsibility reports may be not willing to disclose much information. The next argument for developing this hypothesis is society's negative perception of the companies' activities in the field of philanthropy in Poland (On Board PR, 2008). Some companies may prefer to use other information channels to disclose such information e.g. media releases or web pages in order to limit the costs of preparing the information.

In the light of legitimacy theory, NGOs wanting to obtain the right to operate should undertake socially beneficial actions in an efficient way. Cooperation with corporations

enables them to increase their scope of operations. Publicizing their actions would allow NGOs to be transparent and accountable to society. Therefore, in the light of legitimacy theory we should posit that scope NGOs' disclosure on collaboration with corporations is high. However, taking into consideration the unique institutional settings in Poland, as well as the results of former studies showing that NGOs in Poland concentrate more on fulfilling their mission than reporting requirements (Waniak-Michalak, 2011) we decided to put forward a hypothesis *a contrario* to the main notion of legitimacy theory.

Hypothesis 2: The scope of NGO disclosures on collaborations with corporations in Poland is small.

Historically, as mentioned in the third point of the article, Polish society was deprived of nongovernmental organizations serving the community for many years. Nowadays, we can observe an increase in the number of new NGOs in Poland every year. However, they are more focused on fulfilling their mission than reporting requirements (Waniak-Michalak, 2011), both mandatory and voluntary.

In the first stage of the research, the content analysis method was used to analyze the available data. The content analysis used in the research took the form of examining the type and amount of analyzed data (in reports and web-sites) than the more often used analysis of single words or phrases. The level of disclosure was evaluated using two types of disclosure: about the partner and about philanthropic activity.

In the second stage of the research, in order to explore the justification of the scope of disclosure on the collaborations between corporations and NGOs, interviews were carried out with CSR managers and directors of foundations. We chose entities that didn't reveal information on any identified partnership (even the name of the partner).

We started the sample selection with the group of companies that should be most willing to publish CSR information from two major groups, i.e.:

- 1) companies publishing CSR reports,
- 2) major donors.

Companies publishing CSR reports should make more of an effort to present their social and environmental impact, including cooperation with NGOs (such disclosure should be most comprehensive). We included in the sample all 31 companies which published CSR reports in Poland for the year 2010–2011 included in the FOB database¹.

We included in the sample 17 corporations (companies listed on the stock exchange) awarded for their charitable activities in a competition organized every year by the Donor's Forum Association (for the period 2007–2011), however, because the 7 biggest donors published CSR reports, our sample increased only by 10 companies.

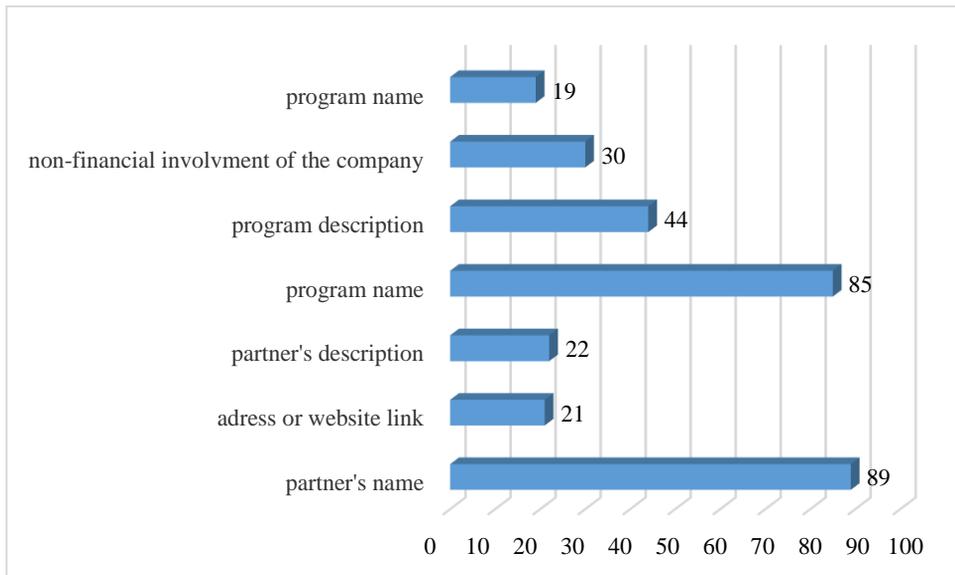
¹ FOB (Forum Odpowiedzialnego Biznesu) is an NGO focused on the promotion of CSR and CSR disclosure.

In order to examine collaboration disclosure on both sides of the relationship, we included in the sample NGOs mentioned in corporations' CSR reports or on the websites of the corporations. As most corporations (32 out of 41) limited the number of disclosed collaborations to five (mean 4.43) we decided to incorporate in the sample no more than five NGOs cooperating with one corporation. In the case of corporations that revealed information on more than five collaborations, we included in the sample five mentioned NGOs. Analyzing the webpages of NGOs, 12 additional collaborations (that were not disclosed on corporations' websites) were revealed. As a result, we ended up with a sample of 82 charities.

4. Results of quantitative (content) analysis

The frequency of various types of information on collaborations with NGOs revealed by corporations in the sample are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Corporate disclosure (percentages of analyzed collaborations)

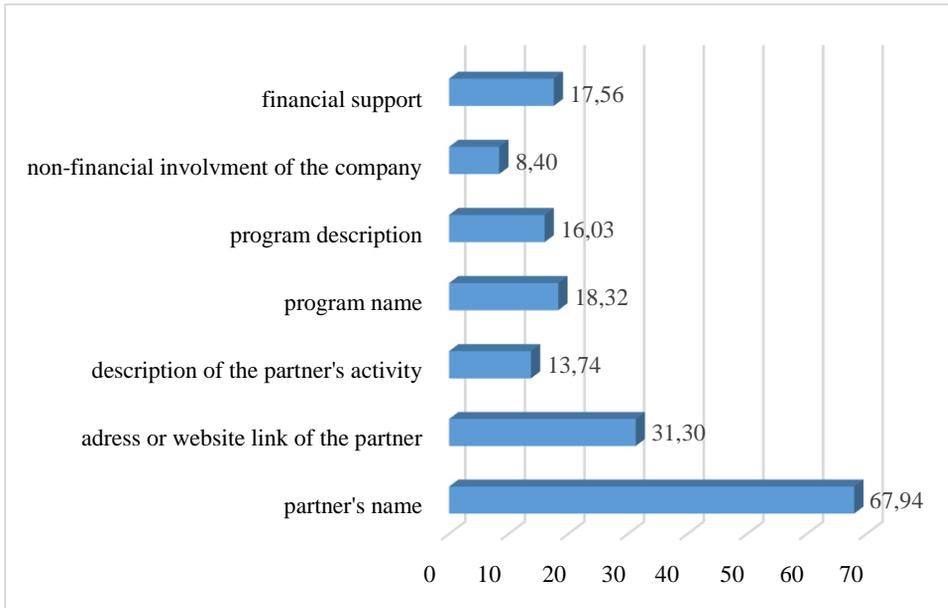


Source: own elaboration.

The most common type of information is just basic data such as the names of the partner and program. More detailed information about collaborating NGOs, like its address and description, were revealed in less than 20% of collaborations. The least common type of information was disclosure on the amount of financial support granted to the NGO.

The frequency of various types of information on collaboration with corporations revealed by NGOs in the sample are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. NGO disclosure (percentages of analyzed collaborations)



Source: own elaboration.

According to the FOB report (2010), a small group of companies in Poland prepares CSR reports. In the years 2007–2009, CSR reports were published by companies from three sectors: FCMG (fast moving consumer goods), financial services and the oil industry. As some companies had prepared reports for a few preceding years, the number of companies in the study was smaller than the number of reports (25 companies and 39 reports). Most of the CSR reports embraced information concerning changes in the value of the company and relations with suppliers. Only 8 CSR reports were prepared in accordance with the GRI Guidelines. Another study, „Reporting of CSR in Poland 2010” included 29 published reports. Some of them concerned the year 2009, others included a longer time perspective. Among the 29 reports there were also 3 part-reports presenting only one area of responsibility, e.g.: environmental or social. Among the 29 organizations, 12 prepared reports following GRI standards (CSRinfo, 2011).

Half of the analyzed corporations reveal only the name and address or link of the collaborating NGO. Only 3 corporations described fully (all analyzed types information) the collaboration with NGO on the website and 1 company presented full information in the CSR report.

The corporations in the sample supported various philanthropic organizations. However, a company from the distilling industry declared its involvement only in actions

devoted to preventing customers from driving after drinking alcohol and from pregnant women consuming alcohol. In accordance with the regulations of CEPS (Confédération Européenne des Producteurs de Spiritueux) concerning responsible alcohol consumption, corporations from the distilling industry should undertake only those marketing and promotion actions that will not promote the consumption of alcohol among children and the youth, and will not encourage adults to consume more alcohol. This may cause distilling industry companies to avoid engagement in a charitable activity which demands disclosure of information about donors (e.g. the donor's logo) especially when such undertakings are geared at children. However, the analyzed brewing companies disclose on their websites or in social responsibility reports donations for foundations helping children. The level of disclosure of analyzed corporations was low, however some corporations revealed full information about the collaboration with NGOs. They were corporations running corporate foundations. However, there were also cases where the companies did not reveal more information about their corporate foundations than other NGOs.

Fifty percent of the analyzed nonprofit entities revealed only basic information: the name of the partner and address or link. However, a smaller number of NGOs disclose an average level of information. Only 1 foundation revealed all information on the collaboration with companies (about collaborating corporations, programs and received donations, engagement of the company). The foundation had been established by the corporation.

The number of descriptions of collaborations containing information about partners (34%) is almost the same as the number of collaborations not revealed by the foundations at all (32%). However, only a small part of the information on revealed collaborations contained the name of the program and other details on the cooperation (16%).

Among the analyzed NGOs, 17 were foundations established by corporations, while at the same time 2 of them did not have the name of the founder. Approximately half of them (8 foundations) disclosed information only about one donor or did not disclose any information except for the name or logo of the founder (3 foundations). This may mean that corporate foundations that do not have their own website (only a subpage on the website of the corporation) and that do not mention another donor are convinced that this is a clear message that they receive support only from the founder. Only one corporate foundation (the Polsat Foundation), revealed on its website detailed information about received donations with the name of the donors. What was quite interesting is that the amount of donations received from a few other companies was higher than the support received from the founder. In the case of the Polsat Foundation, an additional, non-financial contribution of the funding company existed – free promotion and advertising activities, and organizational support for one of the programs run by the foundation. However, the non-financial and financial engagement of the founders of other corporate foundations remains unclear. In almost all cases of cooperation, the financial benefits obtained by the donors of the charities, e.g. an increase in sales of

products or services, or a change of image are unknown. Only Danone Ltd. (one of the companies in the sample), indicates in its social responsibility report that its philanthropic actions are conducted in order to achieve three objectives: meet the needs of the local community, increase the motivation and satisfaction of its employees and obtain business benefits. The company revealed that as a result of the implementation of the nutrition program for children („Share the meal”) and the introduction of a product to the market with the label of this program, the company received an 86% increase in sales.

Our research let us support hypotheses 1 and 2, that the scope of disclosure on the collaboration of corporates and NGOs is small. Only 44% of corporations and 16% of NGOs disclose more than the name of the program or partner name. The next stage of our research (interviews) will explain why some NGOs and corporations do not want to reveal detailed information about their collaboration.

5. Results of qualitative analysis (interviews)

After the analysis of the reports and websites of corporations and charities, the research question was formulated: *Why do companies cooperating with NGOs not reveal the information regarding the collaboration?*

The answer to the question would also explain why the companies don't use the cooperation with NGOs to legitimize their actions.

In order to answer the research question, the authors decided to carry out interviews. The interviews were conducted with directors of selected foundations that disclose any information about the donors, and CSR managers of selected companies that do not disclose any information on particular collaborations with NGOs.

The interviews with directors of NGOs were conducted in order to answer the question why NGOs do not reveal much information about collaborations with companies. 11 respondents were asked three questions:

Q1: Is it possible to obtain information about the amount of donations received by the Foundation from the companies? (If so, indicate where the information is given)

Q2: If you do not reveal such information, then what is the reason? (No requirements from the partners, no benefits from such disclosure etc.?) What is the reason for non-disclosure of information on donation amounts?

Q3: Do you make a selection of donors, and if so, what are the criteria?

The questions were asked during phone conversations with the directors of the charities.

Six charities agreed to answer the questions. The answers to the second question are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Reasons of non-disclosure of detailed information in charities

Charity number	Reasons of non-disclosure of detailed information
1.	No interest – „no one asked”
2.	No interest of stakeholders
3.	No such obligation, such information is confidential
4.	Some donors do not wish the information to be disclosed
5.	No such obligation Other media used (TV broadcast was most wanted by donors as founding corporation is a TV holding)
6.	Donors do not wish the information to be disclosed

Source: own elaboration.

The first charity explained that they sent a full list of donors to the tax office in accordance with art. 18 of the Act on income tax from legal persons. The first foundation does not publish information on the amounts of donations because no one has ever asked for such information yet. The charity discloses only the logos of some donors and states that it is sufficient. The rest of the information may be made available in the foundation headquarters at any time.

The director of the second foundation explained that he had never received such a request (to provide data on donors). He didn't know that someone might be interested in the information. The list of donors the charity sends to the tax office is in accordance with the Act on income tax from legal persons. The director offered to send the authors the list of donors, however, he failed to fulfill his promise.

The director of the third foundation also informed the authors that the foundation sent the report to the tax office. However, he stated that there were no legal obligations to publish such data and, moreover, that the information was confidential. The logos of the donors were published on the websites only after obtaining permission from the donor.

The director of the fourth foundation offered the authors access to the report sent to the tax office, but emphasized that there were companies that didn't wish to publish such information and therefore the foundation couldn't disclose data on the subject.

The director of the fifth foundation sent the authors the information about received donations via e-mail, but indicated that she never faced the donor's requirement to publish the information about the participation of the company in philanthropic activity. At the same time, the foundation director said that the foundation was invited very often to a ceremony or a party during which the corporation wanted to make a charitable gesture, for example, donating money or goods to the foundation. However, the corporation expected this to be broadcast on television (because the foundation was founded by a media corporation). This is proof of the use of philanthropic activities by corporations to improve their image.

The director of the last foundation considered the publication of the total amount of donations as sufficient information. However, the director stated that stakeholders could ask for details in the office of the foundation, unless the donor wished to remain anonymous.

All directors of the foundations responded similarly to the third question. They decided which corporation to cooperate with taking into consideration, above all, the reliability and responsibility (environmental or social issues) of the company as well as the form of cooperation.

The results of these interviews indicate a lack of motivation of charities for voluntary disclosures on cooperation with companies. If there is no obligation to disclose such information (legal or under the partnership agreement), the philanthropic organizations that do not see benefits for themselves of such disclosures publish a minimum of information.

Interviews with corporation managers were run in order to answer the question why companies do not disclose any information on the collaboration with particular NGOs or reveal only the name of the NGOs and what influences the level of disclosure. We sent e-mails or telephoned 6 corporations that had the CSR departments or CSR managers who we could contact. We managed to obtain an answer only from 4 corporations. The rest of the managers didn't respond to our request for an interview. The summary of the interviews is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Reasons of non-disclosure of detailed information in corporations

Corporation number	Reasons of non-disclosure of detailed information	Criteria for disclosure amount/level
1.	Some data were not available from cooperating NGOs GRI Guidelines do not require such detailed information	Projects with the highest budgets and the highest social impact
2.	Other communication channels (TV programs, internet platform, web page of corporate foundation) used to disclose such information	Criteria are developed as the company prepares its first CSR report
3.	Information disclosed mainly internally on an intranet	The information is created mainly by employees for employees, so they impact the amount of disclosed information
4.	Long time to prepare, no information from cooperating NGOs	Consistency with CSR strategy and collaboration budget

Source: own elaboration.

The first corporation chose which NGOs to support from those organizations which applied or from organizations recommended by PR agencies. The choice was made

following the CSR strategy of the corporation. The most important criteria of NGO choice for cooperation was the high reputation of the NGO, (e.g. „Caritas”, „SOS Wi-oski Dziecięce”). The corporation revealed the information on the collaboration with NGOs according to the GRI standard, so without names of foundations. As the standard did not require disclosure on the amounts donated to particular NGOs, the company did not publish such information. They tried to reveal the information on the efficiency of such programs (e.g. the number of beneficiaries), however, the data were not available in all cases. Moreover, they tended to disclose most of the information on the projects with the highest budgets and on projects with the highest social impact.

The second corporation ran the corporate foundation and supported a wide range of the NGOs. The corporation chose NGOs using similar criteria as the first corporation mentioned above. An important factor may also be the reputation of the founder, however, as mentioned by the company’s manager, it did not prevent all bad choices. As the second interviewed company was a media corporation, it used different channels to communicate the information on its socially related activities. The company disclosed such information in TV programs or on an internet platform. Many NGO representatives participated in the TV shows broadcast by the corporation. The company also published the information with the help of the corporate foundation, which was the best proof of the social orientation of the corporation. The corporation was preparing its first CSR report at the time of the interview.

The third corporation chose NGOs to collaborate with through a dialog with employees and the local community. It cooperates heavily with the corporate foundation and uses the knowledge of the foundation’s employees for the choice of NGOs to cooperate with. The dialog with employees is often conducted through short polls and comments gathered on the intranet. Employees proposed or voted for which NGO to choose. The company also cooperated with an NGO coalition for the local community and supports an NGO helping local children. Such a collaboration was aimed at empowering employees. They disclosed information on cooperating with NGOs which were ranked the most important (had the highest legitimization effect) by the company’s employees and the corporation foundation’s employees, so not every collaboration was presented on the corporation’s website.

The last corporation started collaborations with NGOs in a passive way. It waited for the proposals from NGOs. In some cases, cooperation was sustained for many years. It mainly chose projects aimed at children’s education and children’s arts workshops. The company also supported NGOs developing and promoting electric smart grid projects. It helped to develop new products, as the company produced components of such grids. The fourth company chose NGOs following its CSR strategy which focuses on patronage of the arts and sponsoring of local and country-wide projects. The company attempted to disclose information on all NGOs. In the case of financial support, it only mentions the NGOs name. In other cases, it describes the collaboration. Information on some collaborations with NGOs was missing in some CSR reports due to the long preparation time of the report and limited space (the manager was sure that it was mentioned).

The company webpage and CSR reports were the most important channels of communicating the collaboration with NGOs. It was supplemented by some releases in the local media.

The interviews let us draw the conclusion that lack of legal requirements for corporations to disclose information on the collaboration with NGOs was the main reason for the very limited disclosure on collaboration with NGOs. Moreover, those companies that tried to reveal more information on philanthropic activity encountered difficulties getting access to the results of the activity. The corporations disclosed the information most willingly on projects with the highest budgets or projects with greatest social impact. We also found that media corporations use communication channels other than the CSR reports of corporate websites. Finally, if the company used the philanthropic activity as an employee motivation tool then the information was revealed more thoroughly on the intranet than the internet.

Implications and conclusions

In the paper we tried to examine the scope of voluntary disclosure on the collaborations of NGOs and corporations and the factors influencing the scope of the disclosure. We used legitimacy theory to explain the motives of different types of organizations for revealing particular information. We examined disclosures of 41 corporations and 82 charities in Poland. In turn, we analyzed information revealed about 131 collaborations for the corporations and charities on their websites and 95 collaborations in CSR reports of corporations. As a research method we used content analysis of CSR reports and web pages of corporations. In order to explain our results, we decided to conduct interviews with CSR managers and directors of chosen NGOs.

Our study yields several important practical and theoretical implications. First, in line with legitimacy theory, we assumed that corporations and NGOs use the sources of information (like web pages and CSR reports) in order to legitimize their actions. Moreover, behind a corporation's charitable giving, the personal interests of managers may be hidden (Brown et al., 2006). In consequence, the companies do not have to be interested in revealing the information about their collaboration with NGOs. Some collaborations may also serve as a tool for companies to manage their earnings or gain other benefits for the board.

Our research let us identify some reasons which influence the small scope of disclosure on corporation-NGO cooperations on the websites and CSR reports of corporations and charities. Firstly, some managers adopt the stance that if there is no legal requirements or even voluntary guidelines (like GRI Guidelines), any further disclosure on collaboration is not necessary. Moreover, corporations' managers tend to follow the materiality rule in voluntary disclosure and reveal information only in projects with the biggest budgets and/or which have major social impact. In addition, the profile of the

company (if the corporation is a media company) or the motive behind the philanthropic activity may influence the scope of disclosure on the collaboration of corporations with NGOs.

Our research let us support hypotheses 1 and 2, that the scope of disclosure on the collaboration of corporates and NGOs is small. Only 44% of corporations and 16% of NGOs disclose more than the name of the program or partner. Exploring the results of the content analysis using interviews, we discovered that the NGOs do not see the benefits for them in publishing detailed information about their collaboration with companies. In Poland, NGOs were not able to exist and act in the communist system. Now we are experiencing a boom of new philanthropic organizations starting up. Managers of the NGOs are now much more focused on the fulfilling the mission and goals than on revealing the voluntary information for stakeholders, or even compulsory information. All administrative responsibilities are considered unimportant in the light of the primary goals of the charitable organization. Moreover, as other research shows, the NGOs believe that for donors the most important thing is not the information presented on the Website or in the reports, but the information received from others or via the visibility of the NGOs in their community (Szper, Prakash, 2011; Waniak-Michalak, Zarzycka, 2012). Interviews with CSR managers revealed several factors on the side of corporations influencing the disclosure on the collaboration of corporations with NGOs. Firstly, some managers adopt the stance that if there is no legal requirement or even voluntary guidelines (like GRI Guidelines) no further disclosure on collaboration is necessary. Moreover, corporation managers tend to follow the materiality rule in voluntary disclosure and reveal information only in the projects with biggest budgets and/or which have a major social impact. Finally, the profile of the company (if the corporation is a media company) or the motive behind the philanthropic activity may influence the level of disclosure on the collaboration of corporations with NGOs.

We can also find that the level of legitimization in corporations in Poland is low as a result of reduced trust of Polish citizens for corporate public statements. Such disclosures can be regarded by customers or other stakeholders as a kind of corporate propaganda, according to the results of survey among Poles conducted by CBOS (Public Opinion Research Center) in 2010. Therefore, we may draw the conclusion that the disclosure of information about collaborations with charities for the promotion of corporations can bring the opposite effect to the expected one. The scope of disclosure on such cooperation is reduced in comparison with countries with a long corporate charitable tradition and, in consequence, the legitimization effect of social disclosure of companies in Poland may be smaller than observed in other countries.

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