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**The determinants of Corporate Social  
Responsibility and its strategic boundaries  
within the luxury hotel industry in Dubai**

**A qualitative analysis of Corporate Social Responsibility in Dubai luxury  
hotels**



## Abstract

Research indicates that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a puzzle and a fuzzy concept. CSR has been studied in developed countries and emerging nations; however minimal research exists on CSR in the Middle East region. The purpose of this study is to examine CSR as a management tool to create value and differentiation for luxury hotels in a Middle East country the United Arab Emirates (UAE), specifically Dubai. The thesis illustrates contrasting perspectives on CSR demonstrating corporate social theory is perceived as individual philanthropy or social-religious obligation. There are orientations that CSR is becoming significant on the UAE business agenda with some corporations perceiving CSR as a strategic approach to align their core business values with their long term strategic goals. The investigation examines successful hotel companies Rezidor, Jumeirah, Rotana & Marriott by comparing their diverse CSR approaches, the impact CSR actions have on various stakeholders and recommends new CSR initiatives to create greater synergy with their long term vision. Situational and cultural values have a direct impact on whether a business adopts CSR practices; therefore by investigating the boundaries of CSR and its determinants, a new model of CSR has been created indicating different stages of adoption. The thesis proposed drivers of CSR adoption among luxury hotels in Dubai: pro-environmentalism orientations and urgency, Human Resource Management (HRM) pressures, leadership, government regulations, competition, innovation and pro-societal values. The results indicated that the main drivers for the hotels were pro-environmental urgency, international HRM pressures and mimic pressures, whilst ethical and responsible corporate leadership, government regulations, innovation commitment and pro-societal values appeared to have less influence on a company's decision to adopt CSR practices. Nevertheless there are limitations to this thesis, because it uses qualitative research therefore a large scale quantitative research would further extend this study. Hoteliers are experiencing increasing global competition, continual technological inventions and global volatility, consequently guests expect hoteliers to respond proactively to the public's fast changing expectations. To assist businesses with this turbulent and hyper-competitive business environment, the potential of CSR potential is investigated as an innovative strategic tool to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.