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Organizational effectiveness through the intermediary role of organizational engagement and creative behavior: A case study of small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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Abstract
In recent years, interest in social responsibility has gradually increased, especially concerns about risks from foreign investment and the negative effects of industrial development on the environment and social issues. The globalization process promotes social responsibility in developing countries and the need for cooperation to solve social and environmental problems. Small and medium-sized enterprises play an important role in the economy, but do not pay enough attention to CSR, so research is needed to propose policies to support increasing their operational efficiency through CSR. CSR brings competitive advantages to businesses and is of interest to large enterprises. Although social and environmental issues are increasingly complex, CSR plays an important role in solving them. At the same time, it is necessary to pay attention to SMEs and encourage them to apply CSR to contribute to sustainable development. The goal of the article is to evaluate the influence of corporate social responsibility CSR on organizational effectiveness through the mediating component of organizational engagement and creative behavior at work, specially, research on SMEs in Ho Chi Minh City. From there, the author has a basis to propose management implications for SMEs in Ho Chi Minh City in promoting organizational engagement and creative behavior at work to improve the organizational effectiveness of businesses. The author conducted a survey of 331 subjects of SME owners, CEOs/administrators, financial directors/chief accountants as well as sales department heads in Ho Chi Minh City. Quantitative analysis results with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient analysis technique, EFA exploratory factor analysis, and Structural equation modeling SEM determine the influence of CSR on organizational effectiveness through the mediating component of organizational engagement and creative behavior at work in the case of SMEs in Ho Chi Minh City.

Keywords: Social responsibility, organizational engagement, creative behavior at work, organizational effectiveness, Structural equation modeling SEM

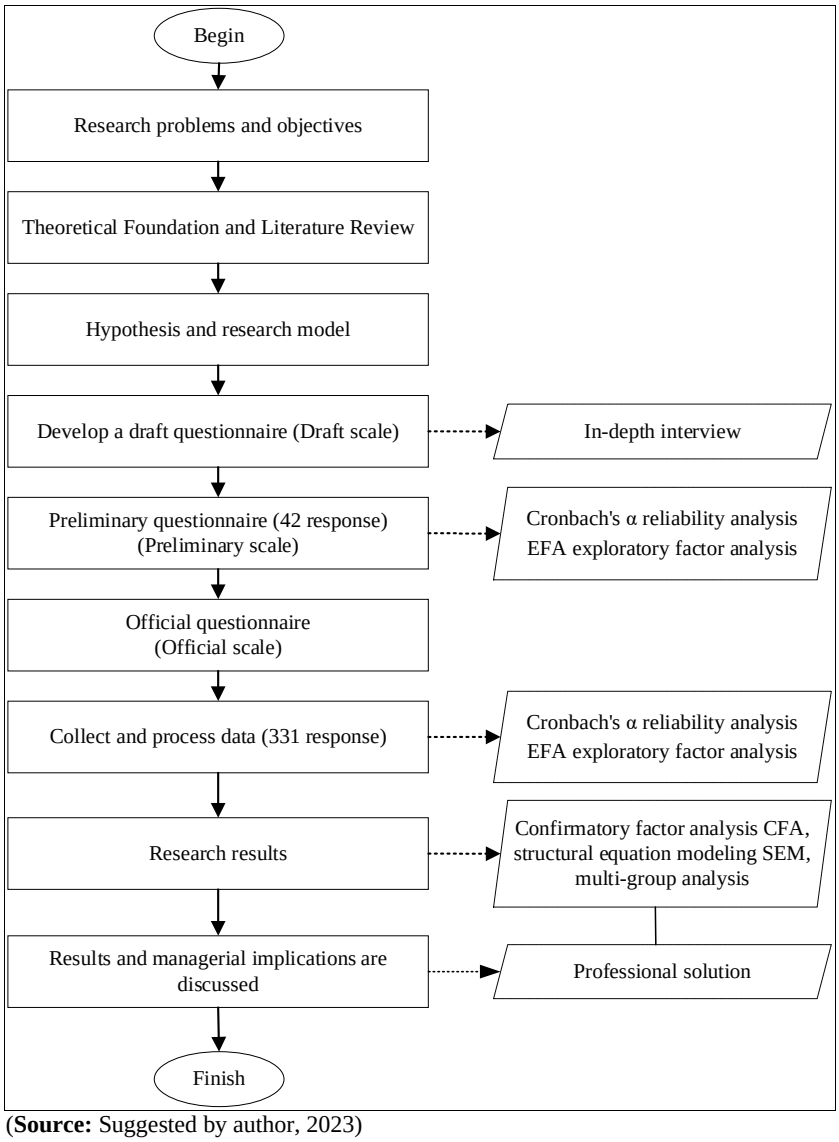
Introduction
Most studies have analyzed the cause-and-effect relationship between CSR and organizational effectiveness, in addition to the intermediary components that impact this relationship such as business benefits. These previous studies mainly used questionnaire survey techniques to collect data sources and apply SEM models to analyze results. However, these studies have not paid attention to creative behaviors at work in the relationship between CSR and organizational effectiveness. The author realizes that this is a research gap, so he will analyze it in more depth to clarify the implications of this issue. Some studies include Mehralian (2016) [6], Hoang Thi Thanh Huong (2015) [3], Chau Thi Le Duyen and colleagues (2019) [1].

The author finds that studies related to CSR activities only highlight the influence of one or a few intermediate variables, such as organizational commitment, welfare or knowledge management as researched by Mensah (2017) [7], Le Thanh Tiep (2018) [5], Chau Thi Le Duyen and colleagues (2019) [1], Latif and colleagues (2020) [4]. The author evaluates that CSR activities may also be influenced in a comprehensive way by the above-mentioned intermediate components, so he determines that this is also a blank point that needs to be analyzed in this case. Finally, the author has not found any related research that really addresses creative behavior in corporate CSR activities, so this is also a gap, and this factor needs to be added to the research model.

The above reasons are the reasons for the author to conduct research to evaluate the influence of corporate social responsibility CSR on organizational effectiveness through the intermediary component of organizational engagement and creative behavior at work, specific research on SMEs in Ho Chi Minh City.

Research Method

First, the author clearly states the urgency and importance of research in today's context. Along with that is the process of reviewing documents on the relationship model between factors, implementation methods and practical results. Next, the article mentions the process and methods to conduct research, including the analytical framework and research contents. The research hypotheses serve as a premise for proposing a model of the relationship between CSR, engagement, creative behavior and organizational effectiveness. The research process is presented in Figure 1.



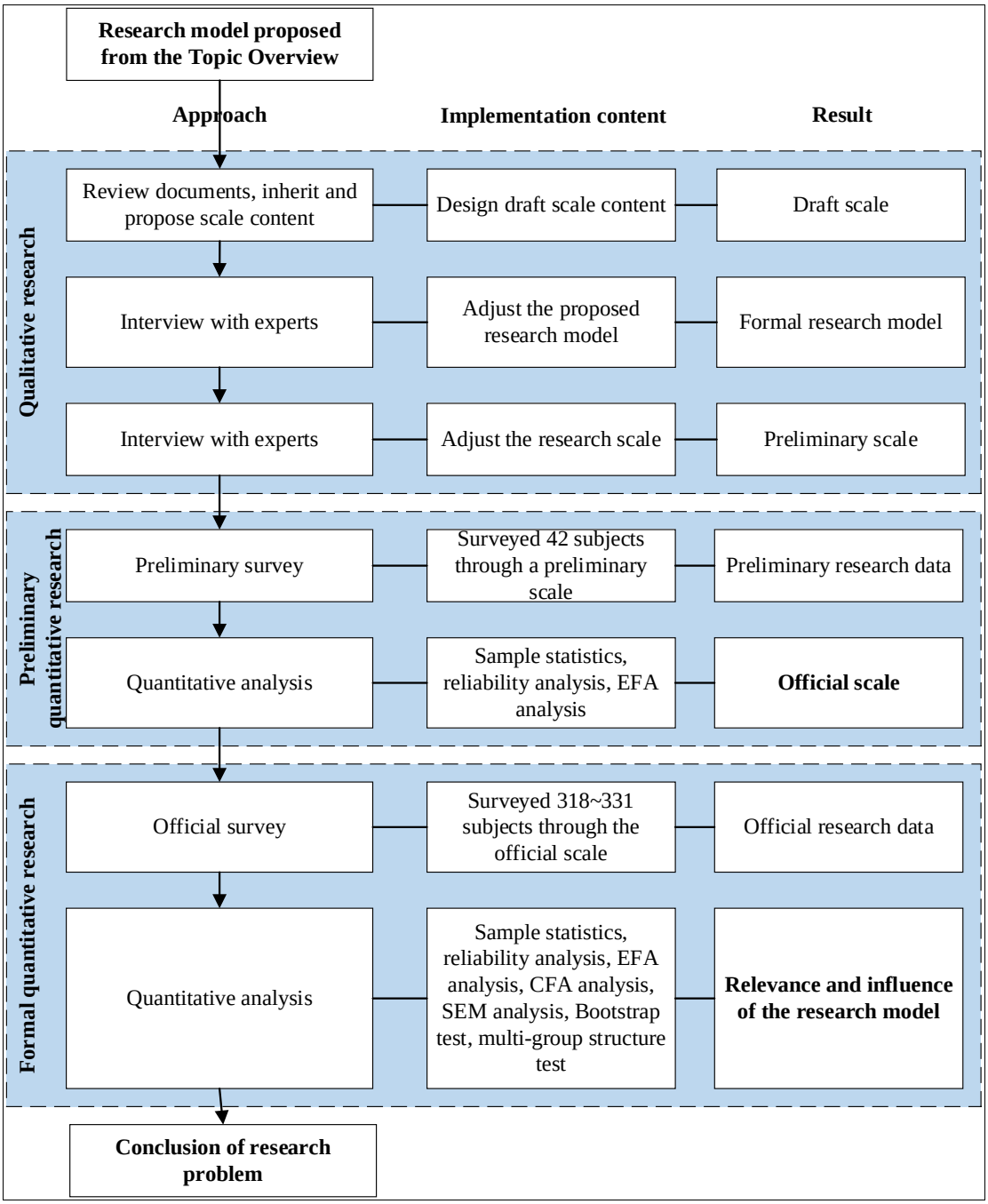
(**Source:** Suggested by author, 2023)

Fig 1: Research process

In the qualitative stage, by reviewing documents, the research has inheritance as well as proposed corresponding contents. From there, a draft scale is formed. This scale is the subject of in-depth discussion with highly specialized experts in education, business administration and SME owners. The purpose of this process is to edit wording, structure the questionnaire or add questions appropriate to the thesis.

The proposed research model is sent to experts to interview, discuss opinions and adjust the model with relationships based on individuals' perspectives and research practices. Interview experts include 2 people have long-term research experience in the field of education and 4 people are SME owners, CEO/administrator, financial director/chief accountant or director/sales manager at SMEs in Ho Chi Minh City. From there, the official model will be determined to distinguish it from previously proposed models.

Simultaneously with the above process, the author also conducted direct discussions with experts on the contents mentioned in the draft scale. The result is the formation of a preliminary scale to distinguish it from the draft scale proposed previously. Figure 2 presents the analytical framework of the study.



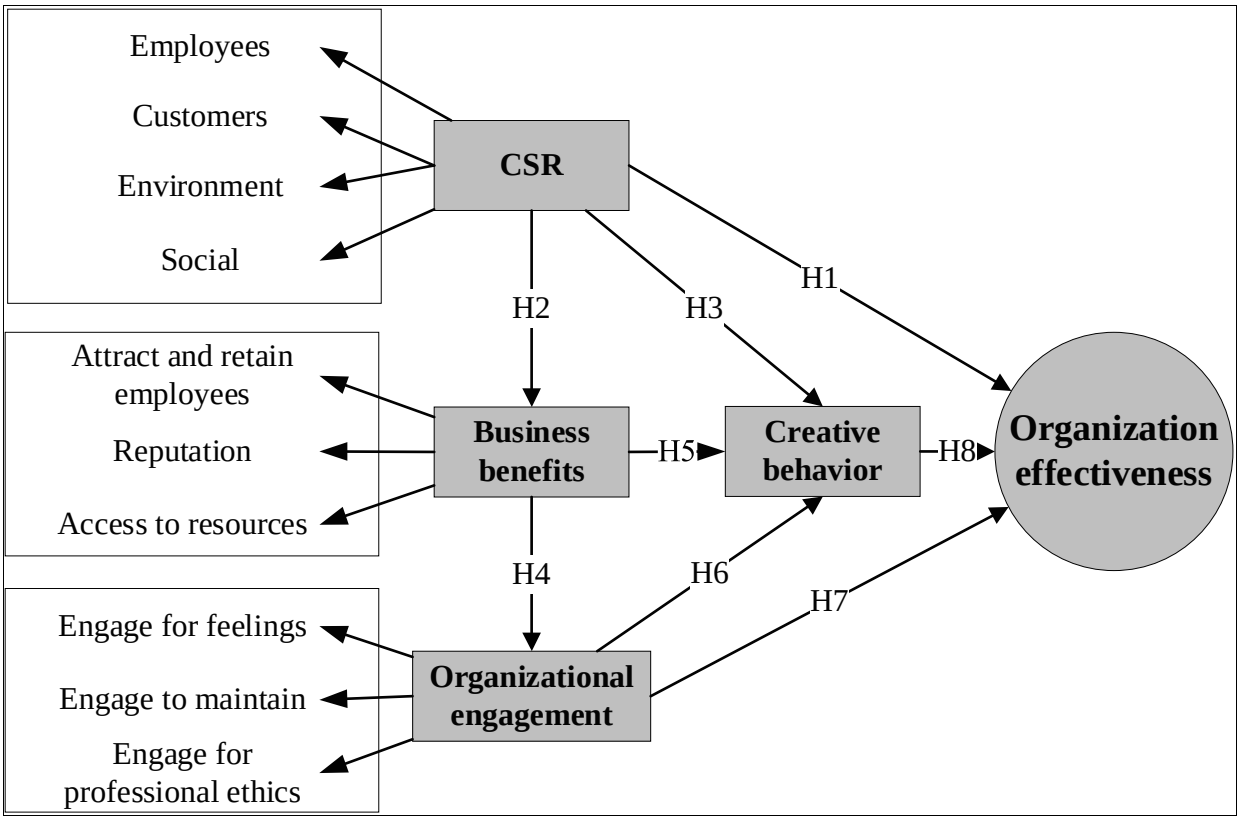
(**Source:** Author's compilation, 2023)

Fig 2: Research analysis framework

Entering the preliminary quantitative stage, the preliminary scale (questionnaire) is used to collect an expected sample size of about 40 survey subjects (SME owners, CEOs/administrators, finance directors/chief accountants, and directors/sales managers at SMEs). Non-probability methods and convenience sampling are applied. The results form the official measurement scale of the study. Entering the formal quantitative phase, official scale (questionnaire) collected from 318 to 331 survey subjects (SME owners, CEOs/administrators, finance directors/chief accountants, and directors/sales managers at SMEs). The proposed research model is presented in Figure 3.

Hypothesis and Research Model

The author inherits the research model (Figure 3) with the following hypotheses.



(**Source:** Proposed author, 2023)

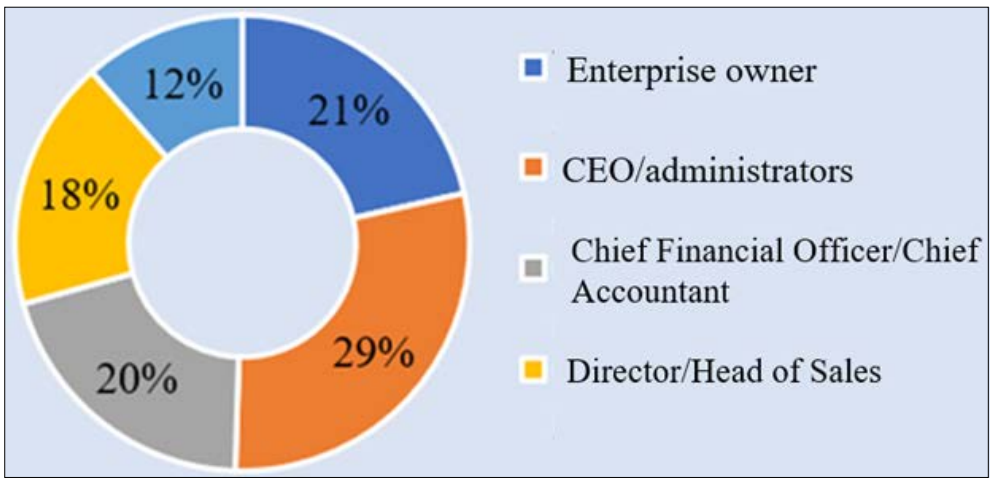
Fig 3: Proposed research model

- **Hypothesis H_1:** CSR has a positive impact on organizational effectiveness.
- **Hypothesis H_2:** Business benefits are influenced by the positive impact of CSR.
- **Hypothesis H_3:** Creative behavior is also positively affected by CSR.
- **Hypothesis H_4:** Organizational engagement is influenced by the positive impact of business benefits.
- **Hypothesis H_5:** Creative behavior is also positively affected by business benefits.
- **Hypothesis H_6:** Organizational engagement has a positive impact on creative behavior.
- **Hypothesis H_7:** Organizational engagement has a positive impact on organizational effectiveness.
- **Hypothesis H_8:** Creative behavior has a positive impact on organizational effectiveness.

Research Results

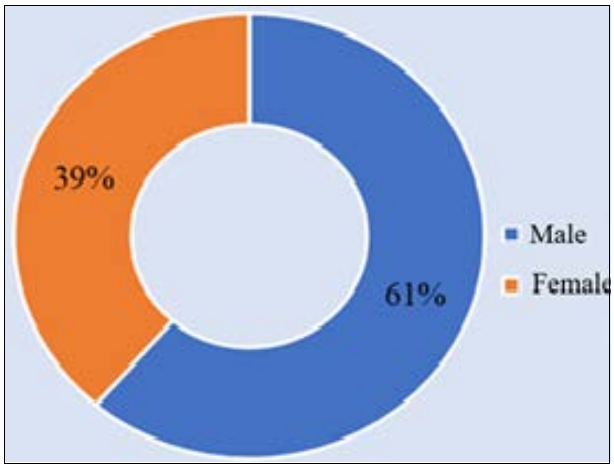
Sample statistics

The positions or job positions of the survey participants are listed in Figure 4. The gender of business owners has a difference between men and women. While the male gender has up to 203 people (accounting for 61.3%), the female gender has 128 people (accounting for 38.7%). Statistical results are presented in Figure 5.



(**Source:** Author's compilation,2023)

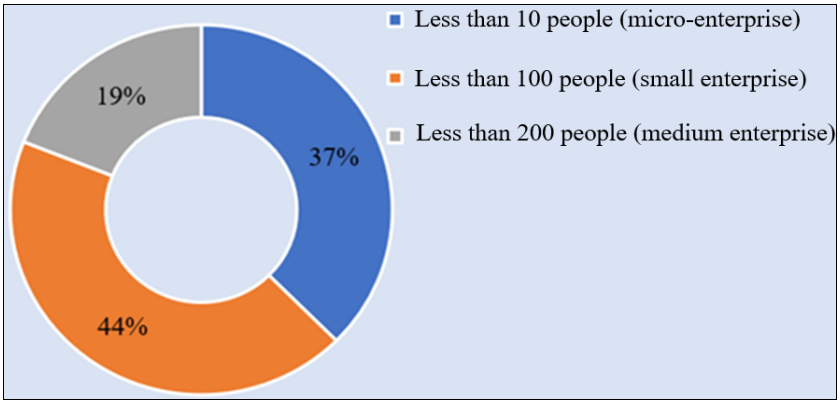
Fig 4: Statistics describing positions of survey subjects



(**Source:** Author's compilation, 2023)

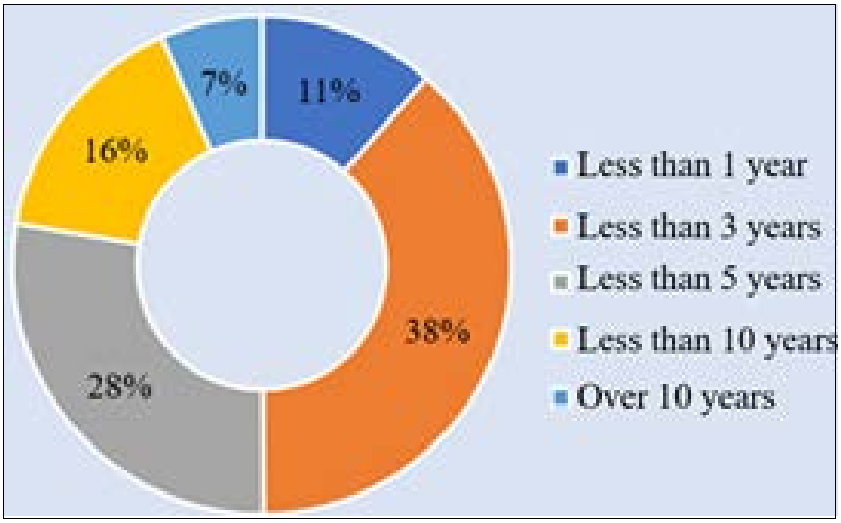
Fig 5: Statistics describing the gender of business owners

The total number of official employees or the scale of the enterprises participating in the study is listed in Figure 6 and the number of years the enterprise officially carried out production and business activities is statistically shown in Figure 7.



(**Source:** Author's compilation, 2023)

Fig 6: Statistics describe the number of official employees of an enterprise



(**Source:** Author's compilation, 2023)

Fig 7: Statistics describe the number of years a business has been in operation

Results of scale reliability analysis

The results of testing the reliability of Cronbach's Alpha of the official scale show that all Cronbach's Alpha coefficients and the remaining total variable correlation coefficients meet the requirements, so they are used for official EFA exploratory factor analysis. The results of scale reliability analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of scale reliability analysis

Observed variables	Average of the scale if removing the variable	Scale variance if the variable is removed	Variable-total correlation coefficient	Cronbach's Alpha of the scale if removing the variable
CSR1	10.73	5.761	.723	.871
CSR2	10.52	5.753	.773	.852
CSR3	10.69	5.717	.712	.876
CSR4	10.63	5.653	.827	.832
Observed variables	**Average of the scale if removing the variable**	**Scale variance if the variable is removed**	**Variable-total correlation coefficient**	**Cronbach's Alpha of the scale if removing the variable**
LI1	9.85	7.876	.825	.855
LI2	9.84	7.862	.823	.856
LI3	9.85	8.114	.766	.877
LI4	9.82	8.763	.704	.898
Observed variables	**Average of the scale if removing the variable**	**Scale variance if the variable is removed**	**Variable-total correlation coefficient**	**Cronbach's Alpha of the scale if removing the variable**
GK1	6.62	2.395	.724	.829
GK2	6.61	2.190	.779	.776
GK3	6.65	2.276	.729	.824
Observed variables	**Average of the scale if removing the variable**	**Scale variance if the variable is removed**	**Variable-total correlation coefficient**	**Cronbach's Alpha of the scale if removing the variable**
ST1	7.52	2.147	.680	.779
ST2	7.51	1.996	.687	.772
ST3	7.53	2.001	.708	.750
Observed variables	**Average of the scale if removing the variable**	**Scale variance if the variable is removed**	**Variable-total correlation coefficient**	**Cronbach's Alpha of the scale if removing the variable**
HQ1	13.0453	2.959	.789	.865
HQ2	12.9849	3.148	.729	.887
HQ3	13.0242	2.963	.776	.870
HQ4	13.0060	3.006	.810	.858

(***Source*:** Author compiled from research results, 2023)

Results of exploratory factor analysis

First, the result of KMO coefficient analysis reaches the value 0.896 (greater than 0.5) and second is the Sig value. Barlett's test reached 0.000 (less than 0.05), presented in Table 2. This result shows that the appropriate level of factor analysis and the component variables are not correlated in the whole is satisfactory.

Table 2: Results of KMO coefficient and Bartlett's test of the secondary scale

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin coefficient		0.896
Bartlett's Test	Chi-Square	3719,924
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

(***Source*:** Compiled from research results,2023)

The number of factors with an Eigenvalue greater than 1 is 5 and these factors correspond to a total amount of extracted variance of approximately 68.2% (greater than 50%), presented in Table 3. This result shows the high explanatory power of the extracted factors for all observed variables (18 variables) of the research model.

Table 3: Eigenvalue results and variance extracted official scale

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Total variance extracted			Total rotation
	Total	% variance	Accumulation%	Total	% variance	Accumulation%	Total
1	7.051	39.171	39.171	6.739	37.438	37.438	4.592
2	2.568	14.269	53.440	2.260	12.557	49.996	3.596
3	1.618	8.986	62.427	1.321	7.340	57.336	5.023
4	1.524	8.467	70.894	1.225	6.804	64.140	4.016
5	1.088	6.044	76.938	.739	4.108	68.248	4.673
6	.503	2.797	79.735				
7	.439	2.441	82.176				
8	.412	2.290	84.465				
9	.372	2.069	86.534				
10	.356	1.981	88.515				
11	.349	1.940	90.455				
12	.307	1.706	92.162				
13	.287	1.597	93.759				
14	.271	1.503	95.262				
15	.237	1.316	96.577				

16	.216	1.202	97.779				
17	.208	1.154	98.933				
18	.192	1.067	100.000				

(***Source*:** Compiled from research results, 2023)

The results of EFA exploratory factor analysis with the Principal Axis Factoring method and Promax rotation for the factor matrix and all factor loadings are presented in Table 4. Specifically, there are 5 factors extracted with the component observed variables all grouped with the same structure as the original grouping and the loading coefficients of the variables are all greater than 0.5.

Table 4: Results of factor loadings and official scale factor matrix

Observed variables	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
LI1	.894				
LI2	.880				
LI3	.814				
LI4	.743				
CSR4		.908			
CSR2		.805			
CSR3		.795			
CSR1		.777			
HQ4			.914		
HQ3			.828		
HQ1			.806		
HQ2			.734		
GK2				.925	
GK3				.781	
GK1				.755	
ST3					.859
ST2					.733
ST1					.717

(***Source*:** Compiled from research results,2023)

Conclusion: This result shows that the scale meets the analytical requirements, all variables of the official scale are retained and used for the official research scale.

Confirmatory factor analysis results

The results of fit analysis of the CFA confirmatory factor model are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Confirmatory factor model fit results

Index	Analytical value	Reference value	Evaluate
Significance level of Chi square (χ2)	0,137	p-value > 0,05	Appropriate
Chi-square adjusted for degrees of freedom (χ2/df or CMIN/df)	1,139	χ^2/df ≤ 3	Appropriate
GFI index	0,954	GFI > 0,900	Appropriate
TLI index	0,994	TLI > 0,900	Appropriate
CFI index	0,995	CFI > 0,900	Appropriate
RMSEA index	0,021	RMSEA < 0,06	Appropriate

(***Source*:** Compiled from research results, 2023)

1. **Overall suitability:** According to the results of Table 7, all indicators are evaluated at a suitable level. Conclusion: The measurement model ensures unidirectionality and is consistent with actual data.
2. **Reliability:** The results of composite reliability coefficient CR (Composite Reliability) and average variance extracted AVE (Average Variance Extracted) are summarized in Table 6. All CR composite reliability coefficients were greater than 0.6, and all AVE extracted variance coefficients were greater than 0.5. Conclusion: The model achieves reliability values**.**

Table 6: Summary of reliability results and average extracted variance

	Composite reliability coefficient	Variance extract
LI	0.901	0.699
CSR	0.889	0.675
HQ	0.899	0.693
GK	0.865	0.685
ST	0.832	0.623

(***Source*:** Compiled from research results, 2023)

3. **Convergent validity:** The results of all unstandardized and standardized weights are greater than 0.5 and the results of calculating the average extracted variance (Table 6) are greater than 0.5. Conclusion: The model achieves convergent validity.
4. **Distinguishing value:** The results of testing the correlation coefficient r between component concepts show that all CRa values are greater than the critical value, or with 95% confidence, the p-value is less than 0.05. The correlation coefficient of pairs of concepts is different from the value 1. Conclusion: The model achieves discriminant value.
5. **Unidirectionality:** The model has indicators consistent with testing standards and does not detect correlation between measurement errors. Conclusion: The model is unidirectional**.**
6. **Theoretical value:** Research models from proposal to official are synthesized and reviewed based on the practice of previous related research on organizations. The business should reach the theoretical contact value.

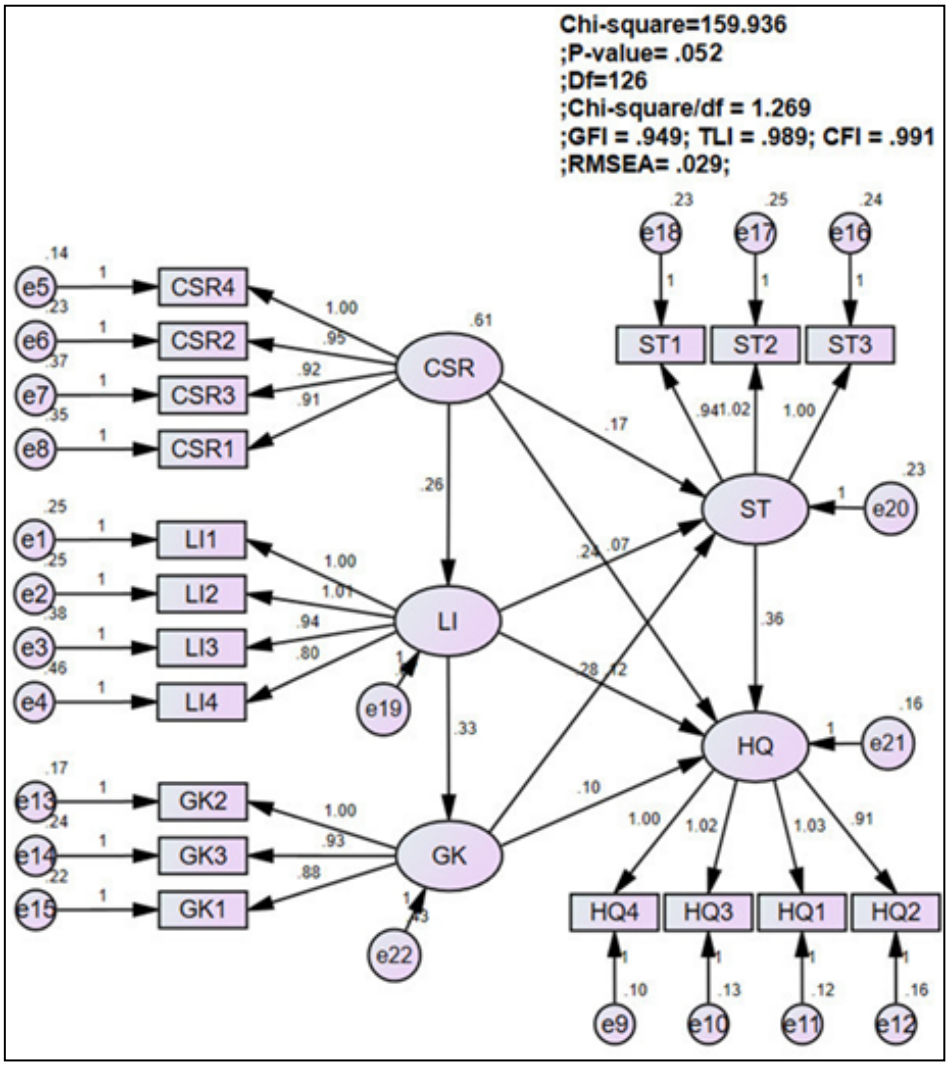
Results of structural equation modeling

The results of the goodness-of-fit analysis of the SEM structural equation modeling are presented in Table 6 and Figure 8. According to the results of Table 6, the results of testing the research hypotheses show that the parameters are appropriate (p-value < 0.05), so it is concluded that the SEM structural model is suitable for real data.

Table 7: Results of SEM structural equation modeling

Index	Analytical value	Reference value	Evaluate
Significance level of Chi square (χ2)	0,052	p-value > 0,05	Appropriate
Chi-square adjusted for degrees of freedom (χ2/df or CMIN/df)	1,269	$\chi^2/df \leq 3$	Appropriate
GFI index	0,949	GFI > 0,900	Appropriate
TLI index	0,989	TLI > 0,900	Appropriate
CFI index	0,991	CFI > 0,900	Appropriate
RMSEA index	0,029	RMSEA < 0,06	Appropriate

(***Source*:** Compiled from research results,2023)



(**Source:** Compiled from research results, 2023)

Fig 8: Unstandardized weight results of confirmatory factor model

Table 8: Structural equation modeling regression estimation results

Relationship			Coefficient	Standard error	Critical value	p-value	Hypothesis
LI	<---	CSR	0.257	0.073	3.517	0.000	H2
GK	<---	LI	0.332	0.045	7.308	0.000	H4
ST	<---	CSR	0.167	0.044	3.824	0.000	H3
ST	<---	LI	0.242	0.042	5.811	0.000	H5
ST	<---	GK	0.282	0.054	5.188	0.000	H6
HQ	<---	CSR	0.071	0.036	1.966	0.049	H1
HQ	<---	LI	0.120	0.036	3.358	0.000	H9
HQ	<---	GK	0.096	0.046	2.086	0.037	H7
HQ	<---	ST	0.363	0.066	5.543	0.000	H8

(***Source*:** Compiled from research results, 2023)

Since then, the test results show that there is no basis to reject the research hypotheses. In summary, the results of testing the structural equation modeling show that the theoretical model is suitable for the survey data set.

Managerial Implications

Implications of social responsibility

Currently, the average value of the Corporate Social Responsibility factor ranges from 3.36 to 3.48, showing that small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City are not implementing this activity well. Businesses need to encourage their employees to develop their skills and careers, always paying attention to the needs and desires of workers, have good remuneration and training policies, and make fair decisions without discriminatory treatment so that employees truly work for the common benefit of the entire enterprise.

Implications of business benefits

From model analysis, it can be concluded that Corporate Social Responsibility has a relatively strong impact, ranking fourth, with value β = 0.257, on Business Benefits. However, the average value of the Business Benefits scale ranges from 3.22 to 3.40, showing that the benefits obtained for small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City from Corporate Social Responsibility activities are not high. Small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City need to build a reputation as responsible units with foresight towards the environment and society in general to increase the ability to attract quality employees and top talents. Small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City need to exercise social responsibility to retain current employees. Doing this well will enhance the business thinking and working of employees, thereby helping to promote the development of the business with their creative solutions and suggestions for improvements.

Small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City that want to improve their reputation from activities that increase social responsibility need to disclose information about their annual CSR reports, releases an annual Environmental, Social and Governance or ESG report, which details a business's efforts in areas such as environmental protection, social responsibility and good governance standards. This also demonstrates the business's commitment to becoming a responsible corporate citizen.

Implications for Creative Behavior at Work

Small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City need to pay a lot of attention to factor ST1 "Enterprise environment creates favorable conditions to promote creative behaviors at work" because the average value is the lowest. CSR activities enhance employee pride and commitment to the goals of small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City, which in turn leads to innovative employee behavior. Small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City should take measures to increase employee engagement to get them to participate in work creatively.

Implications for Organizational Engagement

Organizational engagement is influenced by the factor Business Benefits with the second largest influence compared to other influential relationships (β=0.332). In particular, the GK1 scale "Employees are engaged to the business because of the feeling of being together with their colleagues" needs to be improved by small and medium-sized enterprises. Business benefits in terms of the ability to attract and retain employees have a great influence on employee engagement with small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City. Business benefits in terms of access to resources, especially capital, greatly affect organizational engagement.

Implications for Organizational Effectiveness

From the research results model, factors affecting organizational effectiveness include Corporate Social Responsibility with coefficient β=0.071, Organizational engagement with coefficient β=0.096 and Creative Behavior with coefficient β=0.363. In which Creative Behavior is the factor that has the greatest influence on Organizational Effectiveness. If small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City perform well in corporate social responsibility activities, they will reap important business results such as improving brand reputation and having a cohesive workforce, creativity and quality, increase available resources including capital and have more business opportunities.

Small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City need to take steps to support increasing employees' creative behavior at work, directly impacting the employee's working environment and employee motivation. Small and medium-sized enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City need to increase employee engagement through aspects such as changing the working environment, promoting employee empowerment and investing heavily in training activities. This will bring positive points to organizational effectiveness.

Conclusion

The study has identified the components and constituting factors in the relationship between CSR and organizational effectiveness through organizational engagement and creative behavior at work. Furthermore, the author inherited the results of the scale, built a scale and collected an official research sample with 331 SME subjects. The survey subjects were SME owners, CEOs/administrators, finance directors/chief accountants as well as sales department heads in Ho Chi Minh City. Quantitative analysis results with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient analysis technique and EFA exploratory factor analysis show that the scale reaches the necessary reliability value. The results of confirmatory factor analysis CFA show the appropriateness of the official research model. Structural equation modeling SEM shows all research relationships or hypotheses are accepted as well as determine the influence of corporate social responsibility CSR on organizational effectiveness through the mediating component of organizational engagement and creative behavior at work in the case of SMEs in Ho Chi Minh City. In addition, the Bootstrap test also recorded the level of fit of the factor model compared to the research data. Examining the differences in the structure of business entities on the effectiveness of SMEs in Ho Chi Minh City did not find differences in the position composition of survey subjects, gender of business owners, number of employees or number of years the business has been in operation. In addition, the author used the research results as a basis for the process of proposing management implications to improve organizational engagement and creative behavior at work to improve the organizational effectiveness of SMEs in Ho Chi Minh City in the future.

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