There is no need to shout to be heard! The paradoxical nature of CSR reporting in a Latin American family SME.

Drawing on paradox and reciprocal stewardship theory, this study focuses on tensions in CSR reporting experienced by a family SME in a developing Latin American country. Prior literature suggested a prescriptive, tension-free process, led by family members and driven by the interest to protect and enhance both the family's and the firm's reputation. Relying on an in-depth qualitative approach, this study unveils that CSR reporting is not immune to contradictions between familial and external expectations. The findings reveal that religious beliefs can emerge as a strong source of tensions. A reciprocal stewardship perspective allows an understanding of how and why family and non-family members work together and handle paradoxes. A conceptual model is proposed which is based on multiple sources of emergence (family-related, business-related, and external sources) and management/avoidance of tensions in CSR reporting, mediated by the types of relationships among family members and between family and non-family members. Implications and opportunities for further research are presented.

Keywords

CSR reporting; Family SME; Paradox theory; Reciprocal stewardship; Latin America; Religion

Introduction

There is a growing interest in knowing how deep socially responsible activities run in small- and medium-sized family businesses (Baden, Harwood and Woodward, 2011; Soundararajan, Jamali and Spence, 2018). Family SMEs represent the largest share of businesses worldwide (Howorth, Rose, Hamilton and Westhead, 2010) and their socially responsible engagement, progressively reported under a corporate social responsibility (CSR) label, has not gone unnoticed (Van Gils, Dibrell, Neubaum and Craig, 2014; Spence, 2016). CSR has long revolved around how organisations look after the expectations of society through the decisions and formal actions of their owners/managers, addressing the concerns of those whose lives are affected by the organisation's operations (Carroll and Shabana, 2010; Wang, Tong, Takeuchi and George, 2016). Still, to be effective, CSR engagement needs to be trailed by suitable communication (Du, Bhattacharya and Sen, 2010). In family firms, one explanation that has been offered in prior research about communicating socially responsible activities is that the owning family has a very strong desire to protect both the family's and the firm's reputation by being good corporate citizens, aiming to create and maintain a positive company image, as it also represents an extension of their own identity (Dyer and Whetten, 2006). Notwithstanding, scholars point out that not all family SMEs engage in CSR reporting (Campopiano and De Massis, 2015; Nekhili, Nagati, Chtioui and Rebolledo, 2017) and call to investigate inherent contradictions that remain underexplored (Fletcher, 2002; Spence, 2016).

This study focuses on CSR reporting in family SMEs for several reasons. Firstly, the assumption of a smooth, tension-free process, led by family members and driven by the interest to protect and enhance both the family's and the firm's reputation, overlooks that communicating CSR is "*a very delicate matter*", often fraught with contradictions (Du et al., 2010: 10). Contradictions may emerge around the support or reservations of family and non-

family members to disclose socially responsible initiatives. Tensions may persist as decisions have to be made about what to disclose and why, often amidst contradicting business and personal rationales (Pedersen and Neergaard, 2009). Persistent contradictions between interdependent elements, which are logical on their own but when occurring simultaneously become incompatible and hard to reconcile, relate to paradoxes (Schad, Lewis, Raisch and Smith, 2016: 10). A paradox lens examines family SMEs as a dynamic and complex system encompassing a variety of tensions and dilemmas (Schuman, Stutz and Ward, 2010), which can remain latent until contextual conditions make them resurface (Smith and Lewis, 2011). Recent studies suggest that family businesses face many paradoxes over time (Clinton, McAdam and Gamble, 2018) and thus further attention to paradoxes in CSR reporting is needed.

Secondly, contradicting ideologies and expectations between family and non-family members (Johannisson and Huse, 2000; Long and Mathews, 2011) highlight the juxtaposition of theoretical perspectives, such as agency and stewardship, to explain paradoxes in CSR reporting (Schad et al., 2016). Agency tensions may arise through non-family managers failing to act on behalf of family owners by misreporting or requiring higher incentives to disclose CSR information, or through family SME owners delaying formal reporting or minimizing its importance (Salazar and Husted, 2008). Still, an agency perspective may not fully address how and why family SME leaders manage tensions when fiduciary responsibilities compete with the duty to others and societal expectations. Conversely, stewardship theory posits that family SME owners and managers are not always self-serving and may align goals and motivations to serve the family SME (Davis, Schoorman and Donaldson, 1997; Davis, Allen and Hayes, 2010). Prior studies suggest that CSR is inherently linked to stewardship as it revolves around shared interests to safeguard the welfare of an organisation (Caldwell, Hayes, Bernal and Karri, 2007). A reciprocal stewardship perspective

(Pearson and Marler, 2010; Neubaum, Thomas, Dibrell and Craig, 2017), explains situations when family leaders, focusing on collective serving, intrinsic motivations, and commitment to personal values, aim to improve employee welfare. Such emphasis, which results in high-quality and reciprocal relationships between family leaders and employees, offers an alternative explanation of how agency tensions around CSR reporting within family SMEs may be minimised. To date, there is no empirical evidence about how (whether) reciprocal stewardship influences CSR reporting.

Finally, there is an assumption that CSR reporting is mainly replicated around the world, overlooking differences between Western and international practices (Wang et al., 2016). To increase understanding, scholars call for further examination of CSR in developing countries (Jamali and Karam, 2018), that is, countries held to be lesser developed in terms of industrialization and institutional approaches to social responsibility (Katrak and Strange, 2004). To contribute to knowledge, this study examines tensions in CSR reporting in Latin America, where family SMEs dominate (Müller, Botero, Discua Cruz and Subramanian, 2019) and where CSR research has been the least covered (Peinado-Vara, 2006; Visser, 2008). Whilst there is an expectation of family members leading CSR initiatives to increase reputation (Gupta, Levenburg, Moore, Motwani and Schwarz, 2008), tensions between family and non-family managers (Discua Cruz and Howorth, 2008) and variations in CSR engagement, that run counter to expectations, cannot be underestimated (Husted, Allen and Rivera, 2010). Thus, Latin America is an ideal context for further theorizing about CSR (Dobers and Halme, 2009). Under conditions where communicating socially responsible activities may cause tensions, understanding why family SMEs would engage in CSR reporting and how they cope with tensions that emerge from family-related (e.g., values and religious beliefs, reputation), business-related (reputation, performance), and external sources (international guidelines, industry pressures, associations, etc.) is warranted.

Therefore, this study focuses on the following questions: *Why does a family SME in a developing Latin American country engage in CSR reporting and how does it manage the tensions among family and non-family members in the decision to disclose socially responsible initiatives?* To answer these questions, this study focuses on a holistic single case study in Honduras, which is ideal when little is known about a complex phenomenon in family SMEs (Yin, 2018; Reay and Zhang, 2014). In Honduras, CSR reporting has been associated with large international firms and seen with scepticism by society (Were, 2003; B.-Turcotte, De Bellefeuille and Den Hond, 2007). Moreover, whilst Honduran SMEs are not encouraged to report on their socially responsible activities, nor is it mandatory for them to engage in any kind of formally recognised effort, recent accounts herald a spur of CSR reporting (FUNDAHRSE, 2016). A family SME in Honduras, winner of a CSR award, was purposefully selected as an exemplar that illustrates diverse tensions in CSR reporting, providing the opportunity to refine knowledge (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

The findings reveal that CSR reporting is not immune to tensions. Initial CSR reporting was triggered by the need to ensure business continuity. Paradoxes emerged due to family-related, business-related and external sources. Reporting certain CSR activities compromised the intrinsic religious motivations of family owners. The devising of a solution, around a low-fit CSR project that catered for family, business, and external expectations, evidenced that reciprocal stewardship allows family and non-family members to work together and resolve a paradox.

The remainder of the article continues as follows: First, a focus on the unique context of family SMEs and CSR reporting, followed by a discussion on paradoxes and reciprocal stewardship. Then, the methodological approach is detailed to then concentrate on the findings, discussion, and a model that sketches the paradoxical nature of CSR reporting. Finally, limitations and future research opportunities are outlined.

The unique context of family SMEs and social responsibility reporting.

SMEs differ from large-scale counterparts in terms of relationships, strategy and the integration of new practices (Cromie, Stephenson and Monteith, 1995; Wynarczyk, Watson, Storey, Short and Keasey, 1993). Definitions of SMEs highlight features such as numbers of employees, annual turnover, and unique products and services (Craig, Dibrell and Davis, 2008; McAdam, McAdam, Dunn and McCall, 2014), and acknowledge that SMEs can be part of a group of enterprises owned and managed by one or several individuals (European Commission, 2015). Focusing on social responsibility, Soundararajan et al. (2018: 935) define SMEs as firms that have no more than 250 employees, are generally independent, resource constrained, reliant on personal relationships and informality, actively managed by owners, with personalised treatment, operating mostly locally, and dependent on internal sources to finance growth. As definitions of family businesses abound (Diaz-Moriana, Hogan, Clinton and Brophy, 2019), this study defines a family SME as a firm associated with the involvement of family members in the ownership and management of the firm, and the intertwining of family and business objectives (Howorth et al., 2010: 438). Such definitions are relevant, as a family SME is a context where tensions can surface when business-related issues, such as growth and performance, overlap with family expectations (Fletcher, 2002).

Recent studies differentiate between socially responsible activities engaged in by SME owners and CSR activities, previously perceived to be poorly translated in the SME context (Soundararajan et al., 2018). This study focuses on the latter, as integrating CSR (i.e., introducing codes of conduct, standards, reporting) is perceived to be problematic (Baden et al., 2011). Tensions may emerge related to plurality of opinions, changes required, and resource availability to meet requirements in external communication (Schad et al., 2016; Smith and Lewis, 2011).

CSR integration starts with owners/managers being attentive to diverse societal concerns, influenced by stakeholders making managers aware of pressing needs (Pedersen, 2006), or by reactions to changing industry standards (O'Donovan, 2002). Explicit and implicit motives, often competing with each other, influence integration (Matten and Moon, 2008). Knowledge and awareness, available firm resources and preferences help identify and select social issues to address (Pedersen and Andersen, 2006), which then informs SME practices that become operable, explicit and codified (Pedersen, 2006). Outcomes can include the support of charitable organizations, the hiring and training of the unemployed and/or disadvantaged, improved workplace safety, concern for the environment, education, and transparency in financial reporting (van Marrewijk, 2003). Still, despite positive outcomes, it has always been an open question as to whether disclosure of outcomes is driven by a genuine commitment or by a deliberate approach to comply with institutional pressures, opportunistic motivations or self-interest (Iatridis et al., 2016).

Prior studies highlight that family SMEs may engage informally in socially responsible practices for a long period of time without a CSR label (Fitzgerald et al., 2010). In family SMEs, the values, beliefs, personal backgrounds and experiences of founders may encourage the addressing of societal concerns through resource commitment (e.g., human, financial) and time (Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Hemingway and Maclagan, 2004). Activities can relate to protecting the immediate environment, acts of kindness towards employees and long-term stakeholders, philanthropy, or supporting causes closer to home (Campopiano, De Massis and Chirico, 2014; Uhlaner, Goor-Balk and Masurel, 2004). This study considers such a range of activities as being part of CSR. Aguinis and Glavas (2019: 1068) advocate that it is rare that any firm will implement CSR perfectly, and thus a CSR approach will usually be somewhere on a continuum between peripheral (activities implemented as an initiative that is not part of a firm's core activities, such as philanthropy and charity (e.g., Hutchins and

Sutherland, 2008)) and embedded activities (integrated within an organization's strategy as well as daily operations). Recent studies posit that SMEs may reflect a unique level of sophistication and idiosyncrasy in communicating CSR outcomes (Baumann-Pauly, Wickert, Spence and Scherer, 2013). Therefore, further attention to CSR reporting is needed.

CSR reporting

CSR reporting relates to the *"process of communicating the social and environmental effects of organizations' economic actions to particular interest groups within society and to society at large"* (Gray, Owen and Adams, 1996: 3). Most CSR communication focuses on a company's involvement in social causes, which is associated with commitment, impact, rationale for engagement, and the congruence between the cause and the firm's business (Du et al., 2010). Reporting includes instruments such as social, environmental, and sustainability annual reports, websites, media releases, public speeches, and CSR-related advertising.

CSR reporting acknowledges that SMEs have relationships with a wide range of stakeholders - employees, suppliers, customers, local communities - which affect and are affected by a family SME's operation (Garriga and Melé, 2004). Reporting informs about the consistency of values, norms and expectations between a family SME and its immediate context (Pedersen and Neergaard, 2009; Sweeney and Coughlan, 2008). CSR communication can provide positive benefits by spreading a good corporate citizen image, creating communication channels with stakeholders and legitimizing business practices (Du et al., 2010; Pedersen, 2009). A lack of communication may undermine authenticity and credibility, diminishing stakeholders' positive perceptions of an SME's activities (Du et al., 2010).

Recent studies highlight mixed findings about CSR reporting in family SMEs. Scholars agree that CSR reporting has a profound impact on the reputation, image, and protection of family members' assets and interests in a business (Campopiano and De Massis,

2015). Iyer and Lulseged (2013) found that the active involvement and direct monitoring of family owners in management could act as a substitute for public disclosure: longer investment horizons and less preoccupation about short-term performance, as well as lower information asymmetry between family owners and managers, may make family SMEs less likely to disclose CSR information. Such notions were supported by Nekhili et al. (2017), who argued that family firms publish less CSR information than non-family firms, having less motivation to disclose information because tensions between owners and managers are assumed to be minimal. The presence of independent directors, associated with higher levels of disclosure, may have little influence on family SMEs due to personal or familiar ties to family owners (Cuadrado-Ballesteros et al., 2015). In such circumstances, reporting gravitates around the behaviours of family members, who may perceive CSR reporting as a risk in relation to long-term financial performance unless it enhances reputation and image (Cuadrado-Ballesteros et al., 2015; Gavana et al., 2017).

Nevertheless, while some family SMEs may be inclined to favour detailed CSR reporting due to reputation and image (Gavana et al., 2017), others may prefer otherwise. Whilst hard-earned legitimacy, embeddedness in the prevailing culture and society's perceptions about the sincerity and trustworthiness of CSR activities may provide an advantage for family SMEs (Panwar, Paul, Nybakk, Hansen and Thompson, 2014), a lack of consensus on what should be disclosed (or not) - and for what purpose - may lead to tensions (Margolis and Walsh, 2003), as there may be little interest in turning CSR reporting into forced and selective communication exercises (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009). A highly positive, over-reporting of CSR investments could be misinterpreted as 'bragging' (Nekhili et al., 2017), creating a backlash effect that could affect a family SME if stakeholders become suspicious and perceive predominantly extrinsic motives to shape and manipulate perceptions (Du et al., 2010). Moreover, tensions may arise if peripheral and/or embedded CSR initiatives

that are reported are perceived as incongruent with business operations (Du et al., 2010). Thus, CSR reporting in family SMEs may showcase persistent contradictions that need to be investigated.

A paradox lens

Paradoxes refer to *"persistent contradictions between interdependent elements"* (Schad et al., 2016: 10). Such elements *"seem logical in isolation, but absurd and irrational when appearing simultaneously"* (Lewis, 2000: 760). A paradox lens examines family SMEs as a complex system with a variety of tensions and dilemmas (Schuman et al., 2010). Persistent dilemmas in family businesses may be inextricably intertwined (Litz, 2008). Smith and Lewis (2001) suggest that paradoxes can emerge when family SME leaders must decide what they are going to do in terms of CSR reporting, how they are going to do it, who is going to do it, and in what time horizon. By defining how they are going to operate, they also define how they are not going to operate, creating organizing tensions. *Who* is going to do *what* highlights conflicting identities, roles, and values, creating belonging tensions. As leaders consider the time horizon for disclosure, between today and tomorrow, they create learning tensions. Finally, by defining what they are trying to do in terms of CSR reporting, family SME leaders also define what they are not trying to do, creating performing tensions. Performing paradoxes deal with varied goals and outcomes stemming from different internal and external demands (Margolis and Walsh, 2003), or tensions around interpreting the advantages/disadvantages of CSR reporting.

Paradoxes can persist over time and often remain latent until contextual conditions such as plurality, scarcity, and change make them resurface (Schad et al., 2016; Smith and Lewis, 2011). Plurality deals with several stakeholders expressing contradictory perspectives about CSR reporting. Changes in the way family SMEs report CSR initiatives can trigger

juxtaposing priorities. Scarcity of resources (e.g., financial, temporal, and human) can create tensions about how to support social causes whilst safeguarding financial performance. Managing paradoxes is challenging because owners/managers may display contradictory responses to avoid discomfort (Hahn, Preuss, Pinkse and Figge, 2014). As persistent tensions may revolve around the (mis)alignment of objectives, perceptions, and expectations (Russo and Perrini, 2010), the potential of paradox perspectives to explain organisational phenomena rests on relationships between SMEs owners and managers (Schad et al., 2016).

A reciprocal stewardship perspective

Contradicting ideologies, norms of reciprocity, and expectations of family SME owners and managers (Johannisson and Huse, 2000; Long and Mathews, 2011) underscore agency and stewardship perspectives (Schad et al., 2016). Agency theory (Eisenhardt, 1989) explains relationships in which family business leaders' and managers' interests are misaligned, and may only be aligned through appropriate compensation and monitoring (Le Breton-Miller and Miller, 2009). CSR reporting could be a strategy by owners or managers to benefit only themselves. Yet, an agency perspective may not explain how and why owners and managers manage tensions when fiduciary responsibilities compete with both the duty to others within the firm and societal expectations.

A contrasting perspective to agency is stewardship theory, which acknowledges that individuals are not always self-serving (Davis et al., 1997) and explains situations in which family and non-family owners and managers serve the organisational good and its mission, rather than pursuing opportunistic ends (James, Jennings and Jennings, 2017; Davis et al., 2010; Zahra, Hayton, Neubaum, Dibrell and Craig, 2008). Neubaum et al. (2017) posit that stewardship creates a competitive advantage when - and if - agency costs can be reduced, and they demonstrate that family businesses possess stronger stewardship climates than non-

family counterparts. A strong stewardship climate will explain employees' engagement when policies, practices, and procedures foster widely shared pro-organisational values.

Recent studies suggest that a reciprocal stewardship perspective, integrating stewardship theory and leader-member exchange (LMX) theory (Buch, 2015; Schriesheim, Castro and Cogliser, 1999; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), focusing on the social exchange norm of reciprocity, can offer a nuanced view of how stewardship behaviour occurs when dealing with paradoxes in CSR reporting. Leadership is relevant when approaching CSR to encourage involvement without coercive pressures (Pedersen, 2006). A central tenet of reciprocal stewardship lies in the initiating role of a leader and subsequent exchange roles from followers (Pearson and Marler, 2010: 1119). When family leaders behave as good stewards they are more likely to be concerned with the welfare of employees, the continuity of employment, assignments to challenging and desirable jobs, the opportunities to have new experiences, and other behaviours that employees would view as supportive and positive. Such approaches would develop high-quality relationships between family leaders and employees - based on mutual trust, respect, and obligations - and foster a sense of reciprocal behaviour, where employees may return the favourable treatment in some way. Conversely, if employees are not privy to family objectives, not given access to information about the intrinsic motives or values of a leader, not allowed to engage in constant and meaningful interactions with family owners, or receive limited support and encouragement, then they may become less committed to show pro-organisational behaviours.

To date, there is no empirical evidence about how (whether) reciprocal stewardship may have any influence in CSR reporting in family SMEs. A recent review of leader–member exchange theory, which undergirds reciprocal stewardship, suggests that the ongoing exchange between family SME leaders and managers needs to be examined in the light of cultural variations (Buch, 2015; Schyns and Day, 2010). Dimensions such as power distance,

dealing with how people view superior/subordinate relationships in an organisation (Hofstede, 2001: 98), and individualism/collectivism, which explains the extent to which a culture focuses on individuals and their welfare rather than groups and their well-being (Hofstede, 2001: 225), are long-standing explanations of cultural variations in socially responsible behaviour around the world (Franke and Nadler, 2008; Karaibrahimoglu and Cangarli, 2016) that influence stewardship in family firms (Davis et al., 1997; Neubaum et al., 2017). Collectivism and low power distance may explain positive employee outcomes when integrating CSR (Waldman et al., 2006), as managers may subordinate personal goals to those of the organisations and are more likely to support CSR (Gupta, Hanges and Dorfman, 2002). Nevertheless, recent studies suggest that tensions between owners and managers in Latin America, expected to be minimal, may influence CSR reporting (Gupta et al., 2008). Based on the previous discussions, this study focuses on answering the following questions: *Why does a family SME in a developing Latin American country engage in CSR reporting and how does it manage the tensions among family and non-family members in the decision to disclose socially responsible initiatives?*.

Methodology

Answering 'how' and 'why' questions requires examining and articulating phenomena from the perspective of those studied (Pratt, 2009). CSR needs to be studied "*where it is being practiced and should reflect the experiences of those involved*" (Dobers and Halme, 2009: 298). As the interest was in exploring and interpreting paradoxes in CSR reporting in a developing Latin American country, then a single case study research was ideal (Stake, 2008), as detailed and in-depth insights from those involved directly in CSR reporting, which could illustrate tensions involved, was needed (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2013).

Single case studies provide a nuanced, empirically-rich, holistic account of specific phenomena in detail and offer rich insights when focusing on complex processes in family businesses (Clinton, Faherty, Diaz-Moriana and Craig, 2017; Barbera et al., 2018; Reay and Zhang, 2014), such as CSR in SMEs (Fuller and Tian, 2006). This study relies on a holistic case study (Yin, 2018), focusing on one organization, with the analysis undertaken seeking to be holistic and studied in its context (Tight, 2017), shaped by an approach that relies on narrative, phenomenological descriptions (Hamilton, Discua Cruz and Jack, 2017).

Context: Latin America and Honduras

Honduras is a relevant context of study for several reasons. First, it is a Latin American developing country where family SMEs dominate (Discua Cruz, 2010) and where socially responsible values are an extension of family values, often instilled by founders (Gupta et al., 2008), and often associated with shared religious beliefs. Such an association is important, as in Latin American countries, the movement to support socially responsible initiatives has been linked to social values related to Catholicism (De Oliveira, 2006), which remains a dominant religious faith tied to local culture (Cleary, 2009). Religion can be a source of legitimation for family SME leaders in secular arenas such as politics and business (Morello, Romero, Rabbia and Da Costa, 2017). It is not uncommon to find family SME owners supporting renowned social initiatives led by the Catholic church. Moreover, CSR would be expected to focus on peripheral activities, led by family members around reputation enhancement, with scarce input from non-family managers (Gupta et al., 2008). Non-family managers are expected to minimize values related to self-direction and autonomy in order to avoid managerial tensions (Lenartowicz and Johnson, 2003). Finally, it is a context where CSR may be guided by external agents, including international organisations such as the OECD, private foundations, and multinational enterprises (Peinado-Vara, 2006, Were, 2003).

For example, private organisations such as FUNDAHRSE (*Honduran Foundation for CSR*, www.fundahrse.org) guide businesses in CSR practices based on international standards.

The interest was to find a family SME that engaged in CSR, consistent with the research concern of understanding formal forms of social responsibility. In 2012, a family SME that won a national CSR award and fulfilled the definition of a SME in Honduras (Gaceta, 2009), consistent with the definition described earlier, was purposely selected. The case study offered insights that could expand theoretical understandings. As detailed information is difficult to obtain in Latin American family businesses (Jones, 2004), access was procured through family and professional relationships and under an anonymity request by participants.

The case firm: AsphaCo

AsphaCo is a family business founded in 1984 in Honduras by Maria and Jorge Asturias, after completion of their university degrees. AsphaCo started with six employees and concentrated initially on bartering palm oil from Honduras for asphalt from Nicaragua. Their business emerged during the political turmoil in Central America in the 1980s, when trading was problematic in the region (Leogrande, 1996). Over the years, AsphaCo grew from a single firm to a diversified small family business group employing 118 staff in sectors including energy, construction, office technology, and farming. AsphaCo is currently owned and managed by members of two generations of the Asturias family. The founding generation is composed of Jorge and Maria, general managers. The second generation is composed of Jorge Jr. and Ana. At the time of the initial interviews, Jorge Jr, a business graduate, participated in AsphaCo's management, while Ana was still studying a business degree in the USA and was not involved in management. The managerial structure of AsphaCo evolved

from relying solely on family members to include non-family managers (Wynarczyk et al., 1993) in several SMEs created over time.

CSR engagement started through one of AsphaCo's associated SMEs: InteCo, created by Jorge Jr. in 2007 to supply office technology equipment and services to large Honduran businesses. From 2008, InteCo's management was entrusted to a non-family executive, Iris Perez, a business graduate, who has worked for AsphaCo since 2005. Her mandate was to position the firm as a leading office technology provider. In 2011, Iris was invited to attend a CSR seminar by one of InteCo's largest customers: the BANCOF Group, a large Honduran financial conglomerate, winner of numerous CSR awards. Training was guided by FUNDAHRSE. Participant firms were to be evaluated on CSR dimensions a few months after the seminar.

Data collection and analysis

Data collection started in 2012, with follow-up interviews in 2013, 2014, and 2016, focused on understanding CSR integration longitudinally. Collection involved in-depth interviews conducted in Spanish and collected verbatim, lasting between one and two hours. Translation was carried out later for future analysis. Phenomenological interview guidelines facilitated unrestricted accounts about CSR reporting (Hamilton et al., 2017). Interviews were held with AsphaCo family and non-family executives, as well as BANCOF and FUNDAHRSE executives. At the time of the initial interviews, family and non-family members were discussing further CSR engagement and reporting. The interviews revealed the emergence and management of several tensions. A total of 15 interviews were conducted. This allowed follow-up on emerging themes (Patton, 1990). A range of different data elements (e.g., documents, articles related to InteCo's CSR reporting) as well as secondary data from

FUNDAHRSE and BANCOF (e.g., company brochures, annual reports, company websites, and media reports) were collected for triangulation (Reay and Zhang, 2014; Yin, 2018).

Data analysis was inductive, as the study sought to understand perceptions and experiences (McAdam et al., 2014). The analysis was informed by prior theoretical understanding but not constrained by it (Finch, 2002). Analysis of the data was reiterative in moving between data and emerging findings (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). Based on Shaw et al. (2017) and Zhang and Reay (2018), this study started by independently examining the data in interviews, observation notes, and documents. Then a coding process was carried out by reading and re-reading transcripts, notes, and documents, and then using codes in sentences or paragraphs to organize data. Once coding was completed, data were organized to identify emerging themes. The interpretation of emergent findings was discussed with participants to gain their perspectives and inform ongoing analysis.

In analysing the data, experience of the local culture was important, as was experience in owning and managing family businesses, because both factors helped to increase understanding and confidence in analysis (Hamilton et al., 2017). Finally, the findings were 're-contextualized' by comparing them to arguments in existing literature. Table 1 summarizes the data coding, themes, and concepts that emerged in the process. Data in tables support the key themes emerging from the analysis (Pratt, 2009). Compelling excerpts from the data were used to illustrate arguments. Such an approach was undertaken to increase transparency and address validity (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010). To address reliability, a case study protocol and the development of a case study database was used (Yin, 2018).

Case analysis and findings

Data analysis revealed an undeliberate approach to CSR integration, where unexpected tensions surfaced between family and non-family executives in reporting outcomes.

Sources of tensions: Business demands and industry trends

CSR engagement at InteCo was initiated after Iris attended a CSR seminar sponsored by BANCOF in 2011.

> *"Initially, I did not know what CSR was really about, I thought that it was mostly about formal donations and financial support of social causes… I learned the basics about CSR through the experience of BANCOF."* (Iris)

A report on supplier and client relationships, employee welfare, and community enhancement were CSR dimensions demanded by BANCOF executives. After the seminar, Iris initially focused on supplier and client relationships, relying on her knowledge about how AsphaCo and InteCo operated to see if compliance was possible:

> *"...we had to ensure that all suppliers [of InteCo] provided original products; that clients' quotes were addressed appropriately... we often have to go through bidding processes with customers... as all our [InteCo] procedures followed every legal requirement, it was just a matter of reviewing what we were already doing and ensuring the process was well documented and formalised…"* (Iris)

Knowledge of existing procedures shaped a detailed CSR report. Such action ensured the continuity of the commercial relationship between InteCo and BANCOF, as well as preserving the legal and fiduciary interest of InteCo's family owners. At the end of 2011, InteCo's detailed report received a CSR compliance award by BANCOF. Iris invited Maria to attend the award ceremony as *"it provided a great opportunity for Ms. Asturias [Maria] to know more about CSR and the efforts done at InteCo"* (Iris). After the ceremony, Iris asked Maria to consider further CSR engagement based on BANCOF dimensions, as it could benefit AsphaCo in the long run. Maria agreed.

Table 1 shows that business and external sources of tensions may emerge from growing pressures in an industry, awareness of such trends, and information available,

particularly when strong commercial relationships exist, which demand a prompt response to ensure business survival. Industry trends, the need for compliance, and available information represented sources of tensions around CSR reporting. Adequate reports were a positive signal to external stakeholders about the firms' social responsibility efforts. Moreover, further engagement showcased motivations to go beyond mere compliance. This was noted when Iris was invited by BANCOF to attend further CSR training in 2012. Iris recalled:

"...following up the [CSR] training was not compulsory but I was really interested, and from my experience in AsphaCo a lot of things could be achieved… there is something special about our company… it is rooted in the way things are done and the family behind it. We had to engage further…it would impact the way this company survives in the long run."

Table 1 shows that Iris' motivation to pursue further training was driven not only by the perceived benefits of CSR reporting but also by experiencing stewardship behaviours of family business leaders. Iris expressed:

"There are many things in this workplace [AsphaCo] which were not written down. People that do not interact with the [Asturias] family do not know them. They [the Asturias family] transmit a special way of caring for employees; they will find a solution to employee problems beyond what anyone could expect, be it financial, medical or whatever. That is a feeling that is transmitted when you start working here … they will go to great lengths to help their communities. I have worked in other companies before and I have never seen this… how can I then be indifferent to look after the firm if those who are on top [owners, family managers] care about us [employees] and where we live [community]?"

-Insert Table 1 about here-

The motivation to reciprocate such behaviours and 'look after' InteCo and AsphaCo in the same way that family leaders cared for employees and the community suggested the presence of high-quality relationships between leaders and employees. Such reciprocal behaviour aligned motivations to craft and support reporting of socially responsible initiatives engaged in by family leaders. Nevertheless, the demands of further reporting revealed tensions between business and family expectations.

Managing tensions

Following CSR reporting demands, Maria and Iris approached the subject of communications about employee welfare activities. Iris expressed that such an approach concentrated on:

> *"...ensuring that all employees have formal contracts and job descriptions...that working conditions were appropriate, etc. was important to continue [to engage in CSR] ... it was just a matter of ensuring it was well documented and clear for everyone to see."*

As detailed legal procedures around employee tasks and functions were already in place, reporting on basic employee welfare practices progressed satisfactorily. Iris then focused on pinpointing any additional initiatives related to employee welfare and community engagement. Several CSR activities related to peripheral initiatives were identified, such as donating wheelchairs or supporting fundraising or social activities for the community, hospitals, and retirement homes. Jorge Jr. emphasised that constant interaction between family members and among family leaders and employees allowed awareness of pressing societal concerns, making it easier to 'step up' and contribute. Maria stressed that a close relationship with AsphaCo employees allowed family members to understand and address their needs. Such an approach revolved around an axiom of the Asturias family, shared by family members.: *"of whatever we have [material resources, money, time] we should always*

give something back [to others], even if just a little." (Maria) Table 2 shows the peripheral CSR activities that the Asturias family engaged in, based on such an axiom:

-Insert Table 2 about here-

Table 1 shows that Iris was motivated to reciprocate in drafting further CSR reporting, based on stories of the family in business and knowledge of shared family values, as well as the awareness of employee welfare activities beyond legal compliance in business. Knowledge of the family story in business supported understanding of the motivations behind the activities engaged in:

"It is all about the type of family that leads a business... this family [Asturias] started from humble beginnings, they faced many obstacles, that is why they have empathy with their employees and their communities - they experienced the same issues." (Iris)

Iris believed that disclosing such information would further increase AsphaCo's legitimacy in business.

Unpredicted tensions: There is no need to shout about it!

Tensions surfaced as reporting peripheral activities was perceived by family members as opportunistic and conflicting with long-standing family values and beliefs. Jorge Jr. noted:

"....it is not really for us [the Asturias family] to do something and then have a photo taken to show it. Other companies do it and do not follow through [on their social engagement] after it... they [other companies] promote it in the media, in radio, TV or newspapers... we prefer to do it at a personal level, anonymous…and feel fulfilled by knowing that what we support will have lasting repercussions… we have a strong belief that this [reporting] should not be done…there is no need to shout about it!"

Family leaders considered the reporting of peripheral activities as 'bragging' for something they felt was *"a natural part of being a family in business"* (Jorge Jr.). While family leaders did not undermine the potential advantages that CSR reporting entail for the image of the firm, disclosing prior and current peripheral activities (Table 2) in a formal communication channel ran counter to their motivations. Such perceptions illustrated a paradox between business and family expectations. Iris expressed that such an approach was at odds with what CSR reporting could do strategically, as it could remain linked exclusively to the family:

"All their [the Asturias family] community work was done at a personal level, this [approach] did not create any association [in the community] with the company [AsphaCo]."

When asked about the reasons behind a preference for under-reporting peripheral activities, family members expressed that their desire for anonymity was based on religious beliefs. The Asturias family are devoted Catholics. Maria regards herself as a *"devoted servant of the Virgin Mary"*. Family members regularly attend religious events associated with the Catholic church. Family members dedicate several days a year to activities linked to Catholic projects to help the community. For instance, since 2008, Maria has visited retirement homes and spent time with the elderly as part of honouring her faith. Moreover, Maria expressed that the mission of AsphaCo was guided by a shared family religious principle: *"We [the Asturias family] are thankful to God ... my kids know that we should always be thankful to God that we have an opportunity to work and provide jobs for people."* Maria strongly advocated that such a principle, transmitted to the second generation from an early age, was reinforced by supporting, as a family, diverse peripheral initiatives anonymously (Table 2). This approach was expected to influence future socially responsible initiatives supported by the incoming generation.

Whilst tensions arose due to family shared religious beliefs, Table 1 also shows that understanding associated practices was important to contextualise further CSR integration. Rather than avoiding tensions, and dismissing CSR reporting, an initiative that addressed business and family expectations was identified and supported to solve the paradox.

Avoiding future tensions

To handle tensions, family and non-family executives focused on a socially responsible project that could address intrinsic family motivations and the interests of employees to reciprocate the family's stewardship behaviours in the future. Maria wanted to help the elderly and underprivileged children in Honduras, with the latter becoming more important. Jorge Jr. was interested in initiatives that addressed children's education. Iris noted:

> *"Maria is very keen regarding philanthropic activities; she has been always involved in actions to help the community and will continue to do so; she is now involved in a project around education… the children [Jorge Jr. and Ana] have been involved with their parents before in hospitals and with education scholarships…Jorge Jr. is now a member of an international programme that supports education for the underprivileged."*

An opportunity to address tensions was identified in a peripheral initiative led by Maria. Months before receiving the CSR award, Maria became a board member of the most reputable NGO related to English language instruction in Honduras. Upon becoming a member, Maria developed a scholarship programme to enable high-performing underprivileged children to learn English as a second language. The pilot programme, supported by the US embassy, provided 50 scholarships. Yet, the size and complexity of managing such a project became problematic, as 400 scholarships and funding up to US$ 1,500 per participant were envisioned. Time away from the business to coordinate such a

project would be required. Family members acknowledged that the time, resources, and skills of family and non-family members could address the growing complexity of such a project and provide a framework for future CSR initiatives. Iris expressed:

"There is a need to look at this [education project] from a strategic perspective as to how employees could contribute in the long term. In the future, there can be several projects addressed at the same time: some linked to hospitals, or to artists, or to other education projects... the idea is to create a structure where employees are able to tell the [Asturias] family about social concerns or activities and the structure could accommodate dealing with such concerns, and where employees may contribute with their time or solutions..."

A managerial structure that included volunteering employees to help the family manage the English education project was devised collectively by family and non-family members. Such a project, despite having a low association with the operations of AsphaCo, reflected an alignment of interests between family and non-family members to support a socially responsible initiative. Table 1 shows that knowledge of the interests of family members to continue supporting CSR initiatives and specific societal concerns allowed non-family employees to support a specific low-fit CSR project that could be formally communicated without contradicting family religious beliefs. Moreover, such a collective approach would assist in understanding how to scale up socially responsible initiatives at the business level in order to manage tensions in future CSR reporting.

Discussion

The findings challenge previous assumptions of prescriptive and tension-free phenomena, and lead us towards a greater understanding of how family businesses build on paradoxes in CSR reporting. Drawing on paradox and reciprocal stewardship theory, this

study contributes to the literature on CSR reporting by elucidating the ways in which tensions emerge and are managed. In doing so, reciprocal stewardship has offered an explanation of how and why a family SME negotiates the tensions emerging from external, business-related, and family related sources involved in CSR reporting in a Latin American family SME.

In terms of a paradox perspective, this study empirically reveals that paradoxes in CSR reporting within family SMEs are much more complex than previously reported in CSR and family business literature. The findings reveal the emergence of organising and performing tensions, as demands for detailed CSR reporting challenged how the business operated (Du et al., 2010). Underlying tensions emerged due to the plurality of perceptions of family and non-family members around disclosing the scope and reach of peripheral CSR activities, as it can be associated with 'bragging' or a forced business-related marketing exercise (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009) that compromised the intrinsic motivations of family members (Smith and Lewis, 2011).

A paradox persisted, because family leaders faced a dilemma as peripheral CSR activities related to employee welfare or community enhancement were preferred to be kept anonymous and under-reported. In this study, such a rationale can be explained through social ethics expectations in Catholicism (Arruñada, 2010), encouraging a discreet approach when CSR is engaged (Cornwall and Naughton, 2003; Tropman, 2002). Detailed reporting contradicted underlying expectations, which could affect the image of a religious family in society (Sandelands, 2008). This is a surprising finding, which extends studies suggesting that family SMEs may rationalise CSR engagement based on religious norms and expectations (Brammer, Williams and Zinkin, 2007). Whilst prior studies pose that the higher devotion to religion, the stronger the interest in CSR engagement (Jamali and Sdiani, 2013), this study evidences that religious intensity in family members can create a paradox when the business rationale for CSR reporting runs counter to underlying religious expectations. Thus,

although CSR could be engaged systematically, guided by external or business-related sources, religious beliefs from a family-related source can create tensions that affect CSR reporting.

This study also contributes to reciprocal stewardship literature in four ways. First, the findings highlight that agency theory alone does not fully explain how tensions in CSR reporting may be resolved. This study provides empirical evidence of the role of reciprocal stewardship in handling tensions in CSR reporting. High-quality relationships, initiated by the leaders of a family SME, and reciprocal behaviours by employees allowed the devising of collective solutions to handle a paradox, rather than relying on agency controls to align motivations. Second, this study extends our understanding of how religion can influence reciprocal stewardship behaviours and its repercussions for CSR reporting. Shared religious beliefs among family members aligned motivations to engage in specific socially responsible initiatives over time. As family members were open about prior CSR peripheral initiatives being guided by religious beliefs, non-family employees were aware of the intrinsic motivations behind wider stewardship behaviours within and outside the firm. Constant interactions in business, knowledge of family stories, and access to information about shared family religious beliefs supported employees' perceptions of genuine, intrinsic motivations of family members, distant from self-interest. The outcome was manifested in the alignment of efforts to support a low-fit CSR project (English instruction for underprivileged children), which could differentiate a family SME as being more sincere in its underlying motives and increase the support and effectiveness for CSR reporting over time (Du et al., 2010).

Third, by examining the tensions of CSR reporting, this study contributes to reciprocal stewardship theorising by identifying the role of non-family organisational stewards. The findings suggest that non-family organisational stewards may confront difficult dilemmas when normative and instrumental expectations in business and society do not

perfectly align with family expectations. Insights were gained into how their reciprocal behaviour was enacted through becoming integrators of shared interests, acting upon their concern for the long-term welfare of the family SME rather than self-interest, and having a key managerial role (Berger, Cunningham and Drumwright, 2007; Caldwell et al., 2007). By deciphering and translating the underlying motivations of family members into the 'fit' between socially responsible initiatives and a family SME, organisational stewards can turn the tensions in CSR reporting into sources of insight about how initiatives can be scaled up over time (Dobers and Halme, 2009).

Finally, this study enhances existing reciprocal stewardship literature by presenting a conceptual framework to understand tensions in CSR reporting of family SMEs in a developing country (Figure 1). The model departs from three sources of tensions (family-related, business-related, external) and illustrates that their management and avoidance is affected by the relationships between family members and among family and non-family members. High-quality relationships enable family SMEs not only to ascribe meanings to shared narratives, influenced by family values and beliefs (Hamilton et al., 2017), but also to consider the avoidance of tensions by looking into the continuity of socially responsible behaviour based on such narratives, potentially nurturing a socially responsible legacy (Hammond, Pearson and Holt, 2016).

-Insert Figure 1 about here-

The model suggests that family-related, business-related, and external sources of tensions surface when a family SME experiences plurality, change, and scarcity in order to meet CSR reporting requirements. Figure 1 illustrates that the quality and type of relationship can affect the way paradoxes are handled. High-quality relationships between family and non-family executives may allow organisational stewards to manage tensions, based on knowledge of socially responsible activities, stories, shared values, and the underpinning

motivations of the family in business. Organisational stewards can then devise solutions around the complexity of socially responsible projects, future demands, shared interests, and the wider involvement of employees. Where tensions are unresolved and low-quality relationships persist, the model speculates that family/non-family members with unfulfilled incentives for CSR reporting will pursue isolated CSR initiatives, delay investments and under-report activities (dotted arrow).

For practitioners, this study underscores that CSR reporting may allow a family SME to be transparent about its underlying motivations to address societal concerns. The risks of under-reporting CSR activities is that such behaviour could be considered contradictory to the expectations of an industry. Still, benefits from CSR disclosure may be difficult to achieve unless reporting is done effectively and efficiently. The findings highlight the often-overlooked role, yet privileged position, of professional executives in addressing tensions related to the adaptability and transformation of business practices embodied in CSR reporting (Howorth, Wright, Westhead and Allcock, 2016). This is more likely to occur when the underlying motivations of family SME owners (including religious beliefs) to engage in CSR are known. Failure to appreciate such influences may prolong tensions when trying to communicate CSR activities. High-quality relationships between family leaders and non-family managers can shape CSR integration around collective interests that may minimize the recurrence of tensions over time, catering for family and business expectations (Pedersen and Neergaard, 2009). For policy makers, the findings suggest that without legislation or official government support, it is unlikely that CSR will become a norm for family SMEs in Latin America. Recognizing that CSR reporting has to acknowledge cultural aspects (e.g., religion) is key to understanding how to promote the adoption of CSR reporting guidelines. Devising policies that encourage appropriate communication could prevent CSR from being perceived as a nominal response to satisfy public relations.

Limitations and future research

This study has a few caveats and therefore its findings must be interpreted with caution. First, whilst relying on a single in-depth case study provides a comprehensive understanding of tensions in CSR reporting, it also limits the generalizability of results to contexts and situations that do not wholly match the specificities of the case (Stake, 2008). In this study, the participants were highly educated individuals. The selected firm had a higher level of professionalization, which may not be the general condition for most family SMEs in Honduras (Discua Cruz, 2010). Further research using a wider sample of family SMEs engaging in CSR reporting is needed to establish the empirical generalizability of findings.

Second, this study supports the view that findings are dependent on the firm studied and the context in which business is carried out (McAdam et al., 2014). Religious motivations of family members should not be underestimated in CSR reporting. As the choice of CSR activities was based around the social ethics of business owners (Cornwall and Naughton, 2003), then the variety of cultural dimensions and faith systems around the world can motivate researchers to revisit personal values, beliefs and motivations behind CSR reporting (Blindheim, 2015; Gond and Moser, 2019). Future studies could explore to what extent the variability of CSR reporting is influenced by cultural expectations, and the level of adherence to religious beliefs (Ibrahim, Howard and Angelidis, 2008; Miller and Ewest, 2015).

Third, a paradox lens offers much promise to researchers looking to understand different types of tensions in CSR reporting (Schad et al., 2016; Schuman et al., 2010). It provides an alternative approach to contrast perspectives that dominate social responsibility and family business research, providing a natural fit to study tensions and their management in family SMEs that engage in diverse forms of social responsibility (Zahra, Labaki, Abdel

Gawad and Sciascia, 2014). Future research might compare how learning, organizing and belonging paradoxes in CSR reporting emerge and unfold in diverse types of family SMEs (Westhead & Howorth, 2007), and reveal if different sources of tensions and their management add to the discussion presented here.

Moreover, this study was conducted in one developing country in Latin America, Honduras, and therefore it may be difficult to infer similar results in other countries. Further comparative work that focuses on how CSR reporting tensions are solved across countries that share common or contrasting cultural traits (Gupta and Levenburg, 2010) is needed. Multiple case studies in contrasting regions may support, expand, or challenge findings presented here (Reay and Zhang, 2014). This study shows that developing countries offer a fascinating context to explore paradoxes in family business research. Future quantitative and qualitative studies could look into developing economies, as well as emerging and transition economies (e.g., Tibet, Cuba, Venezuela, Russia), in order to explore the nuances of institutional, religious, and political influences in the paradoxes of CSR reporting.

Finally, this study did not explore whether reciprocal stewardship solves tensions in CSR reporting when succession occurs. Pearson and Marler (2010) argue that reciprocal stewardship will be more difficult to foster when family SME leadership becomes dispersed across generations. The approach and rationale of sibling partnerships and cousin consortiums to handling paradoxes in CSR integrations needs to be further examined. Such undertakings are important, as family SMEs face increasing pressures to report on their social responsibility efforts, calling for further research into the paradoxes involved.

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