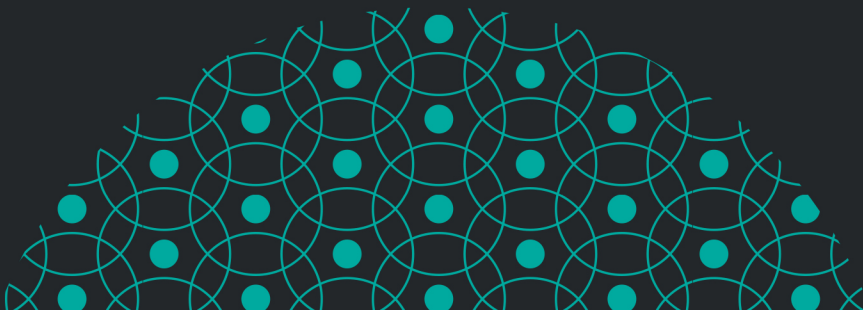# SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS IN THE ARAB REGION

Corporate Social Responsibility vs Culture

RANDA DIAB-BAHMAN

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SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS IN THE ARAB REGION: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY VS CULTURE

BY

RANDA DIAB-BAHMAN

Kuwait Technical College, Kuwait

emerald
PUBLISHING

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

This book is dedicated to my beloved country, Kuwait, in hopes of paving the way toward a positive and sustainable future.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Culture

The extant literature includes many studies of CSR and its impact on business outcomes (Bhattacharya et al., 2008; Blowfield & Frynas, 2005; Khurshid et al., 2016; Visser, 2008; Wu et al., 2016). However, while CSR is well studied in general, the impact of culture on CSR is largely understudied in an Arab context (Alfakhri et al., 2018). This is surprising, given that previous research has acknowledged that cultural factors can potentially have a big impact on the understanding and expression of CSR (Wang & Juslin, 2009). This book, therefore, sets out to explore the understanding and expression of CSR in an Arab context. It does so through a qualitative pilot study with 12 CSR experts (people with leading roles in CSR in the private, public and non-profit sectors) in Kuwait. The pilot study confirms the importance of cultural elements in influencing the understanding and expression of CSR. Interestingly, the pilot study highlights the importance of the Islamic religion and specific aspects of its religious doctrine (e.g., announcing good deeds can be taboo) as being particularly important to understanding why CSR may be expressed differently in an Arab context (e.g., not communicating publicly about CSR achievements). The document concludes by positing that further research is needed to explore the impact of aspects of the Islamic religion on CSR and suggesting that this would be a crucial step into paving the way for more culture-sensitive CSR policies and approaches.