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The Influence of Managerial Equity on Corporate Social Responsibility: The Case of Agricultural Systems

La influencia de la Equidad Gerencial en la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial: el Caso de los Sistemas Agrícolas

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Resumen / Abstract

Objective: To offer an overview of managerial equity and its influence on the social aspect of corporate social responsibility, which has been incorporated in the processes of organizations through the principle of sustainable development. Methodology: The systematic review was carried out using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. Further, the inclusion criteria for papers were (i) being written in either English or Spanish, (ii) being published in a scholarly peer-reviewed journal, and (iii) focusing on issues related to social sustainability and its relevance in agricultural systems. Results: Seven studies fulfill the inclusion criteria and therefore they were analyzed. Limitations: The number of articles found in four databases (ScienceDirect, Scopus, Springer and JStore). Conclusions: Managerial equity influences corporate social responsibility in agricultural systems by the incorporating the ethical principle of sustainable development.

Palabras clave: regional development; managerial equity; sustainable development; social sustainability; corporate social responsibility; agricultural systems.

Objetivo: Ofrecer un panorama de la equidad gerencial y su influencia en el aspecto social de la responsabilidad social empresarial, que se ha incorporado en los procesos de las organizaciones a través del principio del desarrollo sustentable. Metodología: La revisión sistemática se realizó utilizando la guía Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). Más aún, los criterios de inclusión de los artículos fueron (i) escritos en inglés o español, (ii) publicados en una revista académica revisada por pares y (iii) centrados en temas relacionados con la sustentabilidad social y su relevancia en los sistemas agrícolas. Resultados: Se encontraron y analizaron siete estudios que cumplieron con los criterios de inclusión. Limitaciones: El número de artículos encontrados en las cuatro bases de datos (ScienceDirect, Scopus, Springer y JStore). Conclusiones: La equidad gerencial influye en la responsabilidad social empresarial de los sistemas agrícolas, a través de la incorporación del principio ético del desarrollo sustentable.

Key words: equidad gerencial; desarrollo sustentable; sustentabilidad social; responsabilidad social empresarial; sistemas agrícolas.

Introduction

Between 1990 and 2010, social sustainability, one of the three main components of sustainable development, focused on the issues of poverty and population growth. Therefore, reducing poverty and limiting population growth were the central goals of any active social sustainability program. However, at present, issues related to equity, inclusion, democracy, cohesion, well-being, and quality of life have become more relevant for companies, communities, governments, and countries (Gilek et al., 2021).

Equity is an essential requirement for the social aspect of sustainability. Development cannot go into account exclusively the economic point of view, nor sustainability can solely denote the protection of the environment. Development and sustainability must be oriented toward the realities of people's lives and promote rights, opportunities, options, and dignity. Both must be inclusive, generate social progress, and contribute to achieving greater fairness (Muñoz, 2012).

The topic of equity has been explored in the broadest sense of justice and social good (González, 2000). Notably, managerial equity has been defined as the effort to end labor discrimination by recognizing the competencies and merits of people, thus promoting their inclusion within an organization (Yates, 1993; Vargas and Mota, 2013; Castro and Álvarez, 2016). It is not easy to find discussions of managerial equity concepts in the literature. Castro and Álvarez (2016) have described equity in management through equal opportunities in social, cultural, and scientific paradigms as a source of openings and as an essential element for

companies, organizations, and institutions. This way, they state that equity represents the need to guarantee people's active and balanced participation, regardless of their physical condition, in all business activities. These conditions entail working to eliminate all types of employment discrimination. Including equity as a guarantee of quality and excellence, responds to the current trend of business modernization, the requirement to create new models of organizational culture and leadership, as well as the need to advance social sustainability.

Managerial equity as an integrated concept

The concept of managerial equity remains unclear. Due to this, we will attempt to establish this concept, starting with the explanation of the word "equity" and finishing with the definition of the word "managerial".

Equity

Unequal opportunities occur in occupational spaces when decisions regarding selection, promotion, evaluation, or remuneration processes are based on individual characteristics such as age, appearance, sex, religion, sexuality, public opinion, and skin color, rather than on educational qualifications, work experience, seniority, or career development. Discrimination in workplaces is related to social power, prestige, job expectations, and experiences at work. Assuring the right to be included in public and private employment positions is an ethical obligation for organizations working toward achieving equity, which is an element of social sustainability (Martínez, 2009).

The word equity originates from the Latin *aequitas* or *aequitatis*. This, in turn, is derived from the Greek term *epiekeia*, which is related to the idea of the virtue of the just. That means that each person receives what deserves. The original meaning denotes equanimity, moral balance, impartiality, and mind equality. At the same time, this word is based on *aequus*, *aequa*, or *aequum*, which means equal, fair, or equity, as well as the suffix *tat*, which relates to the quality of precision. Therefore, the etymological concept is the quality of fairness and impartiality (Vega, 2013).

The concept of equity is based on three social values: equality, the fulfillment of rights, and justice.

Equity is a comparative concept between human groups that is achieved when equals are treated in the same way and unequal are treated unequally, an idea that agrees with the ideology of groups or communities that seek public service benefit (Hernandez, 2008). However, this view disagrees with the vision that organizations maintain on equity, which is related to the evaluation of people to determine their inequalities and take advantage of those capacities that can lead them to develop workers, work teams, and organizational structures that believe in assuming and implementing practices that are better for the environment and society (Terán, Robles, Preciado and López, 2019).

Ocampo and CEPAL (2000) refers to equity as an ethical and fair principle and argues that it demands the same conditions and opportunities for all people without distinction, with the exception of adapting in particular cases. For instance, those who have special needs and cannot easily adapt to the social groups in which they operate. This author's contribution aims to be more consistent with the perspective of an organization based on equity, arguing that people should have the same opportunities without discrimination.

Managerial

The word management comes from the latin *geners* (carry out, manage, administer). This word means administration, government, the management of governing bodies, resource management, and business management. So, management refers, above all, to a system of planning activities and resources. It results in organizations that use systematized knowledge, techniques, methods, or tools for production, marketing, and expansion processes to explain the managerial behavior of organizations (Sanabria, 2007).

For these reasons, "management" has been considered from a holistic point of view that permits the designation of highly qualified and specialized employees who direct and manage an organization’s dealings (Drucker, 1993). For Sallenave (2002), management must be assumed to be based on an integral vision that attempts to link all the forces that define the idea of a company, organization, or

institution to achieve greater competitiveness. There are three keywords in management: a) strategy, meaning knowing where the company is headed; b) organization, meaning the ability to specify the strategies to be utilized; and c) culture, meaning the ability to change the organizational structure.

These perceptions consider general management issues related to resources, strategies, the planning of activities, knowledge, techniques, and methods. However, they do not contemplate issues related with the interaction that the management area must maintain concerning social and environmental issues both within the organization and outside of it.

The term "management" relates to the use of resources to generate profit and well-being in specific sectors of society. Epistemologically, the central objective of management is to predict and explain the problems of effectiveness (achievement of objectives), efficiency (achievement of objectives with the best use of resources), and social effectiveness (connection between economic activity and social needs) in organizations. In addition to the above mentioned, management also deals with quality, productivity, and competitiveness processes (Díaz and Torrealba, 2011). Thus, the managerial process is a sequence of functions adjusted to be executed simultaneously and continuously according to four main aspects: approach, organization, direction, and control (Reinoso, 2013).

Managerial equity

Few references were found describing managerial equity in the literature. Castro and Álvarez (2016) mentioned equity in management as providing equal opportunities to people in social, cultural, and scientific paradigms as a source of openings and an essential element for companies. They say that it represents, among other things, the need to guarantee the active and balanced participation of people, regardless of their physical condition, in all areas of business activities. Additionally, this entails working to eliminate all types of employment discrimination. Equity as a guarantee of quality and excellence responds to the trend of business modernization and the need to create new models of organizational culture and leadership.

The actions that any firm take to prioritize equity in their structure make evident a transformation from a position in favor of stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination, exclusion, and other practices that mask various attitudes and hinder cultural change, to s position that is in favor of unity, social cohesion, solidarity, and the principle of equity.

The present work addresses equity in management to improve organizational performance as well as to discuss the need to inform society and those who lead organizations about the importance of promoting policies to recognize the merits, abilities, and competencies of people, rather than focusing on their sex, race, religion, age, etc., through the promotion of more diverse, tolerant, and inclusive work environments (Vargas and Mota, 2013). In this regard, it is essential to note that these characteristics represents a challenge to the company that must be considered so that disadvantaged groups can reach their full potential without encountering obstacles caused by prejudice.

Another approach to the concept of "managerial equity" is presented by Yates (1993), who conceptualizes it as a solution to the problems and concerns of the organization by providing an opportunity for those in management positions or other high positions in the company's hierarchy, to head in a new direction by improving equity and inclusion to reduce workplace discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or place of birth. He argues that equity managers should actively seek out capable individuals to prepare them for work and ensure that barriers to their progress will be minimal

Thus, managerial equity must contain two phases to succeed. The first phase occurs when the company, organization, or institution grants job opportunities at managerial levels to candidates who meet the knowledge, experience, value, and attitude criteria, regardless of their sex, color, nationality, sexuality, etcetera. The second phase entails that managerial equity must continue to be promoted in the form of a cascade in the workplace through managers or those in high-level positions offering promotions to applicants who have the skills, abilities, experience, values, and attitudes needed, regardless of their gender, religion, origin, sexual orientation, or political opinion (Yates, 1993 and Terán et al. 2019).

Based on the factors mentioned above, managerial equity can be defined as the union of efforts to reduce labor discrimination by recognizing the competencies and merits of people in an organization (Yates, 1993; Vargas and Mota, 2013; Castro and Álvarez, 2016, and Terán et al., 2019).

Sustainable development and its significant social component

At the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972, the seed of what later became known as sustainability was created (Calvente, 2007). After the Brundtland Report of the Commission in 1987, this concept received global attention. In this report, sustainable development was defined as the search to "satisfy the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet theirs" (WCED, 1987). In other words, the goal of preserving nature for the development of present and future humanity was formalized and began to spread (Fernández, 2011). This definition shows that, despite all its rectifications, conventional development (focused on economic interests) has left in its wake substantial environmental and social deterioration that has become manifest in the crises many are experiencing today, which is the reason why some criticisms exist to the concept in different parts of the world.

Blum et al. (2017) define sustainable development as a process that aims to safeguard the future and enhance the present, satisfying human's essential needs and desires within the ecological, social, and economic limits of the planet. What can also be said about this concept is that it reconciles economic growth with environmental and social concerns. Supplementary, it seeks for attention to be given to the needs of all countries, each of them with a particular situation, to create a better life for all that is governed by compliance with regulations, positive economic development, justice, and equity (Ramcilovic and Pülzl, 2018). This last contribution is entirely in line with what we intend to express in this document, since we aim not to underestimate any of the three factors of sustainable development; instead, we seek to find the most critical factors that must be considered to develop strategies for sustainable development.

Indeed, sustainable development occurs at three pillars: environment, society, and economy. However, it is crucial to mention the focus had been on the economic and environmental aspects compared to the social ones; and that is why, this pillar has been described as the vaguest in the sustainable development discourse (Vifell and Soneryd, 2012). As a result, the concept of social sustainability has been simplified in the existing theoretical discussions, because of the growing interest driven by political, commercial, and economic issues that point towards the

development of communities (Colantonio, 2009). Based on the issues mentioned above, Littig and Griessler (2005) asserted that social sustainability occurs when work and institutional agreements within a society satisfy a broad set of human needs; however, they also point out that it arises when demands for social justice, human dignity, and equal participation are met.

Eizenberg and Jabareen (2017) argue that social sustainability is part of a broader framework of sustainable development than the one contemplated initially. In this regard, they propose that social sustainability should include aspects to address major social problems that arise when dealing with the effects of climate change and environmental hazards. For them, social sustainability seeks to improve the protection and care given to people, regardless of their color, place of birth, culture, or socioeconomic status, by promoting more just and equitable social, economic, and environmental policies. In their conceptual framework, these scientists reformulate a vision of a more sustainable future, which is essential to achieve the general objectives of sustainable development.

This sustainability work highlights the importance of promoting relationships and cohesion between individuals and designing the mechanisms necessary for society to participate in its management. This aspect also requires formulating spaces so that they allow diversity to be achieved. However, it is important to emphasize that the creation of these circumstances is not exclusive to the government, and includes private and non-profit organizations, since only in this way is it possible to promote social interactions.

Munzel, Meyer-Waarden, and Galan (2018) concluded that social sustainability is the process through which sustainable and prosperous places promote well-being, considering what people need in the places where they live and work. The social side of sustainability focuses on well-being, development, and stability in a pleasant work environment, going beyond the company's environmental and economic objectives.

In this way, the concept of social sustainability is focused on promoting the progress of societies in a way that makes possible the achievement of aspirations, both individual and collective, and allowing people to overcome the current lack of rationality in the prevailing socioeconomic system. Therefore, social sustainability is a fundamental idea, as it calls for focusing on common goals and specific objectives to achieve sustainable development in every society, in conjunction with the environmental and economic axes.

Managerial equity internalized through corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Antelo and Alfonso (2015) state that CSR is a continuous commitment to contribute to the sustainable economic development, care for the environment, and improve the quality of employees' life and their families, the local community, and society. Likewise, Acuña, Araque, Rosero, Rubio and Uribe (2014) describe CSR as a set of actions that an organization develops to achieve progress in three components-economic, social, and environmental-to satisfy the requirements of all parties.

Considering the above, it is evident that many multinational companies try to show how responsible they are by attending issues beyond the traditional company-product-customer relationship. To this end, they do not hesitate to publicize their efforts through their internet pages by participating in cultural or educational events, or through financing cooperation, development, and socio-environmental projects. Nevertheless, these demonstrations are not always backed by practices and actions promoting social and environmental responsibility.

In particular, the social sphere of sustainability, as discussed in the previous section, has been internalized in the organization through CSR and its universal principles: a) respect for the dignity of people, b) decent employment, c) solidarity, d) subsidiarity, e) contribution to the common good, f) co-responsibility, g) trust, h) business ethics, i) prevention of illegal business, j) connection with the community, k) transparency, l) honesty, m) legality, n) justice, o) entrepreneurship, p) social development, and q) equity (Caballero, Rascón and Rochín, 2015).

Managerial equity, as well as equity at different levels of an organization; ability to participate in decisions in the public sphere; ease of accessing material well-being and justice systems; citizen security and healthy lifestyles; the ability to access multiple sources of knowledge and information; and access to other social support networks are rights that derive from equity, an element that is part of the great social concept of sustainability and that must be oriented towards the needs of people, providing them with rights, opportunities, options, equity, and dignity (Muñoz, 2012).

The social dimension of sustainability that organizations assimilate through CSR demands that the company must treat the employee as a human being; as such, the company must promote its employees' rights to enjoy healthcare, safety, and a

dignified community (Antelo-González and Alfonso-Robaina (2015). Therefore, to keep pace with global development, communities, institutions, companies, and organizations are increasingly interested in its adoption (Ajmal et al., 2018). Furthermore, social sustainability promotes well-being, considering what people need in the localities where they live and work. The focus on well-being, development, and stability in a pleasant, fair, and equitable work environment highlight the fulfillment of a social purpose that goes beyond the organization's environmental and economic objectives (Munzel et al., 2018).

The interest in companies to being more socially sustainable has caused managerial equity to be internalized in organizations through CSR as it represents efforts to inhibit labor discrimination through the recognition of the competencies of people in firms and other private and public spaces (Talukder, Blay, VanLoon and Hipel, 2017). In addition, firms are encouraged to implement this concept because it enables individuals who are skilled and deserve opportunities to be prepared for work from the management levels to their subordinates, guaranteeing that any barriers to their progress will be minimal. Considering the high quality of performance in management positions and in their workgroups, managerial equity can guide organizations, companies, and institutions towards sustainability, as well as the systems where these corporations are developed (Terán et al., 2019).

Agricultural systems

Agriculture began during the Neolithic, about 10,000 years ago, when humans domesticated animals and plants to produce food. Since then, agriculture has gone through continuous change and adaptation worldwide. In the 1800s, an agricultural revolution began because agriculture could not produce enough food for people, and the world experienced many famines due to crop failure. For instance, between 1845 and 1849, Ireland was affected by potato blight; between 1850 and 1873, China experienced a famine due to drought; and in 1866, India experienced the same situation due to limited rainfall. In these times, agriculture was not in optimal conditions for ensuring global food supply. Nevertheless, between 1900 and 2000, the food production began to increase worldwide, and people began to be better fed

due to the use of modern agricultural systems (Westhoek, Ingram, Van Berkum and Hajer, 2016; Talukder et al., 2017).

Agricultural systems are a source of livelihood for an estimated 86% of people living in rural areas, providing food and employment opportunities. This sector is also responsible for ensuring food security and health as a worldwide goal (Orduño, Kallas and Ornelas, 2020). These systems are among the most significant factors supporting the economy in developed and developing countries; thus, development programs are often aimed at the agricultural sector (Asimeh et al., 2020).

However, agricultural systems are affected by numerous issues related to sustainable development. For instance, in the environmental dimension, these systems experience difficulties linked to climate change, the loss of biodiversity, natural resource depletion (Brun, Jeuffroy, Pénicaud, Cerf and Meynard, 2021), the fragmentation and degradation of habitats, altered levels of nutrients (Bengochea, Henderson and Loreau, 2020), the application of pesticides, the use of fertilizers, and waste production (Schreefel, Schulte, de Boer, Schrijver and Van, 2020). In the social sphere, these systems must be careful with matters related to child labor, basic hygiene and sanitation in homes, fair wages, medical care for workers and their families, educational care for workers' children, good nutritional conditions (The Packer, 2017 and The Packer, 2021), and fair working days and tasks (Duarte, Dedieu and Schiavi, 2021). Finally, agricultural systems must improve the economy of the region (Shah *et al.,* 2021).

Based on the issues mentioned above, managers of agricultural systems are aware that it is necessary to move towards sustainability by using environmentally friendly technologies and practices that do not damage the environment. However, they are also conscious that it is imperative to promote decent work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity. Job opportunities must be plentiful and provide an adequate income; they must also provide security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families. People must have the freedom to express their concerns, organize unions, and participate in decisions that affect their working places and lives; there must also be equal opportunities and equal treatment for all (Duarte et al., 2021).

Therefore, directors and managers in agricultural systems are interested in incorporating sustainable development practices through the principles of CSR to achieve sustainability and provide enough food for all humans, avoiding complications from poor management decisions that negatively affect agricultural

systems' functions. Thus, it is imperative to integrate present scientific knowledge with farmers' knowledge to achieve a better understanding of the issues involved and improve sustainable development practices in its three significant components: environmental, social, and economic (2021).

The social aspect of sustainable development contains the element of social equity, which includes the concept of managerial equity, that has been internalized in organizations, companies, and institutions through the principles of CSR. Managerial equity relates to the inclusion of highly qualified people in terms of their knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes, and values at the managerial levels, regardless of their physical appearance and other attributes. Moreover, managers must seek to offer positions in the organization to people with the necessary knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes, principles, and values.

From this optic, managerial equity contributes to the social dimension of corporate social responsibility and its ideals as well as the ethical principle of sustainable development. The implementation of this concept in agricultural systems will promote the necessary process of choosing specialized and highly knowledgeable employees capable of directing and managing the affairs of an organization at the managerial level to replicate this procedure for those in positions below these managers. This type of manager will actively seek out individuals who are capable and deserve opportunities to prepare them for work and remove barriers. In this way, they and their work teams will have the opportunity to implement practices related to the three areas of sustainable development, and, consequently, lead agricultural systems towards sustainability.

However, there are few studies focused on managerial equity as an element of the social aspect of corporate social responsibility and its integration in organizations through the ethical principle of sustainable development. Additionally, discussions of the social dimension of agricultural systems are scarce. Consequently, the present review analyzes the available literature using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines.

Methodology

This systematic review was carried out considering the PRISMA guidelines Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, and Altman (2010); Dreifuss, Schreier and Zevallos, (2018); Sánchez and Robles (2018). We used the ScienceDirect, Scopus, SpringerLink, and Jstore databases. Moreover, we conducted this review in two phases. For both, the exclusion criteria were book chapters, papers that upon review were found not to be related to the research, opinions, viewpoints, anecdotes, letters, and editorials. Meanwhile, the inclusion criteria were articles written in English and Spanish (the two languages spoken by the authors), published in scholarly peer-reviewed journals, containing themes related to social sustainability and its relevance in agricultural systems. Phase one considered the following keywords and commands -"equity" and "sustainable development" and "agricultural systems"-while the second phase contained "equity" and "CSR" and "agricultural systems".

The first search produced 88 articles from ScienceDirect, 2 from Scopus, 97 from SpringerLink, and 92 from Jstore. The second search located 13 papers from ScienceDirect, 0 from Scopus, 1 from SpringerLink, and 0 from Jstore. A total of 28 articles were excluded due to duplication, which was identified with the support of the Mendeley software. After duplicate removal, the titles, and abstracts of 265 articles were selected and analyzed. After reading the abstracts, 66 relevant studies were selected for full-text reading. Then, 59 articles were excluded after complete reading. By the end, seven studies met the inclusion criteria and were considered for inclusion in this systematic review. Figure 1 shows the process flowchart used for the identification, screening, and inclusion of the studies. A total of 199 studies were excluded because they were related to the following topics: resilience, governance over ecosystem services, emerging agricultural innovations, renewable energy, cropping models, irrigation plans, community conservation models, livestock-derived food, new goals considering SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), and equality in food and income distribution among farmers.

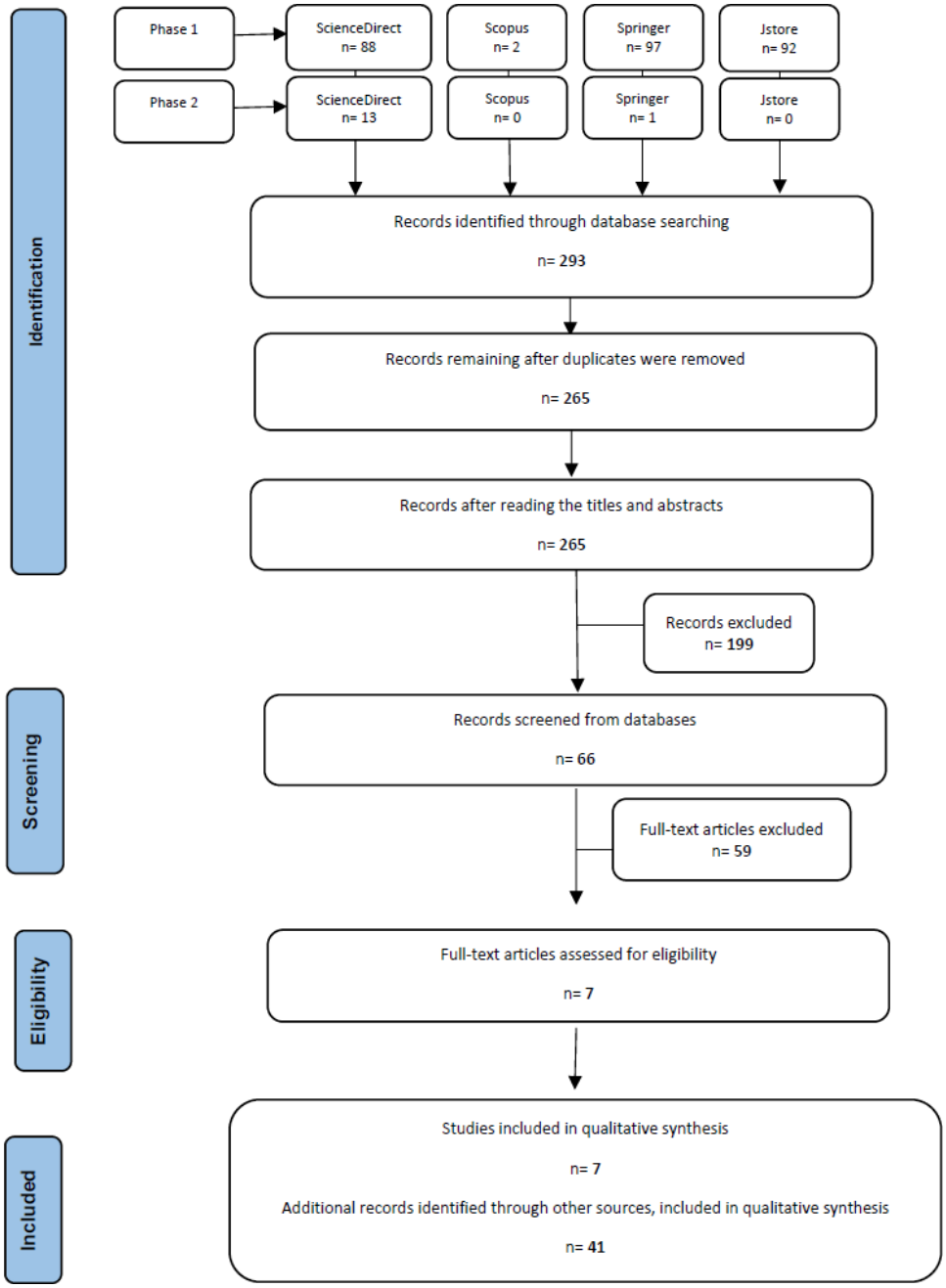

Figure 1. Flowchart of the search and selection criteria.
Source: Adapted from PRISMA.

Even though implementing managerial equity deserves to be analyzed individually, this review explores how managerial equity contributes to the social dimension of a company's social responsibility by incorporating the ethical principle of sustainable development and its relevance in agricultural systems. Findings of literature review are presented in Section 3.

Results

The information of the seven studies obtained by authors is included in Table 1. This information includes the study objectives, the social aspects of CSR that must be taken care of, according to the ethical principle of sustainable development in agricultural systems, and the main results.

Table 1.

Studies included in qualitative synthesis, derived from the following commands: phase 1 ("equity" AND "sustainable development" AND "agricultural systems") and phase 2 ("equity" AND "CSR" AND "agricultural systems").

Reference and Year	Objective	Social aspects of CSR that must be taken care of, according to the ethical principle of sustainable development in agricultural systems	Results
Partidário et al. (2009) [51]	To find how sustainability assessment (SA) was used, what sustainability meant in each study area through the different objectives of sustainability considered, discuss the methods used in SA, and identify the benefits achieved.	Health care; equal rights, regardless of gender, race, disability, age, and sexual orientation; and maintaining and developing distinctive cultures.	The sustainable assessment (SA) process described in the proposal's methodology adds some innovative and challenging dimensions to the broader debate on strategic assessments. The multidisciplinary nature of the project meant that the SA could combine a range of approaches.
Roy and Chan (2012) [52]	To suggest a set of indicators for assessing Bangladesh's agricultural sustainability based on theoretical proposals and practical applications. Moreover, they underline the importance of multistakeholder participation in agricultural sustainability assessments.	Working conditions, social security, educational level, and the participation of local organizations.	This paper provided an extensive review of indicator selection criteria, development methods, validation, and evaluation strategies for agricultural sustainability assessment focused on the present trends and authors' observations.
Bacon et al. (2012) [53]	To carry out a comparative analysis of three case studies and propose an overview of the full range of social dimensions-i.e., human health, labor, democratic participation, resiliency, biological and cultural diversity, equity, and ethics-to assess social outcomes.	Employment, wages, changing labor routines, democracy, migration, discrimination, collective bargaining, human health (pesticide exposure and human diseases), equity and justice, diversity, resiliency, participation, decision making, cohesion, and representation.	The authors illustrate that diversified farming systems (DFS) are interdependent, with a set of institutional environments that promote the use of diversified farming practices and enhance the social benefits of carrying out sustainable agriculture.

Kremen, Iles and Bacon (2012) [54]	To define diversified farming systems (DFS) and explore to what extent DFS overlap or are differentiated from existing concepts such as sustainable, multifunctional, organic, or critical inputs to agriculture.	Social justice; housing, health, and labor conditions; agrochemical exposure health risks.	The authors attempted to promote the concept of DFS by encouraging broad interdisciplinary collaboration and practice through the analysis of the ecology of food production.
Peano, Migliorini and Sottile (2014) [55]	To develop an indicator-based tool for monitoring sustainability in agri-food systems, considering quality in economic, ecological, social, and cultural aspects.	Employment, standards, and rights related to job quality and work conditions, social inclusion, and the protection of particular groups, increasing community power and improving personal relationships, the social roles of producers that reinforce their willingness to organize themselves, communication networks, equity and nondiscrimination, access to education, health, justice, and the media.	The proposed approach allows one to gain a real integrated vision of sustainability in small-scale systems. The assessed methodology was well integrated and represented through a careful selection of sustainability indicators.
Thornton et al. (2018) [56]	To evaluate current progress concerning changing agricultural practices to achieve sustainability using surveys from 5 regions, 21 countries, and 45 sites, including a total of 315 villages and approximately 6300 households.	Equal rights regardless of gender and educational level, youth-focused support, and food insecurity in rural households.	The study confirms that there are considerable numbers of food-insecure agricultural households across five regions of the globe, ranging from under 5% of households in Latin America to 32% of households in East Africa.
Talukder et al. (2020) [38]	To examine how sustainability can be assessed in a way that provides a holistic picture of the individual and interrelated factors. They then present complex adaptive systems to identify the issues and concerns that need to be addressed during agricultural sustainability assessments.	Women´s involvement decision making regarding agricultural activities, differences in wages based on gender, and human skills.	The authors elaborated a set of indicators that will facilitate agricultural sustainability assessment.

Source: own elaboration.

In Europe, Partidário, Sheate, Bina, Byron and Augusto (2009) discussed how sustainability assessment (SA) was used and what sustainability meant in each study area of Europe (France, Greece, Norway, Slovakia, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom) by considering different sustainability objectives in the context of BioScene (Scenarios for Reconciling Biodiversity Conservation with Declining Agriculture Use in Mountain Areas in Europe).

The authors initially established a framework of sustainable development objectives and the central tasks of the SA; six sustainable development themes and sub-themes were adopted. They included three essential aspects of social development: health, equity, and culture. The sustainable development objectives were then further detailed. For the equity element of social sustainability, the following two objectives were established: to ensure equal rights for all regardless of gender, race, disability, age, and sexual orientation, and to promote equal opportunities. The authors believe agricultural systems must reach these objectives through the social dimension of sustainability (Partidário et al*.,* 2009).

Finally, researchers established study area's top-priority objectives and related topics. They elaborated a summary of all scenarios across all six study areas, which allowed them to comment on the relative contribution of all the scenarios to sustainability objectives in agriculture (Partidário et al*.,* 2009).

On the other hand, Roy and Chan (2012) elaborate a proposal using a set of indicators for assessing sustainable development in agriculture in Bangladesh based on indicators that had been theoretically proposed and practically applied by different researchers. This article discusses several issues relating to indicator system development and presents a summary after due consideration has been given. In this process, the authors first carried out indicator's selection based on seven methods of agricultural sustainability assessment, then specified a method for the validation of each indicator, and lastly proceeded to an evaluation of the indicators set.

According to the literature, the authors determined the social dimension of sustainable development and the social aspects that should be addressed in agriculture systems: working conditions, social security, educational level, nutrition, acceptance, equity, etcetera. These researchers argued that social indicators may measure agricultural workers' ability to deal with certain circumstances. In other hand, they stated that social factors affect participation in their organization and

their relationship with other companies, which lead them to share their information and knowledge, skills, and experiences. For the authors, education has a strong association with awareness, knowledge, the adoption of management practices, and access to information. Therefore, education level can be a crucial indicator as well as a determinant objective in the working places of agricultural systems, if it includes both direct and indirect influences on several aspects of the firm, mainly those related to sustainable development (Roy and Chan, 2012).

In general, this paper provides an extensive review of indicator selection criteria, development methods, validation methods, and evaluation strategies for carrying out agricultural sustainability assessments based on present trends and the authors' observations relating to the practices that agricultural systems must follow (Roy and Chan, 2012).

According to discussions of sustainable development in agriculture that do not consider the social dimension, some authors as Bacon, Getz, Kraus, Montenegro, and Holland (2012) create a proposal by focusing on the social dimension of sustainable development-when assessing social outcomes that could support farming systems.

The authors suggest the utilization of various criteria for assessing the social dimensions of sustainable development in farming systems. They established eight themes: human health, democracy, quality of life and well-being, equity, justice, and ethics (in a macro dimension-i.e., inequalities in people's access to food, the influence of geography, food justice, etcetera.), resiliency and vulnerability, biological, cultural diversity, and work. The investigators included in the last criterion some variables that could be used for analysis: employment, wages, changing labor routines, injuries, migration issues, discrimination, and denial of the right to collective bargaining. These are variables that overlap with equity, justice, ethics, and human health (Bacon et al., 2012).

The authors planned the use of a dual-lens framework that includes the analysis of a broad set of social assessment criteria to consider more comprehensive institutional environments. Applying this framework to their three case studies, they analyzed processes representing potentially viable strategies for enhancing social sustainability. The investigators also studied procedures for expanding the use of diversified farming systems in three very different settings. Moreover, they concluded that each case was influenced by the particularities of history, culture,

geography, and political economy. Thus, they stated that it was difficult to propose universal guidelines at that point in their research agenda (Bacon et al., 2012).

Kremen, Iles, and Bacon (2012) tried to explain agroecological principles and their contribution to creating a more sustainable, socially just, and secure global food system, especially with issues related to diversified farming systems. Agricultural systems need to generate social benefits according to the social dimension of sustainable development-for example, social justice (equity), better labor conditions, and improved human health by reducing agrochemical exposure risks. In this document, the authors attempted to launch the concept of Diversified Farming Systems (DFS) by encouraging broad interdisciplinary collaboration and practices from the outset, through analyzing the ecology of food production (Kremen et al., 2012).

Peano, Migliorini, and Sottile (2014) developed an indicator-based tool for monitoring sustainability in agri-food systems by going into account quality, economic, ecological, and social aspects according to the Slow Food (SF) Presidia Project. Their methodological steps were: (i) create a new five-dimensional framework (including quality, economic, social, environmental, and cultural dimensions); (ii) design indicators for monitoring progress toward sustainability for each of those themes; and (iii) apply this monitoring tool to the Slow Food Presidia project as a first attempt at end-user validation. In this case, farmers, consumers, and experts were all consulted regarding these methodological steps.

The investigators prepared a list of quality, environmental, social, economic, and cultural impact issues that had been used previously to assess the sustainability of agri-food systems in study cases. For the social dimension of sustainability, the following are some of the issues that an agricultural system must consider in its practice: a) employment; b) standards and rights related to job quality and work conditions; c) social inclusion and the protection of particular groups; d) increasing community power and improving personal relationships; e) the social roles of producers and reinforcing their willingness to organize themselves; f) communication networks; g) access to education; h) health; i) justice; and j) equity and nondiscrimination (Peano et al., 2014).

The proposed approach allows us to gain a real integrated vision of sustainability in small-scale systems, such as those developed under the SF Presidia project. The assessed methodology was integrated with the SF approach because it represents a valuable tool for measuring the SF Presidia project. The careful selection of

sustainability indicators is evident and the reliable criteria that was obtained through discussion with growers participating (Peano et al., 2014).

Thornton et al. (2018) attempted to evaluate the current progress in directing agricultural practices towards sustainability using surveys from 5 regions, 21 countries, and 45 sites, including a total of 315 villages and approximately 6300 households.

The survey work was undertaken at study sites in Africa and South Asia in 2010, and locations in Latin America and South-East Asia in 2012. Further, these sites were deliberately selected to include a wide variety of agricultural practices and physical conditions, as well as different cultural, political, and institutional environments. The results showed considerable numbers of food-insecure agricultural households across five regions of the planet, ranging from under 5% of households in Latin America to 32% in East Africa at a macro level. At a micro-level, this must be addressed through the support of organizations, companies, and institutions. Equal rights must be achieved regardless of gender and education level, and in the same way, youth-focused support must be provided (Thorton et al., 2021).

Talukder et al. (2017) presented a paper examining how sustainability can be analyzed to provide a holistic picture of individual and interrelated factors in agricultural systems. They used adaptive methods to identify the issues and concerns that need to be addressed during an agricultural sustainability assessment. According to the authors, social worries relate to human capital, including knowledge, skills, education, health, leadership, and organizational skills. This type of capital in agricultural systems and natural, social, financial, and physical capital will allow us to achieve sustainability.

Discussion

The conclusions drawn from the studies included in this review show how several researchers have focused their studies on determining the aspects that agricultural systems must address in terms of the social dimension of sustainable development, which has only been vaguely discussed in research worldwide (Partidario et al.,

2009; Roy and Chan, 2012; Bacon et al., 2012; Kremen et al., 2012; Peano et al., 2014; Talukder et al., 2017 and Thorton et al., 2018).

Suppose that there is an interest in building an agricultural system of organizations that would contribute to the social aspect of sustainable development. In that case, it would be necessary to intensify efforts by researchers on this issue and raise awareness in system companies so that they can be aware of and make decisions regarding this aspect. It will also be essential for both parties to merge their interests and knowledge to solve the social problems that have emerged and thus move towards sustainability (Slimi, Prost, Cerf and Prost, 2021).

The literature reviewed showed that information was analyzed in a very generalized way, regarding the objectives that need to be addressed in the social dimension of sustainable development. However, Bacon et al. (2012) and Peano et al. (2014) discussed some fundamental aspects of social sustainability in agricultural systems, such as employment, standards and rights related to job quality and work conditions, social inclusion and the protection of particular groups, increasing community power and improving personal relationships, the social roles of producers that reinforces their willingness to organize themselves, communication network, equity and non-discrimination, access to education, health, justice, and the media.

Partidário et al. (2009) and Thornton et al. (2018) highlight non-discrimination as an aspect of the social element of sustainable development, commenting that equity and inclusion are necessary for organizations related to the agricultural system, regardless of sex, race, disabilities, age, and sexual orientation. These last researchers emphasize that education level matters and can lead to progress through changes in agricultural practices (Thorton et al., 2018).

Roy and Chan (2012) agree with Thornton et al. (2018), as they denote that people's level of education should be given immediate attention, as this aspect will contribute directly or indirectly to improving various practices in organizations; above all, it may be the key to moving towards more environmentally and socially responsible agricultural systems.

It is relevant to highlight that there is no consensus regarding the important aspects and objectives for social sustainability. This emphasizes the necessity of defining relevant aspects that are concerning at the macro level, as well as those that are significant at the micro-level (Partidario et al., 2009; Roy and Chan, 2012;

Bacon et al., 2012; Kremen et al., 2012; Peano et al., 2014; Talukder et al., 2017 and Thorton et al., 2018).

Even though the articles reviewed deal with equity and emphasize the aspects that must be considered to achieve and contribute to sustainable development, no research has yet dealt with equity at the management level or the integrated concept of managerial equity. We could not find any article that considered managerial equity as an element of the social aspect of CSR, and the way this concept has been introduced in organizations through the ethical principle of sustainable development, or how this social dimension acquires relevance in agricultural systems.

In any case, this article agrees with the findings of Roy and Chan (2012) and Talukder et al. (2017). Those researchers sustain that the education should be considered in recruitment and inclusion processes in organizations related to the agricultural system, because that will improve different practices. This could be the key to creating more sustainable agricultural systems.

Academics present managerial equity as a solution to problems and concerns of organizations by providing the opportunity for diverse groups of people to enter management positions or gain jobs that are on top in a company's hierarchy. This concept aims to include people in workplaces regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, place of birth, physical appearance, political opinion, or sexuality, but considering knowledge, experience, skills, abilities, attitudes, principles and values. Besides that, this term encourages managers to actively seek out capable individuals who deserve opportunities in management and other levels because they possess the necessary attributes.

When managerial equity is achieved, it will contribute to agricultural systems promoting sustainability and becoming a more sustainable organization. Through this, and a generalized effect on other organizations, this will contribute to the sustainable development of the entire region. However, despite the relevance of this concept, equity in management still faces obstacles from government agencies, institutions, and organizations.

Conclusions

This review provides information about the concept of managerial equity and its basis. Until now, managerial equity can be considered an element of the social dimension of corporate social responsibility that has been incorporated in organizations through the ethical principle of sustainable development. Studies analyzing how this social dimension acquires relevance in agricultural systems are scarce.

By adopting this concept, efforts can be made to reduce labor discrimination by recognizing the competencies and merits of people to promote their inclusion at management and other levels of agricultural organizations. In this way, these organizations can evolve towards sustainability and thereby contribute to the region's sustainable development where they practice and operate.

We strongly suggest that future research should discuss achieving equity in higher positions of agricultural system organizations to evaluate and determine the levels of sustainability that can be achieved through the inclusion of people who possess the necessary knowledge, experience, and merits, aiming at the training of employees and work teams who seek to direct the organization towards sustainability.

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